



SCIENTIFRICTION 10

© 78
LH

WARNING

THIS IS AN AMATEUR PULICATION AND MAY CONTAIN UNEXPECTED HAZARDS

(1) There is no editor or publisher in the usual sense. That is, there is no one to whom huge mail sacks full of material are submitted, and who then need only pick the best, or that which best conforms with the publication's policy of what sells publications. Instead, any one at all -- in particular anyone whose writing would be summarily tossed into the ash can, with at best a brief hint of admiration for the perpetrator's chutzpah, by any editor worth the name -- can have his inane gibberings "published" (if we may so degrade the worth of the term) in this bizarre collection of differently colored and differently textured sheets of paper which you hold in your hands.

(2) There is no copy editor or proofreader. Therefore any unorthodox spelling or grammatical construction, whether due to gross ignorance (as is nearly always the case) or due to the so-called writer's egregious arrogance in thinking he owns the English language and can use it as he wants, will simply appear -- in actual ink, as if such abominations were merely symbols on paper rather than unthinkable, anathema, bad news, and the pits.

(3) The various pages of this publication are produced not in hygienic industrial facilities, but, for the most part, in residences, or in the strangely painted back rooms of half-remodeled clubhouses, where the sheets of paper on which this noisome baloney is to appear sit around in half-opened packages likely to be dripped on by mad dogs.

(4) There is no art director (and few who were even good at cutting things out of construction paper in kindergarten) to oversee such elementary matters as margins, page layout, typography and so on. This leads to a grave risk that the appearance of some or all of the pages in this silly thing will present such an annoying pattern to the eye that they will go unread and will thus be useless (which at least provides condign vengeance upon the perpetrator), or so downright disturbing to the human nervous system that the hapless reader is compelled to fling the entire publication across the room with the consequent risk of hitting someone in the eye or knocking some fragile item from its perch.

(5) Since the people responsible for the physical assembly and distribution of this publication do not do it for legitimate reasons (such as fear of being fired, going broke, and having their children starve if they don't), but rather for such fleeting and unreliable motives as pleasure, camaraderie, and service to their fellow man, there is no reason to believe that they will continue to do it or that they will do it on time, or that they will get the staples in straight.

(?) 1978 Greg Chalfin. Adapted from "Such a lot of guns around town, and so few brains" in Apa L # 672.



SCIENTIFRICTION 10 -- October 1978
The "All Fanhistory" Issue (see page 8)
Edited by Mike Glycer : 14974 Osceola St., Sylmar
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Scientifrication is published whenever the editor is overwhelmed by a mad desire to slipsheet. The zine may be obtained for money -- \$1 per. Preferably you will get it by writing a letter of comment, trading your fanzine, or contributing material (art, anyone?) Electrostencils by Victoria Vayne, Jackie Causgrove and G. Estetner.

SCIENTIFRICTION

ART CREDITS

COVER: Wade Gilbreath
COVER: Taral

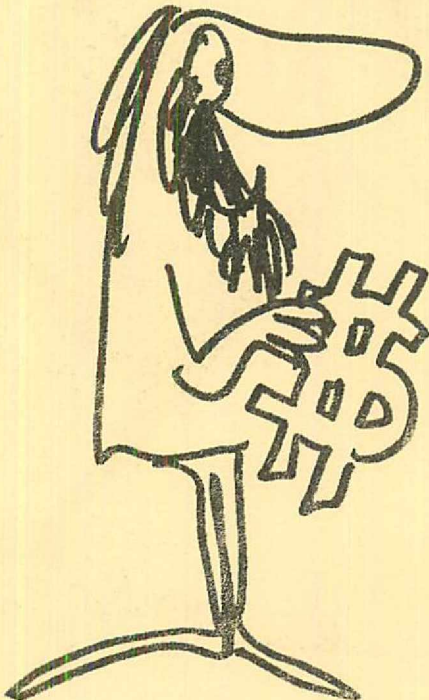
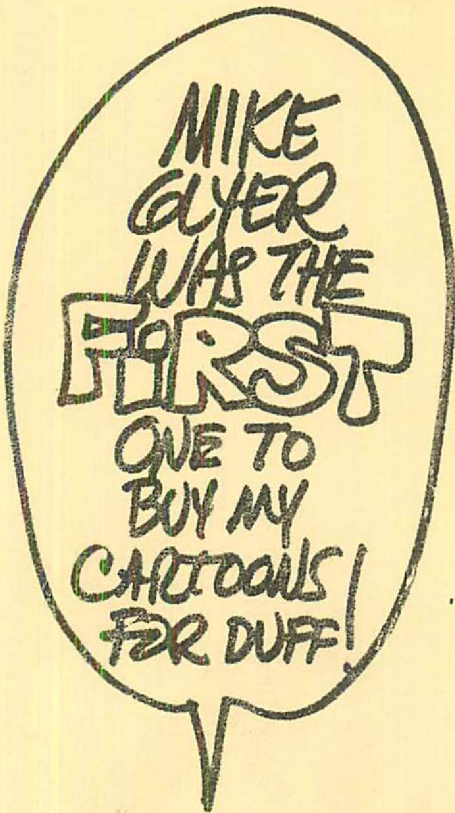
Ray Capella: 2,7,27,46,47
Bill Rotsler: 4,5
Joe Pearson: 3,9,18,23,39,42
Taral: 15,43,48,62
AL: 20,45,52,55
Hank Heath: 24
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Alexis Gilliland: 33,41,63
Wade Gilbreath: 36
Derek Carter: 45
Marc Schirmeister: 50
Simon Agree: 54
Dave Vereschagin: 59
Taral/Stu Gilson: 12,39

FREE ADVERTISING TIME:

FILE 770 is the fannish news-
zine I edit. It's published
about every six weeks -- there
have been seven issues since it
started last January. Subscript-
ions are 4/\$1.50. FILE 770 covers
national fandom in the most com-
plete form of any zine now pub-
lished, and cribs energetically
from overseas zines to keep the
readers abreast of Australia,
the UK and Sweden. FILE 770
acknowledges the wide range of
fannish viewpoints by publish-
ing columnists like Taral and
Victoria Vayne, running thought-
provoking letters, and inviting
various fans to do guest shots.
In Issue #8 two features will
be an update on Swedish fandom
by John-Henri Holmberg, Alexis
Gilliland's views on altering
the worldcon rotation system,
and a number of letters comment-
ing on worldcon controversies.

FILE 770 will trade for clubzines
and newszines; it will give free
rides to the extent that you
send in news. Sample copies are
50%. Why not subscribe now --
the rates go up at the end of
the year.





PREFRICTION

1. Safe for Our Posterity

Now when I was a neo...

In the first place I did everything possible to avoid being considered a neo, which wrecks the structure of this anecdote beyond helping. However, when I got into fandom it was a more tender time, despite Baycon's tear gas, head fans, Vietnam and the New Wave. They still believed in BNFs! The idea of SMOFs was still controversial! And if you can bend your imagination so far, it was actually possible to meet all the big name fans (of America, anyway) at the Worldcon!

Today the only way the worldcon could contain everyone who regards himself as a BNF would be to print tickets and rent out Yankee Stadium. Secret Masters of Fandom post signs on the doors of their room parties warning everyone else away -- except there's no one left outside to read them.

Today excessive use has deprived these traditional terms of meaningfulness. What a pity to see grand fannish archetypes so debased. Shouldn't something be done about it?

I spent many microseconds pondering this problem. At first I thought about creating a licensing examination for Big Name Fans, listing a number of required accomplishments and points of information a fan should have in hand to be a legitimate biggie. Those who could cut it would stay BNFs and the rest of the turkeys would be hustled back to the ranks. There were several problems with this idea.

For one, I haven't been a BNF for years. The other problem: the test isn't needed. There's already a foolproof method for identifying real BNFs. His name is Ro Nagey and if he hasn't bought you a drink this year, pack it in...

As for SMOFs, I lied. (I was the one left out in the corridor reading the sign.) The nearest I ever got to being a SMOF was one night when Elst Weinstein and I were over at Charlie & Dena Brown's home,

and Charlie described how he and Bruce Pelz sold SMOF numbers for a buck apiece at Noreascon. The registry was up to 80-plus. I didn't buy one but Elst did... That accounts for a lot of fanhistory right there. But anyway, neither of these institutions, BNFs or SMOFs, is salvageable by a single genzine editor. I can't really think of a way to upgrade them through a system of licensing and examinations that limits promotions to the most deserving social climbers. Namely, those I approve of. Still -- these aren't the only fan traditions being

eroded by

overeager

people applying

sloppy definitions

There are probably

other areas

slipping into

vagueness

that could be

saved for

future fan

generations

by moving now.

For instance,

one thing we

could preserve

is the fakefan.

BNFs and SMOFs

are shot to hell. When they branch

out to other areas new areas of

fanac will be threatened with

exhaustion. But we'll be ready

to snare the counterfeits this

time, because we'll have The

Fakefans Aptitude Test (FAT). The

portion of the test I have compiled

so far consists of 9 complex

questions. To a regular fan

some of the multiple-choice

answers will be simple -- and

yet others will seem irrelevant.

But to a genuine fakefan, each

will have an unmistakeable cor-

rect response. Since no fakefans

will be reading this zine, go

ahead and check out your own

responses. After any question

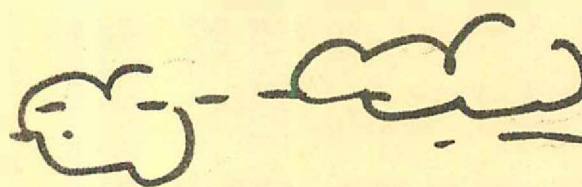
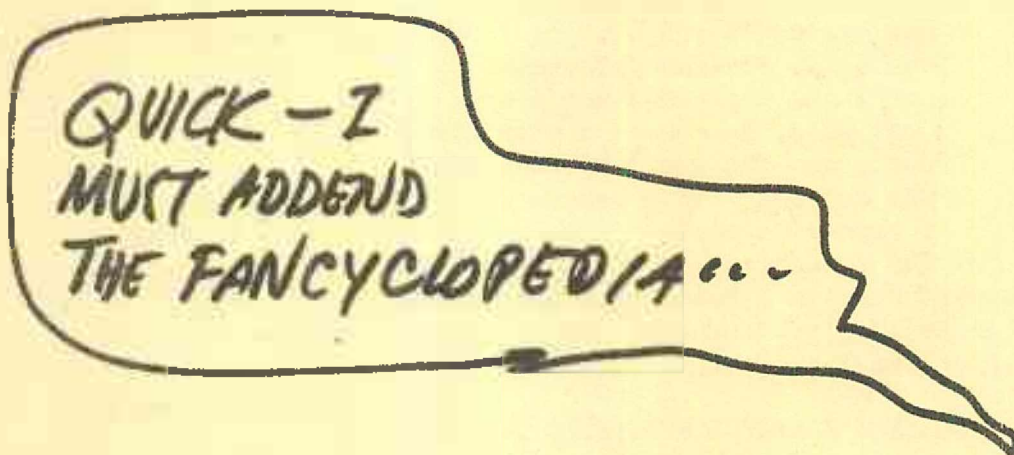
where the answer isn't clear,

notes will be added.

1. WHICH OF THESE POTABLES IS
THE CORRECT ONE TO USE
IN 'SMOOTHING'?

- a) Diet Root Beer and vodka
- b) Tidy Bowl
- c) Sauerkraut juice
- d) Billy Beer
- e) All of the above
- f) None of the above

rePREHENSIBLE



with

2. DINING OUT WITH FANS USUALLY PROVES
AN EMBARRASSING SITUATION FOR THE
ALOOF FAKEFAN. WHICH OF THESE GAFFES
MIGHT BE THE CAUSE? (con't next page)

- a) Crude remarks about whether the meat is well done or burnt
 - b) The fan who renders his hash into separate piles of meat, potato and vegetables before eating it
 - c) Six diners who between them leave a 5% tip
 - d) A group of seven fans who want to go out together to dinner, but one won't eat Chinese food, one hates Italian food, one won't eat meat, one won't eat fast food, one is on a starvation diet, and two are a married couple who consider \$15 a person an inexpensive meal
 - e) The fanartist who plays with jello
- Answer: You are a fakefan if you don't realize that all five are likely to happen simultaneusly.

3. CORRECT ELEVATOR ETIQUETTE INCLUDES:

- a) Tearing down all the signs in reach
- b) In a full car, punching the button for every floor and hanging halfway out the doors to see if there's a party going on
- c) Ringing the emergency bell
- d) Wearing your peanut butter masquerade outfit into a crowded elevator

4. WHICH EDITOR IS MOST LIKELY TO PRODUCE ANOTHER ISSUE OF HIS GENZINE?

- a) Bill Bowers
- b) Francis Towner Laney

5. ACCUSTOMED TO YOUR 8 HOURS SLEEP, YOU COME TO A CON AND PARTY A LITTLE LATE -- GETTING ONLY 6 HOURS. YOU MENTION YOUR TIREDNESS TO A FAN THE FOLLOWING MORNING. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES WILL ELICIT A QUICK RAP IN THE CHOPS FROM YOU?

- a) "I've been up for 235 straight hours and I feel fine."
- b) "What's wrong with the people at this con? The last party closed so early -- 5:30 AM."
- c) "I don't go to bed at cons to go to sleep."

6. AS A FAKEFAN, YOU DREAM OF BEING TRAPPED IN AN ELEVATOR WITH:

- a) Andy Offutt
- b) Andy Porter
- c) Andi Schechter
- d) Amos n Andy

7. SEPA, AN APA ORIENTED TOWARDS SOUTHERN FANDOM, HAS A RULE LIMITING THE NUMBER OF NON-SOUTHERN MEMBERS. LASFAPA, A LOS ANGELES MONTHLY APA, LOGICALLY HAS A FOUNDER WHO LIMITS:

- a) The number of out-of-LA fans
- b) The number of in-LA fans
- c) The number of staples driven through the center of Matthew Tepper's copy

Believe it or don't, founder HJN Andruschak sends spec copies to out-of-town-ers, while refusing them to locals...

8. YOU ARE ACCIDENTALLY INVITED TO SNIFF THE BONG AT A FAMOUS PROZINE EDITOR'S 'PARTY'. YOU ARE TOLD TO BRING SOMETHING ALONG. YOU BRING:

- a) Bill Bridget
- b) oregano
- c) seeds 'n stems
- d) wiltone

9. AS A FAKEFAN, YOU ARE EARNESTLY SEEKING TO ACHIEVE:

- a) GAFIA
- b) MAFIA

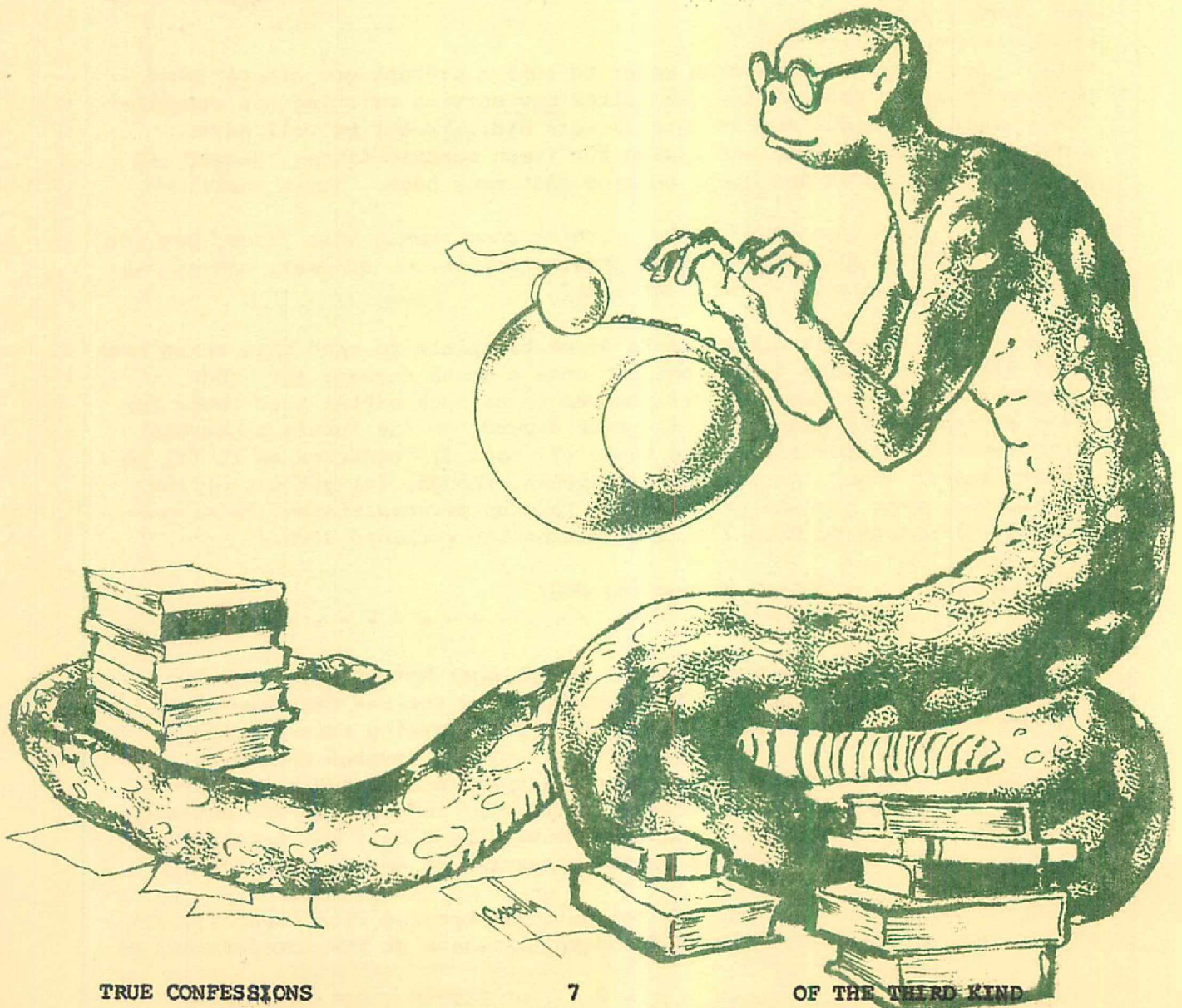
2. Let Us Return To Yesteryear

Somewhere around the turn of the century when the last issue of this fanzine came out it would have been unthinkable to me that I could get so wrapped up in other fan projects that despite the largest flood of LoCs I ever got on an issue of my genzine the next issue would appear four months overdue. Some self-images die hard. For example, me sit on topical material for so long that it becomes outdated? yep... Lou Stathis and Jon Gustafson both offered first rate speculations about the field in their columns, and

wound up historians instead of Cassandras. (Bova did leave ANALOG; Pierce quit GALAXY.) Slightly less important to you, but quite relevant to this fnz, book rate mail has jumped to 48¢ for the first pound. The day has finally arrived when they're going to try and charge as much to mail a copy of this thing as it cost to publish. Most of you will, therefore, have it handed to you at Iggy. How the next one will be distributed is a question to be dealt with later.

But more than anything else Westercon and FILE 770 permitted the April issue of STFR to appear in August. Westercon's record-breaking attendance (1984) solved a lot of problems, while FILE 770 has built up a 120-person subscriber list. That included a drop from 115 to 90 after issue 5, when 25 subs lapsed, and a jump back to the current level with resubs and newcomers.

Westercon. It went fabulously from my point of view -- ie, we didn't lose any money. As cochairman of the convention I found that especially comforting, having contemplated the scenario where membership would top off at 1400, thousands of dollars would be lost and for years thereafter people would dissect the budgeting errors of the most notoriously incompetent Westercon committee in the history of the universe (a title several of our contemporaries hovered around hoping to bestow).



SPECIAL INTERVIEW SECTION: Q&A WITH MIKE GLYER, EDITOR OF STFR

STFR: Mr. Glycer, could you explain how this became the all fanhistory issue of Scientifriction when there isn't a single article about the history of fandom in it?

GLYER: I'm glad you asked me that question (you bad news turkey). All I really wish people would do is make believe they got this zine last April or so. It's not implausible. Unlikely, yes, but considering that in one column calendars for 1978 are reviewed, and Hugo nominees predicted, and in another column the future of Bova and Pierce as editors of their respective magazines was discussed, and that in the letter column there is a hot exchange about Phil Foglio winning the Hugo in 1977, it shouldn't be hard for real timebinders to handle.

STFR: Would you know a timebinder if you saw one?

GLYER: Not even if it ran up and bit me.

STFR: Why don't you just throw away the pages with that out-of-date stuff and start fresh?

GLYER: Ah, I can see you plan never to edit a pretentious mimeographed genzine -- smart man! First, an editor may survive printing his contributors' material eight months late (Bowers did...), but he will never survive throwing it away and asking for fresh contributions. Second, if you think it's quick and cheap to redo that many pages, guess again.

STFR: Does this mean your other fannish commitments have forced you into the same pattern followed by other genzine editors -- at best, annual publication, or at worst, folding the zine?

GLYER: Since the post office wants 48 cents apiece to send this thing book rate, like I was going to put one out once a month anyway, eh? The rewards for doing a newszine well happen to be much better than those for doing an infrequent genzine well. Much depends on the future management of my time. The alternatives are these (1) fold (2) continue as is (3) go offset, saving time, increasing the expense, though, (4) get out of the pretentious mimeo genzine business and take up personalzining (5) transferring columnists to FILE 770, and cutting the workload down.

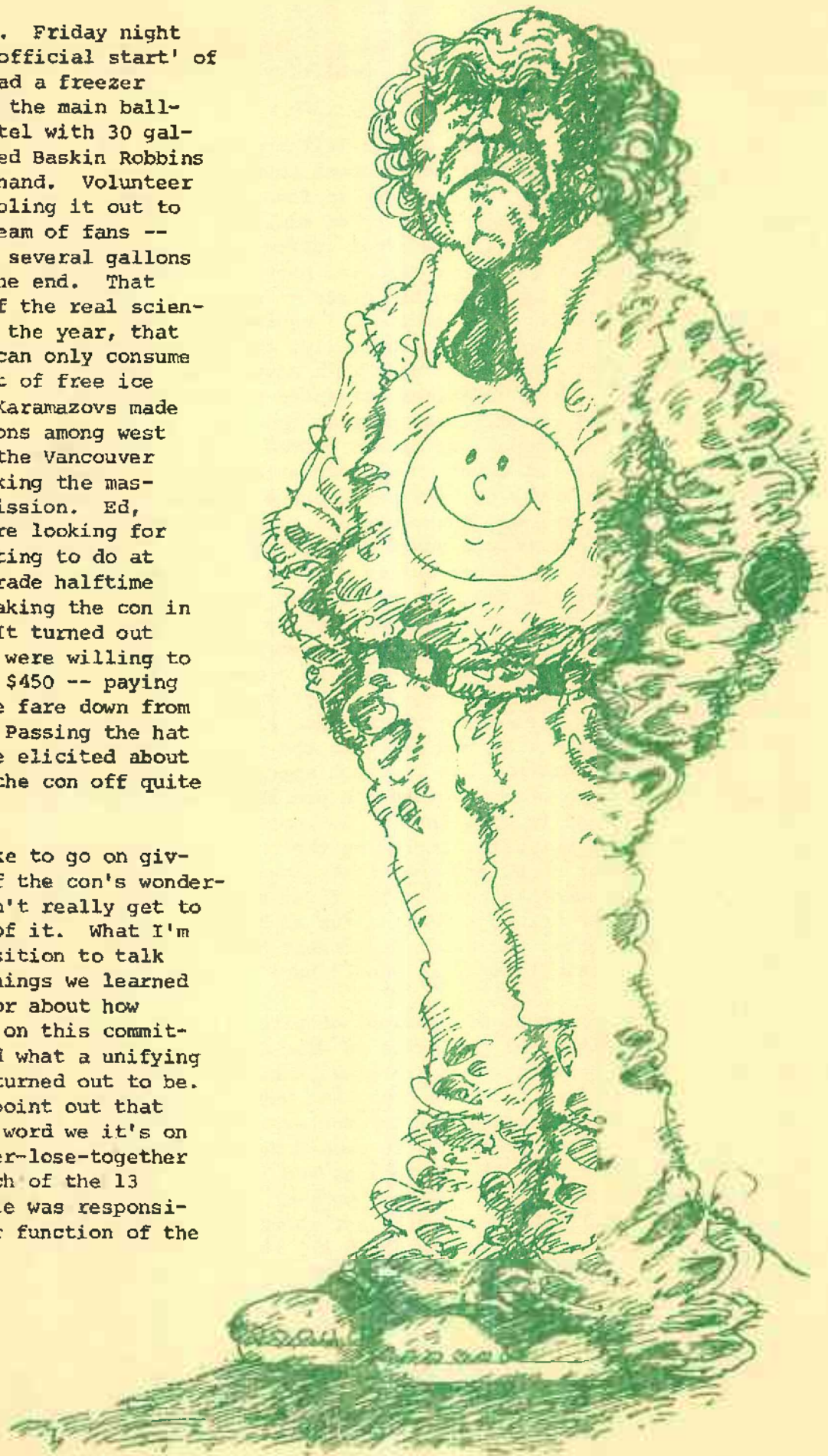
STFR: Wouldn't you rather be reading DNQ?

In essence, though, Westercon 31 was exceptional not only in size but in the fannish sense. Some of that seems due to the bad experiences LA congoers have had at the hands of non-fan, profitmaking cons around here, some run by pirates like Doug Wright, others devoted wholly to huckstering. There are several thousand people in town aware of conventions but a very small percentage of the cons they attend are actually run by fans ("as we know them"). As a result about half the letters we got after the con were comments on the pleasures of an easygoing con.

Two other items that made the con gel were the opening "ice cream social" and the appearance of The Flying Karamazov Brothers at the intermission of

the Masquerade. Friday night prior to the 'official start' of Westercon we had a freezer unit set up in the main ballroom of the hotel with 30 gallons of assorted Baskin Robbins ice creams on hand. Volunteer dippers kept doling it out to an endless stream of fans -- yet there were several gallons left over at the end. That could be one of the real scientific finds of the year, that con attendees can only consume a finite amount of free ice cream... The Karamazovs made their reputations among west coast fans at the Vancouver Westercon, working the masquerade intermission. Ed, Craig and I were looking for something exciting to do at the '78 masquerade halftime -- without breaking the con in the process. It turned out the Karamazovs were willing to do the con for \$450 -- paying their own plane fare down from the Bay Area. Passing the hat in the audience elicited about \$360, letting the con off quite lightly.

Much as I'd like to go on giving examples of the con's wonderfulness, I didn't really get to see very much of it. What I'm really in a position to talk about is the things we learned the hard way, or about how hard everybody on this committee worked, and what a unifying experience it turned out to be. I should also point out that when I use the word we it's on the win-together-lose-together principle. Each of the 13 committee people was responsible for a major function of the



convention -- or in the case of Bill Welden, responsible for many things, computer work, programming the con, some of the publicity, and the design of the daily pocket programs.

Operational problems and planning errors left considerable food for thought. Oddly, so many of the "crises" I heard about involved friends. In a 1900 member convention one assumes that the odds are in favor of problems happening to strangers. One waits for hotel security to massacre somebody wearing a prop sword, or to jail a neofan out of his room after curfew. What actually happens is the maid service rips down all of Gary Farber's party announcements, and hotel security closes down Curt Stubbs' Westercon bid party -- and being such close friends Curt and Gary are almost willing to disbelieve I engineered these atrocities, provided I promise never to do it again... Ironically, two problem areas evolved despite our damndest efforts to eliminate them with advance planning. (1) Uniformed guards at the dealer's room sometimes attempted to physically enforce the entrance and exit rules. If half our mail was praise, the other half was criticism of the guards. The rent-a-cop company we picked proved to be a balls-up group whose employees were quite casual about showing up at all, much less sober. Craig and I were down on the con level one morning about 4 because the guard on duty outside the huckster/art show area was hours overdue to be relieved. Her replacement came in, loaded. Another time a guard was switched away from public areas after a complaint. What's hard to figure out is what we could have done to avoid this, if anything. This was not the cheapest bid we got (nor the most expensive). Craig had checked out their references; nobody's going to give you bad references, but to have any they had to perform competently someplace -- what's more these were references to work at exhibitions, as near to a con as one can get for comparison. And Craig had specified to the supervisor that guards must get their breaks, meals, and relief. The other area where our advance planning was foiled was the hotel's acceptance of fan parties. We had met with the heads of sales and security to prepare them for a Westercon. Our contract specified that Craig be contacted before security acted on non-emergency con problems ("Noise is a threat to sleep, not to life," Craig kept telling them.) So what else should happen than that every department head we had met with, including the ones who promised to be in the hotel throughout the con, was gone, and the night manager was backing his security head's closure of parties around the hotel. The first night was pretty well blown, though Craig hammered away at the night manager for an hour to get a compromise and salvage what we could. Thereafter the sales department heads were in the hotel, and no other parties were hassled. Only it should have been that way from the start.

Like I said, there were areas of problems despite planning, and then there were the real mistakes. Winner of the prize as Most Expensive Error was the decision for the committee to build its own art show hangings. Well, that wouldn't have been such a bad idea if it had been done that way. Originally we took into account (1) the expense of materials (2) the expenses of the art show, and (3) the predicted income from the art show. It seemed Westercon could come out of the art show with a newly built set of hangings and its profits in exchange for the expense of materials and hiring guards. None of us had anything but admiration for the Trimble's excellent record with art shows. But much of the purpose for our doing the con was to get experience in all its parts. The way it turned out by the time anybody was willing to take seriously the need to start work other chores were competing for that time. Craig arranged a deal to have the hangings built for \$150 and the cost of materials, leaving us to attach the poles and fittings. That was a satisfactory way to get rid of the problem, and if any of us mental giants had remembered beforehand to get the material fireproofed it might not have cost \$600 to do that, doubling the cost and wiping out any advantage in building them at all. Nevertheless, for any future group that wants to undertake buying

tripod stands to attach to the support poles (the final product had to be leaned against the walls of the art show room for support; what ignomy) these hangings and two glass display cases are available.

So much for the most expensive of our mistakes. The most time consuming error was having anything to do with Shadowcon. At the start we thought this was just another little interest group get-together: we're running a big con, we're supposed to help these people do their thing. The con, represented to us as a small affair, turned out to be in the mind of its operator Kathy Resch a real con with its own tiny film program, publications, special guests, headaches, delusions of grandeur, tail wagging the dog and cretinism. If Shadowcon had not been using Sylvia Stevens for its liaison we would happily have kicked it out months beforehand. On its behalf one might point out that a handful of people trekked out from the East Coast to participate. But all we intended to do was give this group one of the conference rooms at the disposal of Westercon (others used for D&D, author brunches, video tape program) and leave everything else up to them. Nothing in life is that simple. Before the con there was endless correspondence -- at one point we heard Shadowcon was going to charge \$5 membership. We wondered how that was going to work -- a condition of their having the room was that every member of Westercon had the right of free entry. Then at the con I got to witness this incredible conversation between Kathy Resch and Craig Miller(*italics*):
How soon can we get into our function room? *Whenever the hotel staff has finished setting it up.* Do you have a key to the room? *Yes.* Can we have it? *No.* Why not? *It's the master key to the hotel.* Why can't we have it? *We had to pay a large deposit on it. It's the only one we've got.* Can't you make a duplicate? *No.* Why? *Watch my mouth move: N - O!*

On top of that the big shots of Shadowcon shafted and ignored Sylvia who had done all the work for them setting it up. Then when the hotel bill finally came, what should be included but the costs for Shadowcon's projector rental? If any of you are contacted by Miss Resch in the future, I recommend you take these facts under consideration.

The other thing I recommend, in retrospect, is getting your con a liability insurance policy. That is if you can find an insurance agent who will pull his head out his wazoo long enough to get you a quote. Larry Rothstein contacted several agents for this purpose and they couldn't be bothered. We wound up without a policy. Not that we needed it. But we came so close... As Marjii Ellers crossed the masquerade ramp she saw a hand extended and assumed it was to help her off the stage; she had taken off her glasses. Only there weren't any steps there. She grabbed for a stage light pole to break her fall, and had not a number of fans formed a quick Iwo Jima pole-raising act it might have annihilated whoever was sitting where it fell. And Sunday night a fan seated against the wall listening to Poul Anderson's GoH speech brushed a wall socket with his spiral notebook. A colorful shower of sparks resulted, because protruding from the socket was one detached prong from the plug of an extension cord. Because they escaped serious notice, those moments were forgotten by all except the concom...

Fans tend to pursue goals defined by attitudes that existed when they entered fandom, even if those attitudes have completely changed a few years later. So my theory goes. And I place myself in the witness stand. Within this past decade prudent concommittees combined with unexpectedly high levels of at-the-door memberships produced profits for a lot of conventions. In the mid-70s there was debate about what should be done with that money, and general contempt for individuals who ran cons as a business. And while the committee had done the work, the writers had attracted the "customers" and the fans themselves had actually paid the money.

BUT FIRST WE INTERRUPT THIS EDITORIAL FOR AN IMPORTANT --

MARC SCHIRMEISTER PORTFOLIO

Being a fanartist may be as taxing and full of ironies as any other role in fandom. The fanartist is dependent on others for all his exposure; all the art that gets sent out to fanzines tends to dribble into print assuming it ever escapes the dread "illo file". Or the artist can go chugging along turning out excellent work for a small, transitory audience without the recognition such talent has earned.

The only cure for this over the long run is for the artists to take control of their own distribution. Special fan fund projects like QUINTESSENTIAL COVERS FOR FRED HASSELL (a collection of Apa Q cover art) particularly bridge the gap between a limited-distribution apa and the full community of art-loving fans.

And then, every once in awhile, a Pretentious Mimeographed Genzine Editor will get off his duff and circulate a favorite artist's work. Unfortunately not as often now as when LOCUS produced an annual art supplement, GRANFALLOON, ENERGUMEN and OUTWORLDS were especially art-conscious.

Marc Schirmeister has been a fanartist for quite a few years now -- beginning in the days of RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY, later joining LASFS and starting a long run as star cover artist for Apa L. Schirm has grown into a quick-draw duelist in cartoonist wars. He has sold cartoons to ISAAC ASIMOV'S SF MAGAZINE, and been honored for it with a Fanquet. This portfolio largely consists of apa covers, but begins with an exception: Schirm's rendering of Hanville Svetz in the jaws of Leviathan, which I requested for a proposed series of illos based on Niven stories, and approved by Niven.





BILLY JACK vs.

THE THING

FROM ANOTHER
WORLD!

"DISGUSTINGLY BIZARRE"
....Times

★ STARRING
JAMES ARNESS
RON VAN CLIEF
GLORIA JEAN
AND
CHARLES
BRONSON
AS THE HORSE.

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED
BY

JERRY WARREN

A P.R.C. PICTURE

SMASH SECOND
FEATURE

"THE BROOKLYN
GORILLA MEETS
THE EAST SIDE KIDS"



KEEP WATCHING
THE **SKY!**
NO.2.

ANNUY DOOTENUT

31 SCHMITT-76



SCHIRM 77.

TONIGHT: ANNUAL MARTIAN WAGNER FEST. OY VAY! ~~~~~



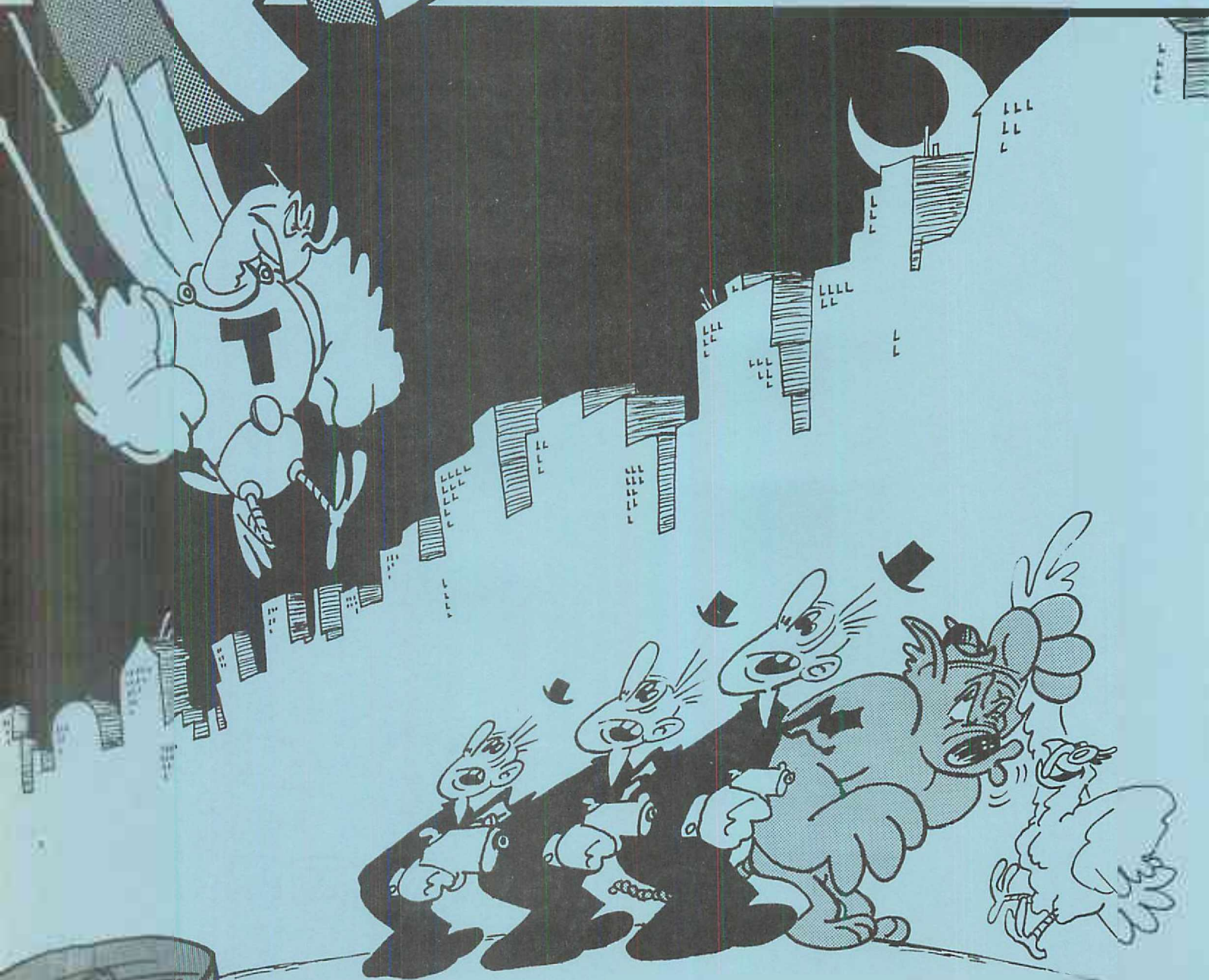
HA! THIS IS A
BOX CANYON. WE'VE
GOT THE FOOL BEAST
TRAPPED!

I WOULDN'T
COUNT ON IT.

APRIL

NO.
602

PHUNNIES



IN THIS ISSUE:

**'TOMIC TURKEY
VS.**

BOSS KIZZEN KZIN

When Ed and I bid for the Westercon we were influenced by this debate and decided that any profits would be dealt away by a vote of business meeting attendees. This was done, but nowadays perhaps the question is much less important to fans. Nobody resented the salting away of Discon monies, or has raised a stink about any other worldcon. A few small conventions publically disburse their profits; others are conducted like closed companies. It is no longer possible to detect any fervor about the issue. See, Ed, Craig had a point after all... Not only did the business meeting have a hand in spending the surplus, it was built into this Westercon's exceptionally large film program, and into the program of distributing cases of soft drinks to hosts of open parties. (For four days I was the best customer the liquor department at Vons ever had.) And any eon now we're going to issue the final PR.



3. A Translation Manual For Aspiring Screenwriters

Maybe in five years we'll all be sitting around the tv at the end of an hour and watching their names roll by on the credits. But right now around LASFS what we have are several fans who register ideas, produce story treatments, and hope someday to make the connection with a paycheck. It's a jungle out there, you know. In fact one evening before the LASFS meeting Buzz Dixon and I were listening to Stan Burns and Don Ayres talk about trying to sell a science fiction film treatment to a filmmaker Don knew. The four of us came up with a list of brushoff phrases that have been used on us and our friends -- and the following *true meanings*.

THEY SAY	THEY MEAN
"See us when the movie comes out."	"Up yours, baby."
"This is not the kind of sf I'm looking for."	"I stopped reading sf 5 years ago because this was the only kind they published."
"We'll get back to you -- "	"-- when you're as big as Hitchcock."
"We're trying to stay away from this kind of sf."	"We're trying to stay away from all kinds of sf."
"We like the script but we want a few minor changes..."	"We like your title -- Here's \$200. We've hired David Gerrold to write it."
"It's a cute idea, but..."	"...so was DAHLGREN."

4. Over The Hill At 34

Frank Robinson jacked a home run into the bleacher seats. Wally Moon leaned up against the white and blue pennant draped over the leftfield wall and watched the ball disappear in a jungle of outstretched arms. Moon was only a little taller than the lettering on the pennant: LOS ANGELES DODGERS 1959 WORLD CHAMPIONS. Maybe in that yesteryear it had been the other way around, with Robinson backed into the cheap mesh screen at the Coliseum called the Chinese Wall after Wally had launched a Moon Shot into the disused football field.

Baseball is not a game of numbers, but ironies. Oldtimer's Day celebrates those ironies by having the game's greatest former players come out and display skills that have withered to Little League standards. So universally understood a sport as baseball, with its emphasis on individuals, has often been used as a metaphor for life and death -- I won't carry on that line too far. What Oldtimers Day really supplies is tradition -- especially for fans too young to have seen the faces that belong to the names in record books. The tradition is strong enough to make you forget how much baseball has changed in 20 years.

Can you measure out your days in ~~office spaces~~ disappearing ballparks -- Crosley Field, with Ron Fairly running up the slope in right field to shag a fly. The tough neighborhood around Forbes Field. LA's Coliseum filled with record World Series crowds of 90,000+ -- and 50,000 of them needed a radio to follow the game.

Baseball fans in LA all bring their radios to the park, as if they have to be reassured by the media that it's really happening: anyway that's the cliché penned by every New York writer who ever escaped New York in April on the excuse of trying

to explain Southern California. On Oldtimers Day that was extended to absurdity. The player introductions were preceded by recorded excerpts from Vin Scully's call of the 1959 National League playoff. 48,000 people stared at a black loudspeaker in center field and applauded 20-year-old news. Scully is baseball in LA. It was bitter news this day that he was off doing a golf tournament for CBS. More ironic than that: Don Drysdale could be heard in the park because he'd been required to broadcast an Angel doubleheader from Detroit rather than attend the local festivity. The chores were left to Doggett and Porter, Scully's seconds, and Porter couldn't seem to aim his mouth at the microphone: "His record of 3,066 mumble mumble never be equalled mumble..."

The game's theme contrasted the Dodger championship team of 1959 with the All-Star team of the same year. It was a day for the last to come first and the first last. Remember Chuck Churn? On a squad of two dozen there was plenty of room for obscurity even if he did pitch in some important wins. It was way down the line they got to the big names. Musial got a tremendous hand. Mays' introduction was interrupted by a standing ovation. Snider, the Duke of Flatbush, had to follow Mays' ovation: his hunched shoulders made him look small, but he towered over Mays when they stood together. Alston's applause was peppered with boos -- little he cared with Mays busy gesturing at Alston's reduced waistline. The appearance of Koufax required another standing salute; likewise the wheeling of Campanella into the on-deck circle. Unexpectedly, Campy waved back this year. Prevented from playing in LA by a crippling auto accident, Campanella came west in 1959 for an exhibition/benefit that drew 93,103 and turned away 15,000 more. Koufax pitched the night exhibition against the Yankees -- because the Dodgers had played a regular game the same afternoon and could only spare an unproven youngster for the chore...

Willie Mays has never been applauded more loudly by Dodger fans as since he retired. But coming to the plate he was upstaged by the outfielders. Duke Snider waved Don Demeter in from right field as he walked towards the bullpen -- didn't he think Mays could poke the ball out of the infield? Far from it. With leftfielder Moon standing at the bullpen gate and Demeter in center, Snider backed up against the left field wall at the 370 mark, reached up, and patted the top of the wall as if he'd need a grip to climb after the ball. There was a crack of the bat. Snider didn't move -- he opened his glove three feet short of the wall and Mays was out.

Mays was one of few exceptions to the oldtimer's lack of clout. However, the outfielder's patrolled their usual beats near the warning track and oldtimer strokes that couldn't have beat a 12-year-old in Pitch/Hit/Run dropped in for singles while Norm Larker's line shot to right was routinely fielded by Musial.

The wimpiest play of the day came with runners on base when a pop fly twenty feet back of second base was caught for an out -- yet Duke Snider waddled back to the second base bag, tagged up and beat the throw to third.

Ex-Red Sox shortstop Frank Malzone could still fire the ball to first, and Maury Wills looked in place next to Jim Gilliam. Once Vada Pinson stole second in his Seattle Mariner's coach's uniform, Wills couldn't allow himself to be shown up at home. Of all things he bunted for a base hit. That's one hell of a way to embarrass 40-year-old jocks. Thereafter it was child's play to steal second.

But that's what the Oldtimers Game is about. It's where a fellow who retired from ball before half his audience was born can get away with stunts he never dared try on the best day he ever played.

(The Real Incomplete) WHOLE FANZINE CATALOG by Brian Earl Brown. To get reviewed
you, obviously, have to send BEB your zine

One of the big problems with fanzine review columns is the very ephemeral nature of fanzines. I'm sitting here in January writing reviews of fanzines that were mostly produced in December, hoping that this column will be printed by June, by which time some editors will have further issues out, some will have moved, some may have gaffed and others may not have copies left of the issue reviewed. A good fanzine column, like any sort of news column, needs to appear often and with as little delay between time of composition and time of appearance. Lacking that, the reviewer should, perhaps, stick to zines of assured in-print nature or fan editors who are not likely to disappear in the foreseeable future

SIMULACRUM 7. Editor: Victoria Wayne PO BOX 156, Stn. D, Toronto ONT M6P 3J8 CAN. Available for \$2.50, substantial locs, selected trades, contributions or editor's whim. 89 pages, all mimeo reproduction.

The first thing that strikes one about SIMULACRUM is the sheer attractiveness of it. The type is clear and uniformly printed, typos are rare, layout is neat and clean, large amounts of art is scattered throughout, none of it bad. Columns and letters are neatly boxed. Color printing is discreetly but effectively used. The goldenrod paper makes the red ink fairly leap off the page, though it glares a bit with black ink and destroys Victoria's two uses of blue ink. SIMULACRUM is the ALGOL of mimeo fanzines. In terms of technical proficiency there is no better mimeo zine being published. It is a zine I can heartily recommend to all mimeograph salesmen as an example of what their machines are capable of doing.

So overwhelming is the appearance of SIMULACRUM that it is hard to remember that it does have contents. This is something of a transitional issue, as Victoria redefines her goals and aspirations of fan publishing. She has done away with a complicated system of genzines and letterzines, abandoned a pointless decision to change the zine's title and begun a new numbering system starting with her first fanzine and not just the first issue of SIM. This issue, thus, contains a long personal column by Victoria describing her fannish beginnings and how it led up to this issue, numerous letters on her past fanzines and a few articles by John Alderson, Jodie Offutt, Darrell Schweitzer, Taral Wayne MacDonald and Janet Small.

The letters I found generally dull and terribly serious. They cover religion, politics, sexism, law and Freudianism among other things. The articles are much more interesting. Janet Small writes a "Dear John" letter to her office mimeo (spurning it for one of her own.) Darrell Schweitzer describes "Disgusting Toys for Disgusting Tykes" (with lovely illos by Bruce Townley). Jodie Offutt lectures to feminists while Taral assassinates ALVEGA in his fanzine review column. John Alderson writes movingly of the Australian custom of "mates" and rather irrationally on myth, Freud and why there must have been a garden of Eden exactly as described in the Bible. But the best writing in this issue is Victoria's "NON-SEQUITUR." Victoria has great talent for personal writing of this sort, neither affected, pretentious, coy or dishonest. She writes quietly and with great narrative control.

FANZINE REVIEWS:
BRIAN EARL BROWN



\$2.50 is a lot to pay for a fanzine, though most *Sword & Sorcery* fanzines currently run \$3-\$4. This is one fanzine that is worth it. Faneditors can admire the great care of its production and aspire to do as well. Fanwriters are sure to find something in the vast diversity of material that will set their blood afire and inspire great locs. **RECOMMENDED**

RAFFLES. Editors: Larry Carmody and Stu Shiffman. Available for the usual or one dollar. Trade copies (one each) should be sent to Stu Shiffman (880 W. 181st St., New York NY 10033) and Larry Carmody (118 Lincoln Ave., Mineola NY 11501). Contributions and locs should be sent to Stu. 42 pages all mimeo.

When Jerry Kaufman decided to move to Seattle it became rather difficult for he and

Suzle Tompkins to continue to coedit THE SPANISH INQUISITION so they folded the magazine, leaving New York without a regular fannish fanzine. Enter Stu and Larry to fill the gap.

And fill it they have.

Larry Carmody explains the convoluted route they took to come up with their title in his editorial. Hank Davis examines schemes to move his SF collection from New York to Kentucky by Greyhound, which founders on the problem of getting a cat into a bus that refuses to carry pets. As if cats were mere pets and not people!

Brian Burley's "View From The Bheer Barrel" is reprinted from Joyce Katz' POTLATCH (Oct. '71), which explains why hotels always come with elevators and revolving doors. Larry Carmody returns with his account of the defeat of the Cvetko Kid in a Norwood, Ohio bowling alley. (Bowling is fannish?) Meanwhile Arnie Katz is having dreams of Harry Warner selling "101 Great Moments in Fandom" on tv. Not that this will stop the infamous "March of Slime", a radio drama (presented on tape) at the 1955 East-con and reprinted here. Pushing a broom Stu enters stage left and sweeps up. Actually, he explains his love affair with hand-stenciled art. There are 35 hand-stencilled drawings in this issue and only three electrostenciled ones. Stu drew most of them, with a few by Ross Chamberlain. Stu is not merely a fast-developing fanartist, but one of the masters of hand-stencilling. Some of the art, such as the cover or the editorial cartoon, are among the best pieces I've seen him do. Like Stu, I love hand-stencilled art. There is a texture to it that is unmatched by conventional means of drawing. And having worked with stencils I can vouch for how hard it is to do.

But while saying this, I must point out that Stu is not "art director" of RAFFLES but the full and equal coeditor of it with Larry. Both agree on the art to be used, the articles, and every other aspect of the zine. To my mind RAFFLES is THE fannish fanzine. RECOMMENDED

JANUS 10. Editors: Jeanne Gomoll and Janice Bogstad. C/O SF³ PO BOX 1624, Madison WI 53701. Available for one dollar or the usual. 36 pages reduced print offset.

BSFAN 8. Editor: Mike Kurman 6633A Glenbarr Ct., Baltimore MD 21234. Available for loc, trade or 25¢. 32 pages mimeo.

RUNE 50. Editor: David Emerson PO BOX 2128 Loop Station, Minneapolis MN 55402 Available for 50¢ or two dollars per year, or the usual.

Three clubzines. People do not get together to publish fanzines. People get together to socialize, maybe talk about SF, but not to publish fanzines. Later someone gets the idea "Hey, let's put out a fanzine!" (copyright Mickey Rooney 1943 BC) and the search begins for a sucker to do the donkey labor. The quality of a clubzine depends upon the enthusiasm of the editor and the cooperation he or she gets from the club.

Take JANUS. Editors Gomoll and Bogstad invest considerable energy into this zine. This is a large quarterly fanzine (the reduced type only makes it look thinner than it is). Jeanne provides merely half the art in this issue and she is quite good, too. Janice's editorial is devoted to a lengthy look at fandom, originally presented at a three day Symposium on Post-Industrial Culture held at the University of Wisconsin (Milwaukee). They've collected articles from clubmembers Diane Martin and Richard S. Russell (movie reviews), and a review of Jack London's THE IRON HEEL by Angus Taylor, and a discussion of cloning by Ctein with comments by George Fergus.

There is an interesting page called "The Funnies" which presents a number of spot illos grouped together to fill one page, an interesting and well-handled way to present art as something more than fillos. There are a healthy number of letters (and not reduced to submicroscopic this time).

There is a feeling of vitality and involvement to this publication. Previous issues have run to 50 pages of the same reduced type with scads of material from both club members and outsiders. JANUS is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

RUNE was once like JANUS: big issues, regular publication, vitality, etc. then its editor decided to go on the road. In his editorial, new editor David Emerson talks about the difference there will be between his Rune and when Fred Haskell directed it. "I remember so many times going up to his apartment and finding him typing stencils, stereo blaring, coffee brewing, and often an artist or two scribbling illos. It seemed during some periods that RUNE was all he ever did besides eat and sleep. Probably was." But David hasn't the time to devote to RUNE or the interest in devoting ALL of his time to Rune. So Rune returns to what it once was -- not the big time genzine Fred Haskell turned it into, but a modest-sized-clubzine, with the emphasis on the club. Still #50 is not a bad issue. Dave Wixon reviews the OPHIUCHI HOTLINE. Jackie Causgrove reports on Minicon 12, as does Mike Blake. There are still some of the handstencilled illos by Ken Fletcher and the lettercol continues to be interesting. ((EDITORIAL THROAT-CLEARING: As of RUNE 51 Lee Pelton & Carol Kennedy became editors -- address 1204 Harmon Pl. #10, Minneapolis MN 55403. Except for the specific contents, this review could speak accurately for their version of the zine.))

BSPAN is pretty typical of clubzines. I didn't know it existed until I saw a copy of it in the huckster room at Confusion pi. It sports a 3-color front and back cover. The front is by Steve Stiles. Inside is a conreport of that alternative to SunCon -- the Milford/Clarion reunion, written by Steve Brown. Sylvia Starshine offers advice to the beginning collector. Steve Stiles takes typer in hand to explain why he no longer likes snakes, a phobia that proves so strong that he needs Judy Kurman's help to conclude. Judy also reviews a handful of fanzines, as befits a good clubzine. There is a pocket guide to babysitting, a STAR WARS filksing and six pages of letters.

The writing is light throughout, pleasant and humorous. In fact this issue is lacking in that usual bane of clubzines -- the wretched articles published because there was nothing else available. And the Steve Stiles art is a distinct plus. For 25¢ how can you go wrong?

TWLL DUU#8 (8 pages) & #9 (4 pages). Editor: Dave Langford 22 Northumberland Ave., Reading, Berks. RG2 7PW United Kingdom. Mimeo. Available for the usual.

What to say about TWLL DUU? There are some fanzines that look like they were put together by crazy people, and there are fanzine put together by people trying to act crazy, then there are fanzines put together by people who must be crazy. TWLL DUU falls into this last category. It's sort of an exercise in creative slander and gonzo journalism. #8 is cast as a surrealistic play in 12 acts, including a play within a play "Waiting for Klingon" by Gene Roddenbeckett. The issue is composed of snippets of conversation both real and fictive, and sometimes I don't know which is which. One is tempted to quote from TWLL DUU as a means of explaining it: "ROB HOLDSTOCK: (inscribing a copy of his latest hack novel for the despicable and toadying Langford): 'To Dave -- any friend of Rob Holdstock's deserves this' signed Chris P. Carl-- How the hell do you spell it?" Instead, take my word for it, this is the best humorous writing I've seen this year.



LOU STATHIS' URBAN BLITZ

Contrary to what most of you might think, I didn't go through that pathetic wrenching-of-hair routine last time in order to solicit your sympathy. Commiseration is nice, but frankly I wrote all that heartwarming stuff down for two entirely separate reasons. First, there was all that stuff I had to get off my chest, and second I wanted to clue you guys in on how the sf magazines really work (or at least the two specific ones that I was intimately acquainted with). Science fiction publishing, in the magazines at least, is not big time stuff, and I was amazed at how often people thought Ultimate Publications was a huge multi-national combine with offices in a glass-walled skyscraper and a huge staff of employees. Not quite, friends. Sol runs the thing out of his house (his garage is the Ultimate warehouse) and Ted from a heaped-over table in his living room. Ted is also the only one who gets paid for what he does, and it's a laughably low sum at that. Sol skims off whatever profits there are, and puts enough back in to keep the two magazines barely afloat. This isn't publishing on a shoestring, gang, it's fucking slavery and prayer.

Up until I began working for Ultimate, I like everyone else blamed Ted for everything that was wrong with AMAZING and FANTASTIC. I learned quickly that though Ted wasn't totally blameless (he does tend towards laziness and irresponsibility), Sol's presence either directly or indirectly was the reason for most everything I disliked about them. I really don't know from what secret resource Ted had been drawing to enable him to withstand Sol's garbage for this long, and I certainly admire his persistent loyalty to the magazines and wonder what part he has sacrificed in exchange. Sol has this incredible talent for making you feel completely frustrated, disheartened, infuriated and guilt-ridden, all in the space of one five-minute phone call. If you live nearby then chances are good that those calls will come more than once a day, because Sol loves to pick up the phone and harangue someone (anyone) with whatever happens to be bothering him at the moment. Mike Hinge's method of getting Sol off the phone was to tell him that he was eating, while I had some success with saying I was using the bathroom. I think the man only has respect for basic bodily functions.

I think the magazines flourished during the years of 1970-1973 when Ted really cared about what he was doing, fighting hard for changes and putting a great deal of thought and energy into the product. It was then that the magazines began to draw some of the up-and-coming talent that was in New York, like Hinge, Jones and Kaluta on the interiors and the covers (instead of the shlock stuff Sol was picking up for peanuts from European publishers). Ted also managed to convince Sol to cut the reprints back at first to one per issue, and later (early '72) to none at all. This left more room for fiction by some of the best writers in the field (Philip Dick, Ursula LeGuin and Robert Silverberg) and features that were much more interesting than anything else anyone was publishing (Dick Lupoff's book review, Alex Panshin's column in FANTASTIC and Greg Benford's science column in AMAZING).

It was obvious that the editor really cared about what he was doing, thought he had a pretty good product and was trying despite crippling handicaps to put out the best magazine he possibly could. But somewhere around '73 or '74 something happened. I'm not sure which things were the causes and which the effects, but all sorts of things began changing. Ted moved out of the city, removing an important in-person link. The SFWA decided to boycott Ultimate because Sol wasn't paying for the privilege of reprinting stories that he owned all rights to (Sol bought the magazines because of this backlist and originally intended to slap toge-

ther all-reprint magazines for as long as he needed a retirement income). This action cast a shadow over the magazines that still hasn't completely left (witness the recent SFWA childishness of declaring the magazines fanzines). The fiction became second rate and frequently incoherent. Sales dropped steadily, and Sol took this as his cue to begin meddling with the package and even the editorial content. No longer was he content to dictate exactly what Ted was to put on the covers, now he took to cutting up old ones in order to show which type style was to be used as well. That practice continues to this day, and when it is taken to its logical extreme it results in such hideous affronts to aesthetic sensibilities as the December 1975 FANTASTIC all-type cover. Yeah. Luckily that issue sold no better than the others, otherwise all issues of both magazines would be looking that way. Sol's editorial purchases also became more numerous and usually they were/are sight unseen from agents because Sol believes them to be a "big name" (meaning the jerk has sold something to ANALOG). Recent issues have had as much as 50% of Sol's selections in them, and some of them have been real stinkers. It was also Sol's brainstorm to change the heading of FANTASTIC to include the words "sword & sorcery" because the Conan issues did so well. If you've noticed, it has now been cut down to plain "stories." Sol also loves to put stuff like BIG NEW ALL-STAR ISSUE or 25th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE (even though it isn't) or STANTON A. COBLENTZ'S BIGGEST AND GREATEST NEWEST STORY and stuff like that all over the issue because he thinks the reader's believe it.

This sort of crap would demoralize even the steeliest of editors, and the issues of the past three years sure do look to me like the product of an editor who doesn't care anymore. If he did care, he would've gone out of his mind long ago. There is enough left in Ted's burned out husk to try some new things, though, and FANTASTIC is about to undergo a minor facelift. In the works are a new logo, a column by your humble cynic, and, already in evidence, the editor's desire to make the zine more readable and enjoyable. (I found the April issue to be the best

in years). The presence of a group of promising new writers in the Washington area who meet weekly and call themselves "The Vicious Circle" has once again given the magazines a stable of talent to call on, always a key element in the vitality of a magazine. All this stuff is great, but it doesn't solve the magazine's central problem, that being Sol's unwillingness to spend any more money than he absolutely has to. Though his payment practices these days are fairly enlightened (unlike GALAXY, Sol usually pays upon publication), the amount he grudgingly coughs up is still at a prehistoric level. It's gotten to the point that so-called "semi-pro" outfits like ALGOL or GALILEO pay more on a cash-for-word basis. Payment for art is also insultingly low: \$10 for one of those column-sized interior illustrations, \$20 for a full-pager and \$40-\$50 for a cover (Andy Porter pays almost double that at ALGOL). Those figures haven't changed much in ten years, and they are going to stay there as long as Sol can get away with it. He's just



not willing to risk any money changing things, and as long as they remain in the same format with the same budget they will get no healthier. It is this circular causality that he is either incapable or unwilling to comprehend.

The solution to this dilemma is an obvious one: control of the magazines must somehow be taken from the hands of Sol Cohen. If you think that's an easy task of just coming up with the cash and buying them you're wrong. Though Sol has often said he's willing to sell, he's balked at every offer thrown his way. In 1975 Sol told me that he would take thirty thousand for the things, and he sounded as though he couldn't wait for someone to make him an offer. Yet when Roger Elwood came along and did just that he refused. Why? From what I could gather, the fact that Elwood brought his minister along to their luncheon conference and voiced the desire to change the name of the magazine to ROGER ELWOOD'S AMAZING STORIES offended Sol. I had new respect for him after that incident. More recently a group of NY sf professionals showed tentative interest, and just this past year Arthur Bernhard, Sol's "silent" partner expressed interest in buying Sol out and turning the magazines over to his son. Each time it comes down to it, Sol either suddenly decided he wants more money, or he just says no. I think the old wheezer has a sentimental attachment to the magazines; perhaps it gives him something to do and worry about, but whatever it is it tugs at him the strongest just as someone is trying to take them away from him. Certainly is odd, considering his professed contempt for science fiction and his numerous complaints that he makes too little for all the trouble he has to put up with. I wonder if he'll ever let go, and whether they can survive more than a few more years with him, or without him.

#

GALAXY's problems are quite similar to AMAZING and FANTASTIC's, but on a somewhat different scale. The problem over there is spelled Arnold Abramson, and from what I hear he is of the type that makes Sol Cohen look a model of ethics and consideration. He is the kind who is polite and charming to your face (if you can get through to see him) and then axes your neck the minute you turn around. Jim Baen managed well enough while he was there, assisted no doubt by the fact that he was well paid (about five times what Ted gets) and had an office with a staff to put the magazine out. Abramson is claiming these days that all of the magazine's past debts to writers have been paid, a debt that for awhile added up to many thousands of dollars. I always wondered why SFWA never got on UPD's case about their somewhat irregular payment habits (the running joke was "Payment on threat of lawsuit") and preferred instead to chase after penny-ante shit over at Ultimate. Interesting that a member of the SFWA ruling cabal can be found on GALAXY's masthead, to say nothing of the fact that Jim Baen is a person much more to their liking than Ted ever was.

I haven't been able to read GALAXY in years, myself. When I was a kid I found Fred Pohl's GALAXY and IF to be the liveliest magazines I came across, and I still look back on them with some amount of fondness. When Ejler Jakobsson became editor I found them becoming increasingly uninteresting to read and very offensive to look at. I developed a distinct dislike for Jack Gaughan's scribbling illustrations. Jim Baen moved in when the magazines were unquestionably at their low points, and though his changes did help them gather new readers, he wasn't editing the magazine that I wanted to read. I never have been able to take Jerry Pournelle seriously and Spider Robinson's book reviews struck me as juvenile and uninformed. My tastes and Jim's have scant overlap, and more often than not I found any given issue contained at least five pieces of amateurish filler to any single item of real story. I also never read serials, and Baen's view of maga-

zine editing seemed to include quite a lot of them (including some choice Zelazny). Visually there was a slight improvement: from offensive it jumped to merely awful, with a sense of design that made the petrification over at ANALOG seem daringly modern.

Baen left GALAXY with a respectable circulation of some eighty thousand, and there is almost an unofficial betting pool in NY about how many of those JJ Pierce will alienate before he leaves. The package has plummeted to an all-time low in appearance now that Stephen Fabian refuses to work for them (he is reportedly owed more than a G-note for past work), and the visual style is being set by "Amy Harlib" who, if she is anyone other than someone's pubescent relative, should pack up her crayolas and charcoal birquets and go home to learn to draw. Her embarrassingly inept work has no business in a "professional" sf publication, whether she's being paid for it or not (and word has it that much if not all of the art in recent issues has been done gratis). The stuff grossly offends me. I was however glad to see Paul Walker installed as Spider's replacement, as he's shown some pretty good judgement in past fan writing. The fiction I haven't read, though I did notice that familiar names are more scarce than ever before -- if that means anything. It is also curious that the date has been removed from the cover on newsstand-distributed copies (Charlie Brown said in LOCUS that subscription copies still bear the dates). I find that just a bit shifty.

The word is out that JJ is desperately looking for another job, either in book or magazine publishing or newspapers (which is where he came from, and perhaps he should've stayed). God knows what delusion he was under when he took the job in the first place. Any of a score of New York people could've told him exactly what he was getting into, and what kind of man Abramson was no matter what his forked tongue might have said. I really have no sympathy, and not much hope, for the life of the magazine.

#

Over at F&SF we have slow, dignified stagnation. Visually it's the dullerest looking one of them all, with nothing save Gahan Wilson on the inside and endless stinkers on the cover to stimulate the eyes. Only two things keep the magazine afloat, the tradition of literary distinction (something easy to maintain when you're the only game in town) and the fact that the editor is a Nice Guy. Not much of a dynamic focus of energy, but very charming and pleasant to work with. Based on those two tenuous propositions F&SF stands as the only class act in the business and the natural magazine home for any writer with a stylish bent. According to LOCUS figures, F&SF sales have been climbing in an uneven, jerky fashion over the past seven years. It now stands at about fifty-seven thousand, with less sold on the newsstands than AMAZING.

Along with AMAZING and FANTASTIC, F&SF is the only sf magazine that I still buy and read every month. Most of what Ed Ferman prints is worth reading, though he does have an annoying weakness for frivolous filler that I find a waste of time. What keeps me buying every month, though, is Algis Budrys' book column. The man has got to be the most perceptive, the most aware and the most fascinating to read of any critic/reviewer now operating in the field. He has a way of being off-handedly acidic (from his May '78 column: "THE BEST FROM FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION 22nd SERIES is now out from Doubleday. Even a broken clock is right twice a day") without being gratuitous or unreasonable. His perspective is unique, his insights frighteningly on-target and his eagerness to tackle the mechanics and processes of writing admirably refreshing. His columns are constantly generating new ideas and channels of thinking, and he seems uncom-

fortable with the role of a passive reviewer -- his columns are active, and they take chances. He is learned, eloquent, informally unstuffed and never boring. He fulfills my idea of the writer/critic, and I hope someone with some brains and money realizes the value of his columns and collects them in one volume. Some of the best of his recent columns have been: 3/77 on Fred Pohl and what Budrys calls the Futurian style of sf, 12/77 on Leigh Brackett and the pulps, 11/77 on the humble genius of Edmond Hamilton, academism and his own MICHAELMAS ("I have of course succeeded brilliantly, surpassing even my own reputation as an sf technician and ratiocinator..."), 9/77 on the insane reality of publishing and PR writing specifically, and the two or three columns that explore Budrys' nascent thoughts about John Campbell, "newsstand science fiction" and "modern science fiction."

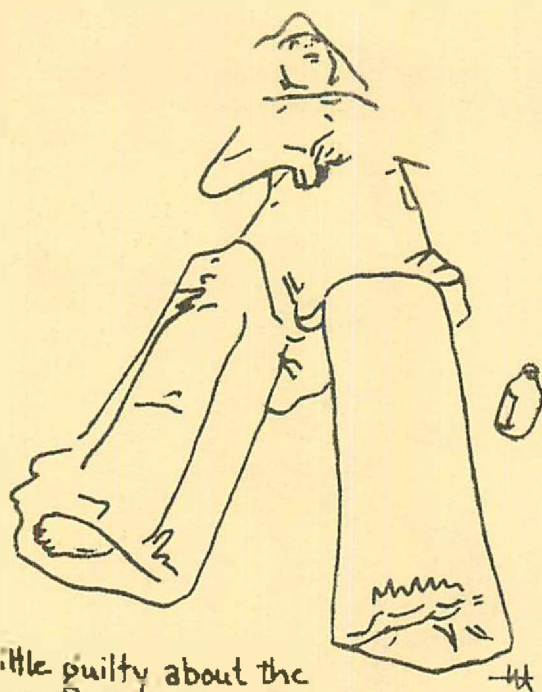
Budrys way of writing allows the reader to watch the genesis of an idea unfold, and not just view the cut-and-dried result. I suspect he's using the column to rummage around in his head and get some thoughts in order for a book length study of sf (whether he's doing this consciously or not I don't know). I think if he were to stop writing this column, F&SFs value as an essential magazine in the sf field would halve. This is no criticism of Ed Ferman, just my high estimation of Budrys as a critic (even though he shies from that label). On the other hand if Baird Searles' Film column was dropped, the magazine would be a few pages shorter at worst, but nothing less as a magazine. Searles has yet to have anything of value to say. I don't normally read the Doctor's science column but I suppose that has some value. I can't foresee much of a change for the magazine in the future, and I expect the thing to continue as long as Ferman and the readers are satisfied.

(continued)



Then there's ANALOG. I haven't bought an issue of that esteemed publication for over a year now, and seems the only time I even consider the possibility of buying a copy is when there is a Mike Hinge cover. Bova's term of editorship is now fully out from under Campbell's shadow, and he has had more than enough time to show us his stuff. Unfortunately I don't think much of his efforts, and it looks today that the magazine under his control has become more the victim of its lofty position than the beneficiary. For the longest time ANALOG led the field in sales, not only because of the dynastic rule of JWC but also thanks to the Conde Nast budget and distribution system. It certainly is the best packaged and most ubiquitous of the magazines. But now Bova seems to have lost his grip on things, and has calcified the already arthritic hulk even further. Without Campbell's magnetism to set the style, Bova has relied on formula and limp, unchallenging reassurance. The entire magazine resonates with familiarity and Bova seems aggressively hesitant to step out onto any new ground and perhaps rattle a few old bones. He seems afraid of alienating all those engineers with slide-rules up their asses who make up the largest portion of the magazine's circula-

tion base. He has unquestionably the greatest resources of any sf magazine to work with, and yet he's opted for the safe route, possibly because tied to those resources are The Boys Upstairs in the marketing and sales departments. He's got it coming at him both ways, and the same thing that keeps him at the top keeps him from taking any chances and doing something really interesting.



"I felt a little guilty about the way I slammed into her mind with no regard for privacy at all. But I have my needs."

Bova's failing is that he's a passive editor, a style in direct contrast to his illustrious predecessor. He seems to take only what is given to him, without playing much of a role in the creative process underneath the surface of the magazine. He lacks the style and vision to make the magazine something more than just a monthly packet of stories, and above all he lacks the passion it takes to be a good editor. He's been treading water and now things have

caught up with him. ISAAC ASIMOV's has whipped him riding a formula of greater mass appeal and a crafty marketing ploy, and the Boys Upstairs are running scared. I would think that a serious challenge like this would cause some changes, some adventurousness, but all that seems to be happening is further tightening up and withdrawal into a defensive position.

The jerkoffs from Marketing have trotted down the hall to tell cover artists which colors don't "sell." Art Director Herb Stolz (whom I've heard called a "glorified paste-up man" by many artists, and by all accounts should have retired ten years

ago) has instructed artists to keep human figures, most especially those of the female variety, off the covers. He's subjected artists to such indignities that a couple of them have left in disgust, while others have shrugged their shoulders helplessly and gone home to imitate Schoenherr. We can look forward to a steady diet of planetary configurations with almost identical coloration and mass-distribution on the covers. I find that unspeakably dull.

If something doesn't change soon, I'd be willing to bet that Bova either leaves the magazine to continue his writing career full time, or finds himself out on the street courtesy of The Boys Upstairs before he can make that decision for himself. More important, though, is a New Art Director, preferably someone who cares about what he's doing.

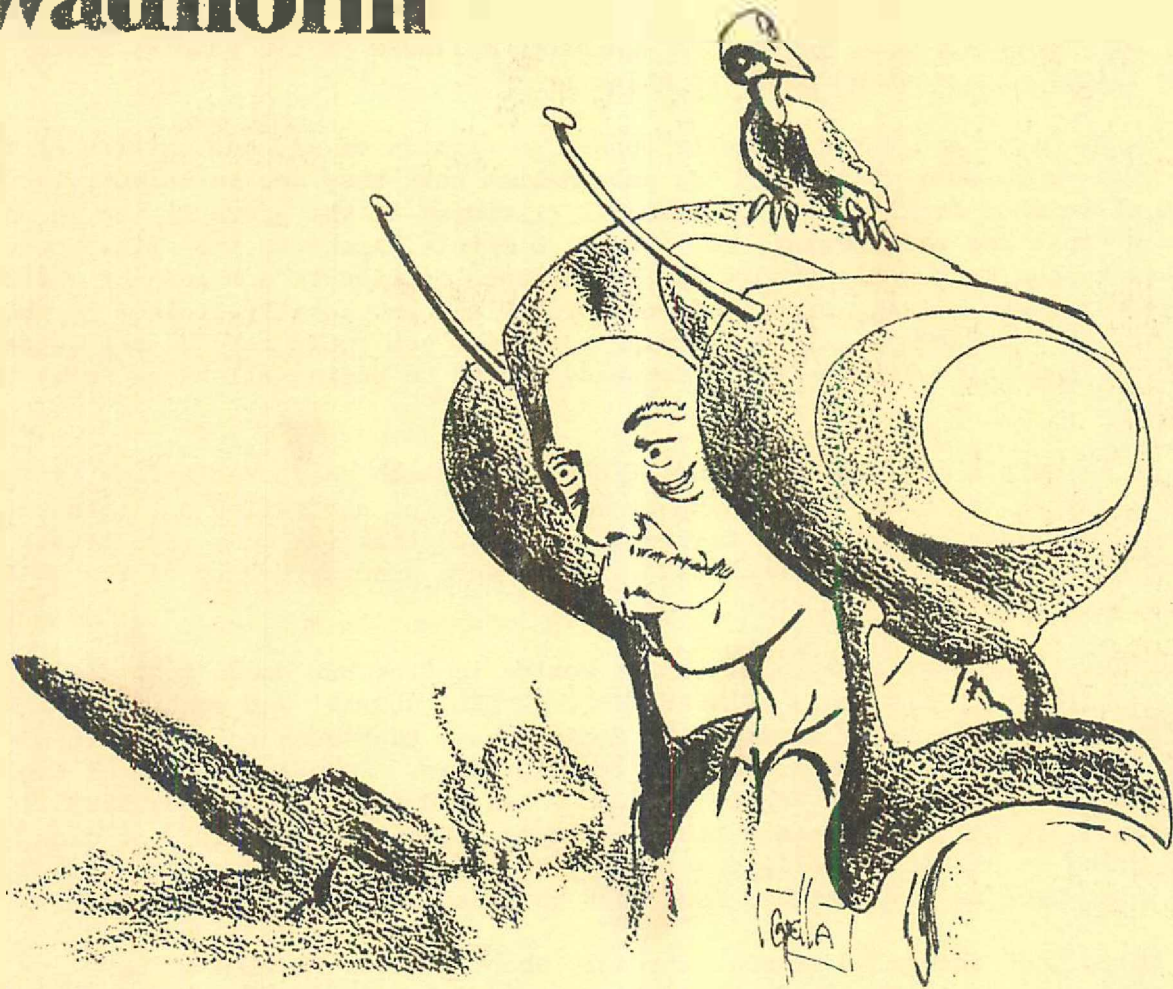
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I'm tempted to dismiss ISAAC ASIMOV'S with a sarcastic backhand, but that would be unfair in light of the magazine's obvious success. It would be easy to say that it is only a science fictional ELLERY QUEEN'S, but apparently that is exactly what a great many sf readers want. So, in classic television producer's logic, who can fault them for giving the groundlings what they are clamoring for? Further, a gold star for marketing acumen should be awarded to the persons responsible for selecting the Lecherous Doctor's face for the selling hook. His is the only face with enough recognition value to work, and the idea seems to have succeeded marvelously. However, the face will work on the reader the first time only; after that the magazine has to be good enough to keep them interested. That brings us to George Scithers, who I suppose does all the real editing (with five, count 'em, assistants in the stable to help out). Does fifteen or twenty years at the wheel of a fanzine qualify him to know what a good story is? I certainly hope so, because there's going to be all sorts of shit coming his way now that they are the highest paying market in the field. There will be good stuff rolling in along with the garbage because of the rates, stuff that he'd have to be an idiot to miss (even if they may not be suited to the style of the magazine).

Judging by the seven issues out so far, and what amount of them I've read, I would say he's an unadventurous editor, but that's just a matter of the differences in our tastes. There's been lots of bad puns and a good share of mildly diverting puzzle stories. Visually, a style of bland lifelessness has already been set. The covers, after the Rev. Ike's photo was thankfully dropped from the logo, have been uniformly unremarkable. Except for newcomer Paul Alexander's Jan-Feb cover they've all been competent hackwork from guys who don't seem to give much of a damn anymore (Freas, Gaighan, Di Fate). I find the lack of inspiration on their part hard to understand, considering they're getting twice what they normally get at ANALOG. Inside it's even worse. I don't think I like the one-column format much, and except for one passable Shomburg, all the illustrations have been blocky, old fashioned and uninspired. The page layouts have been equally unimaginative. For what they pay they should do much better and perhaps take a second look at their art director.

Blandness pervades the features as well. Charlie Brown's one paragraph reviews are almost useless to me, and not much fun at all to read -- I've never been a fan of that style of dispassionate writing. The letter column is a sickening succession of mindless, gushing praise that wastes page after page. A letter column exists to generate interaction between the readers and staff of the magazine, not to suck off an editor's ego. Baen used the GALAXY letters page for similar ends, and to me that negates the entire purpose of including letters in a magazine. I'm honestly pessimistic about the ability of ISAAC ASIMOV'S to transcend its formula. My cynicism tells me that neither Scithers nor the old Doc

Rick Wadholm



THE VIEW FROM GROUND ZERO

Science fiction like other forms of culture is most boring when it's being self-conscious. (Don't you get tired of hearing all those millionaires sing their blues about the record business?) One reason I've sort of stopped writing fan articles is that outside of a few general kvetchings and the odd book review here or there, I really don't like to talk about science fiction. It's hard for me to listen to other people talk about it. It's boring as hell, actually.

Leading up to the fact that SCIENCE FICTION AT LARGE (ed. Peter Nicholls, Harper & Row) is yet another book from SF to SF, but I liked it. Peter Nicholls, the editor, has gone outside the science fiction field for many of the viewpoints presented here. Of the 11 people who delivered the essays presented here (at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London in 1975), less than half are dyed-in-the-wool science fiction writers. The others are scientists, "futurists," or mainstream writers.

In fact the best moments of the book (besides Ursula K. Le Guin's speech on humanizing science fiction characterizations) are provided by the non-science fiction

writers. John Taylor, a hard-science writer in Britain gives a scientists view of science fiction concepts. The criticisms he makes of sf's literary conventions (teleportation, faster-than-light-travel, time travel) are nothing you haven't heard before from Isaac Asimov or Larry Niven, but his explanation of the human politics and philosophies involved in a breakthrough in science on the order of time travel makes him harder to argue with than another day recounting of the law of conservation of energy. A dedicated follower of the Bandini school of star flight, I was given pause to think.

Thomas M. Disch and Peter Nicholls appear as critics of sf, and critics of the critics. Both admirably avoid the paternalism that they see in mainstream criticism of science fiction, though Nicholls criticism of the genre is too second-hand a topic for me to relate to. Disch, a little closer to the field cuts closer to the bone. His theory is that science fiction is a branch of children's literature, expansively conceived but morally and emotionally limited by the demands of its readers. It's the same criticism you could make of any genre fiction, but valid nonetheless. (Somebody has to be buying all those Perry Rhodan books.)

Ursula Le Guin's article on science fiction and human characterization is the best essay in the book. Something to be photocopied and mailed out to macho writers of rent-a-cop science fiction. More than that she goes into detail about how she wrote *THE DISPOSSESSED* without once puncturing any of the fonder myths that I've developed about that book.

Harry Harrison's articles on alternate worlds is fine but doesn't go far enough. Beyond talking up his own *A TRANSATLANTIC TUNNEL*, *HURRAH!* and mentioning how much he likes alternate world stories, he doesn't have that much to say. Philip K. Dick's "Man, Android and Machine" is frankly weird. Sounds like one of those Simm/Classic pictures, *IN SEARCH OF NOAH'S ARK* and the like. Peter Nicholls assures us in his opening that Dick is simply being metaphorical, but once he gets going on his quasi-religious fantasy he gets to sounding pretty earnest. Philip K. Dick is never at his best when he's being earnest.

One thing that occurs to me most strongly about *SCIENCE FICTION AT LARGE* -- it's a reviewer's book. You read about these books a lot in fanzine review columns, but have you ever looked at one? Would you know where to find one if you wanted to? For that matter, would you give a shit if you did? This isn't necessarily a criticism of the book. The book is fine. As a reviewer, my job basically is telling you, the reader, whether the book is worth buying or not, and it is. But would you ever really get around to reading it?

GATEWAY by Frederik Pohl (Del Rey Books) If there are labels you can put on decades of science fiction specifically, the way labels are put on decades in general, the 60s were the decade of "realistic 'futures'." The major sf novels of the 60s seemed to grow directly out of the times, unfettered by the writers' imagination, as if the things happening on the news were more graphically dramatic than anything going on in the writers' head. *GATEWAY* transcends the 60s. The characters, the setting, the action, incorporate the "Realistic Future" viewpoint of John Brunner and Samuel R. Delany. Its vision of the future is cramped, dangerous, anonymous. Even its typographic style is reminiscent of the new wave, inserting broadsides of general news and information from the Gateway bulletin board into the stream of the story.

But Pohl goes far beyond the stopped-up toilets, the fluttering-stomached astronauts, the mundanely homely space garbage that I've lovingly laid into my own science fiction universe to make a novel that truly transcends the later 60s sf sensibilities.

The story's premise is artificial, taken wholly out of Fred Pohl's imagination -- more a "created" situation in the mode of 40s and 50s sf than the If-This-Goes-On mode of 60s science fiction. Pohl moves the story forcefully, with an unstrained natural style setting up an obviously "created future" situation but dealing with real issues, unbearably human characters.

The story takes place in some semi-near future when Grim Reality has once again, in true 60s fashion, descended on America. While science is providing more and more for the super-rich (guaranteed health for as long as you can afford it), economics and overcrowding are making life desperate for working classes. (Oil shale is being mined to grow lichen, which is resold as food.) Mankind has never developed a reliable and quick method of getting to other stars, but deep space travel is available to anyone willing to take the risks. A space station in the Solar System has been discovered, used by the ancient Hee Chee race. At the station are hundreds of ships programmed for destinations no one can predict. No one has the knowledge to repair them or even refuel them.

Robinette Broadhead gets to Gateway -- the Hee Chee station -- on a passage bought with lottery winnings, to hitch a ride out to God Knows Where. Somehow the reality of the place never really settles into his mind until he gets there and gets a good, closehand look at some of the returning expeditions. Most explorers come back empty-handed. A ridiculously high number never come back at all. The few who strike it rich by finding ships travelling to Hee Chee ruins are a cruel goad to a world full of people struggling to escape the existence they're trapped in.

Pohl, like Joe Haldeman and a growing number of 70s science fiction writers, focus on the grisly death aspect of the story with the cinematic fascination of a highway safety movie. Pohl makes it work for him, creating a harshly indifferent backdrop for the scared and desperate ambitions of his amateur astronauts.

In the atmosphere of tentative knowledge and very graphic risk, rumors and quasi-scientific superstitions are as good as fact. Broadhead spends his time at Gateway trying to talk himself into going out, convincing himself that the ones who didn't come back were just too stupid to know when they should have been scared. Pohl's message on one level is that everyone needs a reason to believe that they are different, have a different outlook, better facts, and generally better karma than the ones who don't make it.

The truth is that Broadhead isn't different. He's no different than the victims, no different than the survivors. If he were alive now he'd be a closet novelist instead of an astronaut. Maybe a rock musician. Maybe one of those 32-year-old undergraduates -- the professional college students -- that haunt the halls at CSUN. That's what gives it the sting of truth. Everyone's been in Broadhead's situation -- caught between the dream and the risks of going for it, too afraid of the risks to take the chance, too afraid of the alternatives to let the chance go.

Friends who have read the story say that it is an existential morality play. I'm inclined to agree. The story dictates a situation in which people literally pay for every breath they breathe. Everything Broadhead does at Gateway has a direct cost and a direct result, from the provisions that he uses to the people he has sex with. It changes him. At the beginning of the story Robinette Broadhead is a moral virgin. He goes where people tell him to go, and makes most of his decisions by avoiding them. By the end of the book he's learned to accept responsibility, good and bad, for everything he's done.

Fred Pohl has told a truly universal story of a working class future with the conviction of Delany but without Delany's meandering attention to detail. He's written a political novel, but in true 70s fashion, the politics is personal, quiet, simple.

... SUPPLIES ...



THE 1978 ARTIST HUGO NOMINATIONS

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST:

Vincent Di Fate
Stephen Fabian
Frank Kelly Freas
Rick Sternbach
Michael Whelan

BEST FAN ARTIST

Grant Canfield
Phil Foglio
Alexis Gilliland
Jeanne Gomoll
James Shull

Like a highwire artist who works without nets, again Jon Gustafson has devoted part of his column to fearlessly predicting who will be nominated for the artist Hugos -- and then having to live with the column being published after they have been released. How close did he come? Stay tuned...

JON GUSTAFSON

UTERIOR DESIGNS

Ted White, editor and art director (as "J. Edwards") of AMAZING and FANTASTIC has taken a couple of potshots at my columns that need to be answered. In THRUST 8 Mr. White states, "Geis' SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW has run a column devoted to criticizing the art in the prozines..." He is starting off on the wrong foot, as I don't criticize the art, I critique it. While your Webster's will give virtually the same definition for these two words, in the art field they mean quite different things. Criticize still means what Webster's says but critique means "to examine carefully for strengths and weaknesses." In other words, as an art critic I look for both the good and bad in an artist's work. But this is really not the main issue. He goes on to say "its author seemed to know very little about the actual decisions which go into selecting and presenting prozine cover art." To this I will have to plead a smidgen of guilt -- I really don't know too much about what goes on in the offices of prozines when they choose their cover art, but that's NOT what I'm critiquing. All I have to use is the final result, the prozine or book cover as it hits the bookstand. I think that the fans who read this will realize that I am not in a position to see what goes on at each stage, and take it into account. I do know that the artists realize this and understand what I'm saying...and why. This is part of the issue.

Ted White implies further in the column in THRUST 8 that it is this lack of knowledge that in essence disqualifies me as an art critic. My reply is quite simply, baloney! Art is art is art. The artists who paint covers for ANALOG and AMAZING use the same materials, many of the same techniques, virtually all the same tools and most of the same training as the "pure" artists. The end result is the same, too: to get a message across to the viewer. The message may differ, to be sure, but the basics are the same. An implied diagonal in a work by Matisse is the same as the one in an ANALOG cover by Gaughan; the balance evident in a painting by Picasso is also evident in one by Freas. Art is art; the

difference lies in what each piece of art is used for. I try to look at each cover in two lights: first, as a piece of art, and second, how well it illustrates the story. Obviously, the better it accomplishes both parts, the better I like it and the more I will praise it. And vice-versa.

I've been writing about science fiction art in fanzines for a couple of years, now, and there are even times I feel like I'm getting the hang of it. I'm doing something I enjoy and every now and then getting a little egoboo out of it (a little head-massage does everyone some good.) And, of course, I've had some flak from people for some of the things I've said (or not said) but I figure that comes with the territory. Some of the comments have been quite valid and I've tried to incorporate new information into these columns as I grow and develop as a "writer" and critic, but some of the criticism has been invalid.

Normally I shrug off the "invalid" criticism and don't let it influence what I write, particularly when it might lead to my saying more negative things about a work than it deserves.

In a letter to Mike Glyer, printed elsewhere in this issue, Mr. White makes a number of comments about my first column in STFR, many of which I found to be

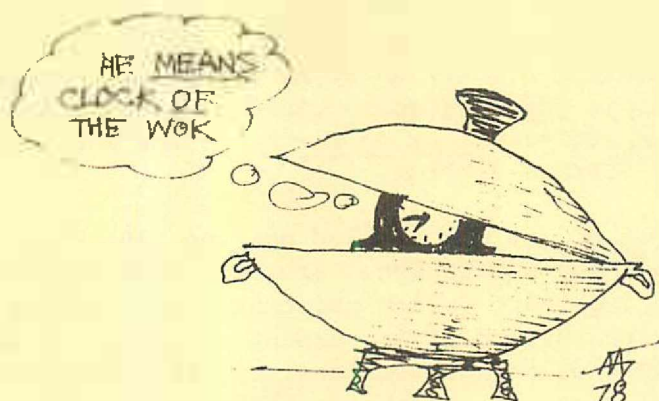
uncharitable, to say the least, and erroneous. He says "I was remarkably taken aback by his characterization of Phil Foglio as (with Rotsler) a 'brilliant humorist'" and a bit further on "To me all of Gustafson's prosing on about Art is rendered suspect by his characterization of Foglio." You see, that is all this is -- a difference of opinion. Ted White does not agree with my statement that Foglio (and Rotsler) is a "brilliant humorist" and uses that to try to invalidate, and make suspect, all that I write about art. I think you can see the obvious fallacy in his reasoning.

Both here and in THRUST 8, Mr. White takes the one item that he disagrees with as a basis to claim what I write is meaningless. I fear I don't understand Mr. White and his purpose with these statements. Perhaps his motives may be better known after he reads and hopefully replies to this column.

Other things Mr. White states in his letter with which I disagree: "/Foglio's technique is/ hardly refined; his work looks like hasty sketches in all but a few instances..." This can also be said of Rotsler's work, or Mike Gilbert's, or Jack Gaughan's and several others. The sole difference seems to be that Mr. White does not like Foglio's work but does like the other's. He also speaks



of the humor, or lack thereof, in Foglio's cartoons, calling the gags "typical high school yearbook stuff -- sophomoric at best, silly and pointless at worst..." Again, this can be said of every other cartoonist's work (and often is) by those who view the gag. Humor, like art, is a very subjective thing and each person finds different things funny. I happen to think that Foglio's cartoons are, on the whole, very funny, as I do the work by Bill Rotsler, Grant Canfield, Tim Kirk and Alexis Gilliland. I have found people who don't like any of these artists' cartoons. So what? I never said Foglio was the best fanartist, I said he would win the Hugo (and if you noticed I stated at the beginning of the column that the Hugo didn't tell who was the best artist only the most popular.)



WOK AROUND THE CLOCK

I do agree with Ted White on a couple of points, though. I do feel there are better cartoonists than Phil Foglio and better pro artists than Rick Sternbach, but that is really beside the point. Foglio and Rotsler were the fanartists I thought stood the best chance of winning the Hugo for fan art, and Sternbach and Fabian in the pro category. I chose Foglio correctly and Fabian wrongly. (Personally I felt that Rotsler and Barr should have won the awards, and that they were the best artists in the finals). I also agree with Ted White when he says "the fascination sf fans feel toward art which uses superbly detailed machinery" is what pushed Sternbach into the award circle. That is an element I did not give enough thought to in my first column.

Mike Glycer wrote me a letter recently and asked me to think about the fanartist nominations for the coming year. He asked me to expound on "what level of competence, what volume of work and what tenure in the field is appropriate for fan artist Hugo nominees." Actually, I rather feel that competence, volume and tenure are moot points when we talk about fan art and who "should" or should not be nominated for the Hugo. Those artists will be nominated who appeal to the greatest number of fans -- or who get the greatest amount of exposure, either through a fanzine with mass circulation or in a large batch of fanzines with small circulations. I don't think it's possible, let alone desirable, to provide a set of criteria for the best artist (as opposed to merely the most popular). If I was to say anything about choosing artists for the Hugo Awards, I'd say choose the artist who causes you to think/feel/laugh the most. Beyond that I cannot go.

I will, however, stick my neck out a bit and see if I can predict who will be the finalists on the 1978 Hugo ballot. My guess for the fan art finalists are: Alexis Gilliland, Grant Canfield, Bill Rotsler, Phil Foglio (sorry Ted), and Jim McLeod. A few dark horses may well be (this is called "hedging your bet"): Ole Kvern, Dan Steffan, Ken Fletcher, and Jim Shull. On the pro art side, the finalists are: George Barr, Jack Gaughan, Kelly Freas, Steve Fabian and Rick Sternbach. Dark horses might be: Vincent DiFate, Paul Lehr, John Schoenherr and Boris Vallejo. When the final ballot comes out I'll take a stab at predicting the winners again. That ought to be good for a few laughs.

It came in the mail today, boxed like any other book I've ever received. On the outside it was undistinguished. Once open, with the green, imitation leather slip-case staring blankly up at me and the gold-stamped binding glittering in my office lights, it gained stature rapidly and what started out as a cardboard box turned into an artistic tour de force. FRANK KELLY FREAS, the binding gloated to me, THE ART OF SCIENCE FICTION.

To those of you who shelled out the \$29.95 and have received this incredible book, you know why I'm raving. From the gold-embossed little green Martian on the cover, to the exquisite Skylab painting that finishes the book, this is a purchase to grace the shelves of any ardent collector of art or books. The binding is superb, the paper of the highest quality, the reproduction excellent. This is also one of the few times in publishing history where the advertisements actually understate the quality of the book; the ad says "Over 35 full-color paintings..." and I counted 66, most of which are full-page (8½ x 11) or larger (by larger I mean that they spread onto more than one page). The ads also say "Over 75 additional sketches in black and white" and while I haven't counted them, I'd be willing to bet there are more than that. The Freas book is published by The Donning Company, 253 W. Bute St., Norfolk VA 23510. The price is \$29.95; just send the dough and tell 'em you want the Freas Book.

The reproductions of Kelly's paintings are excellent and the best I've seen since I received George Barr's UPON THE WINDS OF YESTERDAY, which I might add is a remarkable book in its own right and, like Kelly's book, a worthy addition to any library. I wonder, does the fact that both of these books come from small printing firms (well relatively speaking, anyway) have anything to do with the superb quality of these books? I'd bet that it does, but that may be a subject for another column. This book contains many of my favorite science fiction illustrations, regardless of artist, including "Full Cycle" (from the November 1955 issue of SCIENCE FICTION STORIES, story by Clifford B. Simak), "Zenya" (E.C. Tubb's book for DAW), "The Whenabouts of Burr" (cover for Michael Kurland's DAW book), "The Gentle Earth" (the cover for the November 1957 issue of ASTOUNDING, illustrating one of Christopher Anvil's classic "invasion of Earth" stories), and "Who?" (from the Lancer edition of Budrys' novel...and possibly one of the ten best sf illustrations of all time.)

In short, this is a book that will take a large chunk out of your pocketbook, but I can virtually guarantee that you won't mind a bit. If you love sf art and don't obtain a copy of this book, you'll be haunted by the smell of linseed oil for the rest of your miserable days.

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By the artist who did a number of record covers for YES and OSIBISA, the ROGER DEAN CALENDAR from Simon & Schuster is one that I couldn't really wholeheartedly recommend, although there isn't really anything wrong with it...much. The calendar is large and the dates are easy to read but the illustrations are a bit of a disappointment because of their small size. This isn't really the fault of the publisher but due to the odd proportions of the paintings, most of which are twice as wide as they are tall (and some are about three times as wide as tall) that make it imperative to reduce them vertically so they can fit horizontally...if you follow me. The reproduction is good, but not outstanding. All the paintings are depicted in ROGER DEAN'S VIEWS and look much better there. For \$4.95, I think I'd look around a bit more for a year's worth of viewing, unless you're a Roger Dean Fan in which case you're going to think my opinions are invalid and buy the thing anyway.

For real schtick, there is the WATERSHIP DOWN CALENDAR from Avon Books (#34371, \$4.95). The illustrations for this cutesy-poo calendar are competently done by Eric Tenney; the quality of them is not in question here, but the subject matter is. I've always disliked the anthropomorphic, "cute" animal novels like WATERSHIP DOWN (I have the feeling that I'm going to catch more than a bit of flak at this point) and the added commercialization that this calendar gives it grates on my nerves. However if you like sweetums bunnies and saccharin sentimentality, this is the calendar for you.

The FRANK FRAZETTA CALENDAR (Peacock Press/Bantam Books #M1051-4, \$4.95) is about as far from maudlin sentiment as you will likely get this year. Dynamic, brutal, sensual, erotic, breathtaking and superbly printed by the Ballantines, this calendar is one of the few that will give you everything you paid for and more. Edited by Betty Ballantine, most of the paintings have been taken from Frazetta's book covers and the poster series he did in the past.. The only one I hadn't seen before was the double-sized center spread entitled "Fire Demon" (which, incidentally, is nearly the best one in the calendar). Included for your viewing...um, pleasure? are "Bloodstone", "Aros", "Serpent", "Nightstalker", "Black Panther" (from one of the Tarzan books as I recall), "Girl Bathing", "Fire Demon", "Rogue Roman" (a male chauvinist dream), "Tannar of Pellucidar", "Autumn People", "Dracula Meets The Wolfman", "Bran Mak Morn" and "Swords of Mars". Ian and Betty Ballantine are among the very few to whom the word "quality" seems to mean anything. Their Peacock Press, formed shortly after they sold Ballantine Books, consistently produce the highest quality, lowest priced paperback art books on the market today and the Ballantines are to be congratulated for their efforts.

The TARZAN CALENDAR, illustrated admirably by Boris Vallejo, is one of the best-looking of this year's lot. Published by Ballantine Books, which generally has excellent taste in the art-calendar field, it is one of the \$4.95 calendars that gives you full value for your dollars (order # 27250). As with all of Ballantine's calendars, it is printed on high quality paper and the printing is excellent. The colors are bright and vibrant, with none of the muddying that occurs on some of the cheaper (more cheaply done, not necessarily less expensive) calendars. All the illustrations are 'from' the various Tarzan books and may have appeared on the paperback editions. "Tarzan and the Forbidden City" is one of the best, showing Tarzan wrestling a giant snake underwater, with a voluptuous damsel looking on. I like Vallejo's women better than Frazetta's: they're less bloated-looking. "Tarzan and the Castaways", another of the most effective paintings in the series, shows a massive elephant looming in the jungle mist. "Tarzan the Terrible" includes one of the few real errors I've seen Boris Vallejo make...he shows a carnivorous Triceratops! The centerfold is entitled "Tarzan and La at the City of Opar" and is easily the best painting in this series (it may also be one of the best he's produced.) All in all, this calendar is the best of the best.

UPON THE WINDS OF YESTERDAY is a book I did not intend to talk about, but upon reflection I've decided that it's simply too delicious to ignore (not that I would ignore it, understand). Published by Donald M. Grant and selling, if you can get hold of a copy, for \$25, this is one of those very rare, very beautiful art books that should find a place in every serious collector's library. Books like THE FANTASTIC ART OF FRANK FRAZETTA or 100 YEARS OF SCIENCE FICTION ILLUSTRATION are great, I'll admit, but they can't hold a candle to this book of George Barr's art. George has an eye for detail, composition and color that is only rarely equalled and never surpassed (and I don't make statements like that lightly). I feel certain that George Barr will be regarded, by future art connoisseurs and fans, as one of the five best science fiction illustrators of the 20th century. If you have the chance to buy this book and pass it up, let me know and I'll personally come over and break, if not your thumbs, at least a pencil or two.



This is one version of the story of the quest.

Long ago in a land that was once rich in dreams and strong with the energy of its proud people, there arose a great sadness. For no longer were there dreams, no longer was there strength. The people's dreams had been perverted and made into nightmares, and now the people hid themselves from memories of their future. And their strength was diluted and their values degraded. The land and life itself was barren and devoid of meaning.

In order to renew the people and restore their dreams and strength a new hero had to be found, a hero who could reclaim the remnants of concealed and forgotten visions, and a hero/artist who could fashion mildewing hopes into once again life-giving resources. Of course, only a hero pure of heart, uncommitted to the distorted and degrading values of the ailing world was capable of performing this deed, and of perceiving that a vision and inspiration had been visited upon them. And only the hero dedicated enough to cast aside the mundane responsibilities

WHAT THE
THUNDER
SAID
JEANNE
GOMOLL

and attachments to everyday earthly cares, in order to give full attention to the transcendent qualities of their dream was able to interpret this vision and embark on a quest for further revelations.

For heroes, the quest was a very personal and rigorous trial. Though the final revelation, whatever it should be (if a hero reached the goal, that is), was to be one of renewal and joy for both the quester and the community, the actual quest was an exacting test and a grueling experience for the heroes alone. Following an extraordinary experience (when the heroes beheld visions, heard voices, whatever the medium of inspiration that called them on the quest) and became obsessed with the discovery of its meaning, heroes had to deal with ridicule and abuse from the people around them. There followed a period of seclusion and retreat from the world, a gradual disconnection by the hero from earthly cares. Economic and sustinative needs not absolutely necessary to life were forgotten, family and friends painfully but firmly disentangled from, and gradually, interest in all but the vision and questing after its meaning, was discarded. This was the vigil, the long night of prayer, contemplation, and communing with the vision, that the quester agonized through in order to exorcize and expunge the distractions of worldly care at last from themselves.

Then the actual physical quest began. The heroes left their places of retreat with the vision then more solid and perceptible in their mind, a conception of some direction and some knowledge as to their requirements of their quest that the hero had to fulfill in order to reach the destination and revelation. Ahead was a series of hazards and obstacles to be overcome, perhaps even a set of definite tasks, but more often there was an uncharted and dangerous journey to be made. The heroes were helped along the way by two factors. First, the questers could count upon experiencing/seeing some additional signs to the effect that they were going in the right direction. But, too, the heroes had to be able to distinguish between the validity of these encouraging signs and the frequent doubts and arguments that they were plagued by along the way (from within and from the uninspired persons around them). These had to be overcome. The other aid in their quest was camaraderie, not with earthly-centered persons, but with other questers who shared belief in similar visions or inspiration. Sometimes the heroes acquired squires of sorts, or a group of apostles who followed and provided for the heroes needs.

But eventually a quester was alone, for there was in the end only one hero, only one person able to find and truly understand the revelation. The hazards and obstacles of the journey made casualties of nearly all the questers who made the attempt to seek out the meaning of their dreams. Along the way and especially at the base of the mountain on which was found the Chapel Perilous (found in the very heart of the Waste Land) the hero discovered the bodies or graves of many of the fallen questers.

The base of the mountain and climb to the Chapel Perilous was the final test. For in the Chapel Perilous was the final answer, the revelation which apothiosized the hero and renewed the ailing world. Around the base of the mountain were heinous traps. The worst of the quester's hardships, temptations, and spiritual trials were suffered on the very grounds of the Chapel Perilous; many of the bravest and purest of the questers were stopped here. There was poison gas around the base of the mountain. Once through all the hazards, still pure of heart, the hero found rewards for a dreadful ordeal and saw the culmination and explanation of all the dreams and hints experienced in the quest. The hero asked mysterious questions and was answered. Thunder sounded. Lightning flashed. All was illuminated in both a real and metaphorical sense.

Truth was revealed; lightning flashed; It was the signal for the rain to fall and revitalize the parched land. Hope and life and dreams were reborn through the vision...as well as the final sacrifice of the questing hero. In the hero's final revelation is also the hero's delivery to another world, to a worldly 'death', and an otherworldly rebirth. The world was alive again, growing again, and the need for heroes over until again the land dies and the world required redemption.

Mythologies repeat themselves in form, the patterns continue, transmuting over the centuries; the archetypes endure. The fertility myths (and later the Grail Romances) are most hardy. In their earliest forms they were part of the goddess mythology having to do with the ceremonies conducted at the end of the winter or dry season to usher in and celebrate the land's rebirth. In Northern Africa, the goddess killed her consort every year and took a new lover (The King is dead; long live the King). Death and life, cycles, connected, dependent. The very basic fertility myths and vegetation ceremonies of the oldest cultures have become the basis of many of the religious mythologies which followed them.

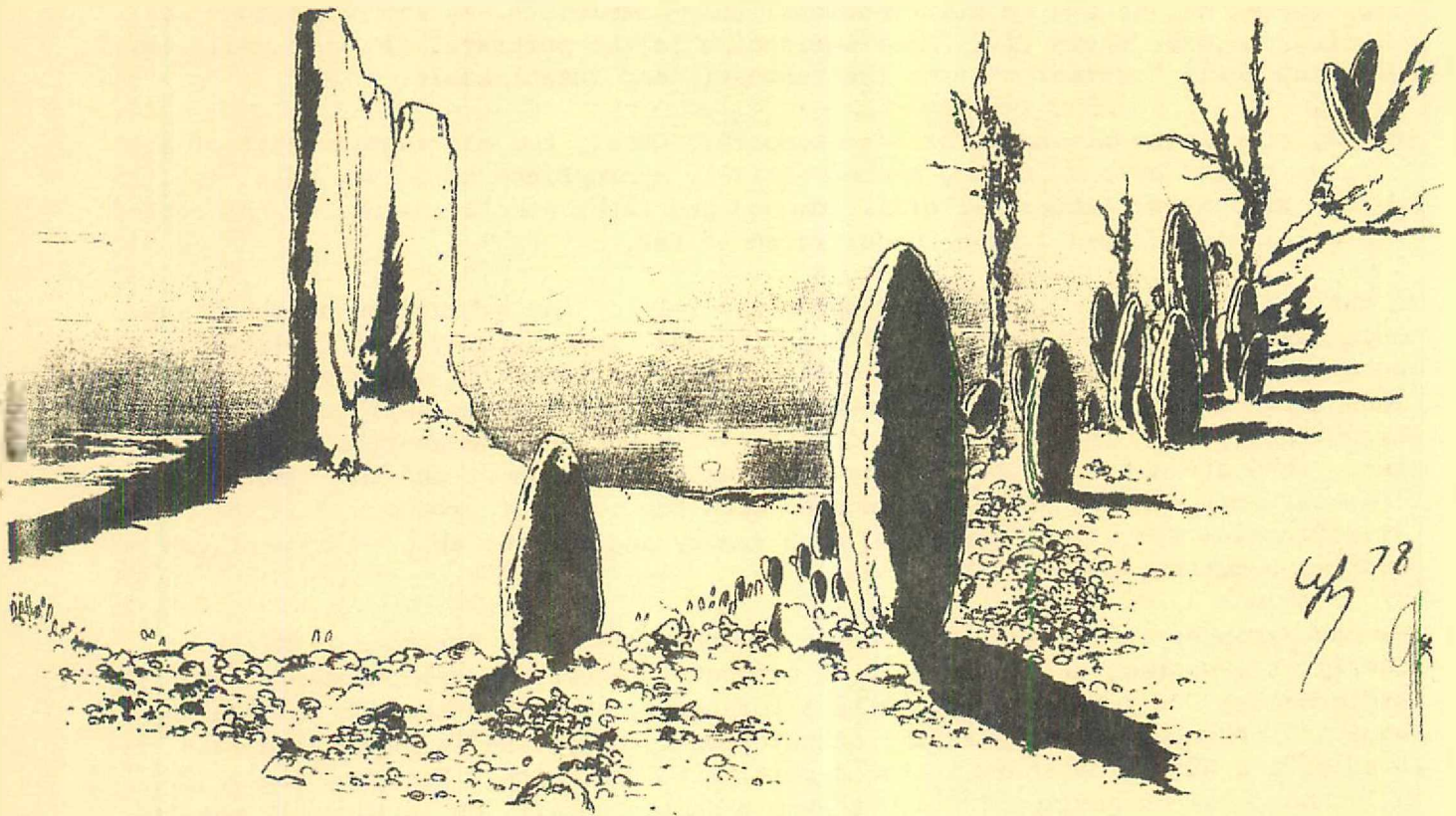
To legitimize the rights of gods, the patterns of the goddess mythologies were superimposed and interwoven into the stories of new male gods' lives. The reused myths acquired a richness and durability through their continued revision and reweaving; and we see the patterns everywhere. The patterns can be found in nearly any culture, in any mythology of any of the major religions. The myths of medieval Europe, though, are particularly rich in the traditions, and the grail romance described in the tale of the hero (or knight) and the Chapel Perilous is a retelling of some of these.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF A THIRD KIND is a retelling of the fertility myths, especially the grail romances, much in the spirit that T S Eliot's poem THE WASTE LAND was of the vegetation ceremonies in modern context. The hero, Roy Neary, in archetypal fashion loses his job, his family, and certainly the respect of his community as he obsessively works on his model of his vision. The vision itself is delivered in a manner reminiscent in outward form, of tales of spiritual experiences, Paul's enlightenment, for instance.

Neary isolates himself from the world -- perhaps an overzealous attempt by the filmmaker to follow the pattern of grail romances, since in "reality" Neary would have been institutionalized for the manner of his obsession.

His time of retreat is at last ended when he receives a clue to the meaning of his quest through the modern-day vision-maker, TV. The hazards he faces on the way to Devil's Tower are mostly visible proof of the sterility and depravity of the present culture as the military establishment seeks to block the world from witnessing an extraordinary event. As in the grail romances, the hero's most strenuous tests come when he is very close to his goal, actually climbing the mountains of the Chapel Perilous. The poison gas at the base of the mountain is both bogus (a mythological hazard to be overcome by the will); and it is real, as the helicopters' sleeping gas. Roy's comrades are those who have also been touched by the aliens' vision, but one by one they fall victim to their own doubts (believing the army's story of strychnine poisoning), or are unable to make it through the hazards surrounding the Chapel Perilous. Some other, in fact, never got to the area because they hadn't been able to interpret the meaning of their vision. But CLOSE ENCOUNTERS does not merely chronicle the story of an archetypal hero, transformed from medieval knight to obsessed American Everyman.

T. S. Eliot in THE WASTE LAND cites Jessie L. Weston's book on the Grail legend FROM RITUAL TO ROMANCE (Cambridge) and also THE GOLDEN BOUGH. All quotations in this essay are from Eliot's THE WASTE LAND.



As did T S Eliot, using ancient legends to comment on the modern Waste Land of values and need for a spiritual reawakening, CLOSE ENCOUNTERS offers more levels of awareness in its own reworking of the myths.

The Waste Land of CLOSE ENCOUNTERS is the mechanized, bureaucratized, suburbanized American landscape. As in the Grail Romances, this landscape (the king's injury, the lands barrenness) seems peripheral and background to the story of the quest.

As in the legends, the Chapel Perilous is to be found in the very heart of the Waste Land, mid-America. (Another reason for setting the Chapel Perilous in the middle of America has been suggested by Stein who points out that against no other background but the extremely everyday and mundane can the truly fantastic be effectively portrayed as "real".)

In the ancient vegetation ceremonies the Waste Land to be refreshed was a literal, physical one: the land was parched; without rain, there would be no life. in TS Eliot's THE WASTE LAND, the barrenness is of a spiritual variety, a function of modern people's abandonment of religious values without having replaced them.

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
and the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water

For the world of CLOSE ENCOUNTERS, the doubt is not a lack of rain or of god, but a lack of wonder, of minds open to new dreams, of children. The Waste Land of minds that do not dream is personified by Roy Neary's wife who can only humor her husband's excitement and at last flees it; by suburban neighbors, media

and governmental officials who discard the extraordinary out of hand, and by the army captain who is not made incredulous, only suspicious, by the mysterious paintings Lacombe shows him. Most indicative is the portrayal of Roy's children, again and again "protected" from the fantastic and inexplicable.

And so, to portray this need for a contemporary quest, the old requirements of a "pure of heart" hero must have seemed entirely appropriate to Steven Spielberg. For the archetypal pattern of grail romance and later embellishments of the pattern fits still closer than I have demonstrated so far.

As the archetypal quest theme developed, the role of the artist who directs that theme has become more important. The artist has traditionally been inserted in the story in the guise of a poet/prophet within the tale; for example, Oedipus or Tiresius in TS Eliot's *THE WASTE LAND*. The poet/prophets are aware of all and make connections. They warn of desolation and point out the sterility of the land. They are aware of the primary importance of the quest and the quester. Tiresius, both man and woman and endowed with the power of prophecy, was the perfect vessel for Eliot, combining both memory and desire, able to comment and prophesy about the modern situation.

The poet/prophet in *CLOSE ENCOUNTERS* is Lacombe, played by Francois Truffaut. Like Eliot's conception of the role of prophets, Lacombe is seldom understood, rarely heeded. Literally, Lacombe is a foreigner, his words need to be translated and often we do not hear the translation clearly. He is associated at first with a dust/wind storm in the desert, with confusion. Yet paradoxically (he's "not even an American!" ...not even a Waste Lander), he is the only one to connect all the events, the clues, the visions and is able to prepare himself, and eventually the world, for the events he never seems at all surprised about. *CLOSE ENCOUNTERS* goes to nearly excessive (in plot that is) to show Truffaut's wide-ranging travels and varied research on the strange phenomenon he studies. Yet we do not sense that Truffaut is on a quest, rather that he is seen to be gathering images (photos, recordings, signs, even sign language) to demonstrate what he already knows. He is cognizant of Roy's quest and knows more about the reasons for the quest than Neary himself. His questions of Neary are mostly rhetorical, more to find out if Roy has understood yet, than to elicit information. At the end he can only say that he envies Neary.

That Truffaut plays the part of the contemporary poet/prophet is particularly significant I think, and a further indication that he is the mouthpiece (or the eyepiece) of the filmmaker. Truffaut is himself called an auteur, filmmakers who are among today's poets and prophets.

With these elements in mind we come to the incredibly gorgeous climax of the film and of the quest. In the ancient vegetation ceremonies the climax was a sacrifice and rebirth. Thunder sounds, lightning flashes: these signalled rain and renewed life. In the Grail Romances the cock crowed, signalling the dispersal of hallucinations and demons from the landscape; the knight glimpsed the Holy Grail and Lance, asked certain questions, was bodily apotheosized, taken up to heaven, then the land was revitalized and redeemed.

*In this decayed hole among the mountains
In the faint moonlight, the grass is singing
Over the tumbled graves, about the chapel
...a cock stood on the rooftree
Co co rico co co rico
In a flash of lightning. Then a damp guest
Bringing rain*

(article concluded page 51)

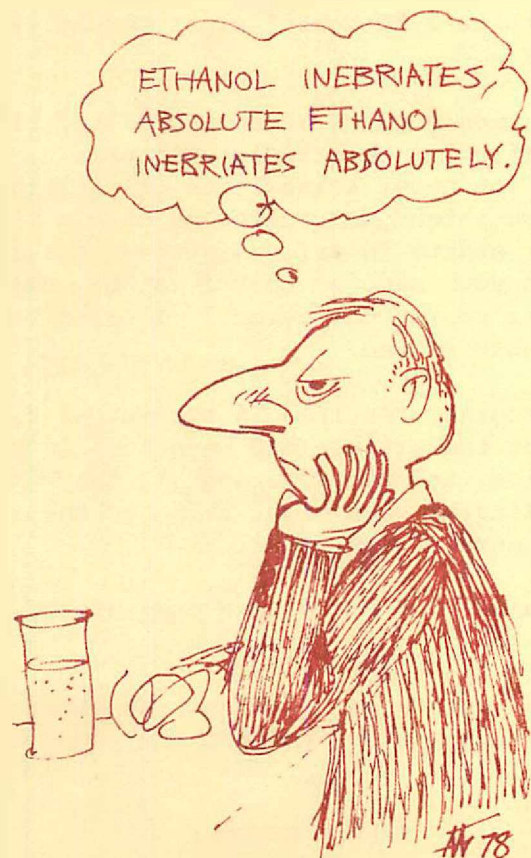
This particular column installment is generated at the request of Mike Glycer, who I ran into at the last Petard meeting (he was standing too close to the liquor cabinet). While he sucked on a beer, and I caressed a measure of Glenlivet, I told him the story of being stuck for an hour in an elevator at the January 1978 Confusion; with four other people and also four members of Star Wars fandom. Mike is always an appreciative audience for dry-running material; he laughs at all the right places and occasionally even rubs a watery eye (this usually happens when I get carried away with my story and accidentally blow smoke in his face.)

After I've finished recounting whatever wonderful tale I had to tell (it has to be wonderful, you know, because Mike is so eager and appreciative while listening to it), Mike's face suddenly loses its boyish smile and becomes impregnated with all the seriousness of a person who has just been told that the dentist is ready for them now. He then clears his throat, leans forward so that he may address me in a more serious and personal manner, and in a very deep voice he always asks me: "When are you going to write this up for Scientifriction?"

I fall for it every time.

As an erstwhile genzine editor, I am not unfamiliar with a few of the numerous means which can be used to ply material out of prospective -- often reluctant, lazy, obstinate -- fanwriters. As a byproduct of this training/experience, it's very often amusing (sometimes educational, but usually at least interesting) to be on the receiving end of this kind of an exercise.

Outside of this technique of Mike's, I clearly recall two other methods which have been used on me in the past. Successfully. There are probably others, but these two stand up to be counted without recourse to a mental file-search. The first method was never applied in an elevator, so this really has no bearing whatsoever on elevator fandom. However, don't despair, as I'll get to that in a minute. Once in awhile I become weak-willed and like to pursue a digression.



DAVE
LOCKE:
BEYOND
THE
SHIFT
KEY

It was at an old Westercon that I encountered the outright bribe technique. All methods of plying involve a basic bribery, but some are more blatant than others. This one had so little subtlety that even I could understand it.

Al Snider, boy wonder of fanpublishing during the late sixties/early seventies, once requested an article for me for CROSSROADS. As Al was a good fan friend (this was before he got his degree in Chinese literature, gaffed, and went into the world to become a taxi driver and later a debate coach. Since then our contact has been dribbling off to a stop), I was happy to oblige. Unfortunately the article got lost in the mail, and oddly enough neither of us discovered this fact for well over a year (Maybe he presumed that I'd forgotten, and perhaps my presumption was he'd gotten it).

At that Westercon, Al was chairing a panel and had the misfortune to wind up one body short, just minutes before the panel was to start. Under such circumstances, being true to fannish tradition, Al panicked. He mobilized himself and rushed out into the corridors to perform the laying-on-of-hands with the first warm body who might by any imaginative stretch be a suitable replacement for his missing panelist.

He chose me. (You must understand that the panel was scheduled for 11:00 AM. The fact that he considered me suitable for the job is more a reflection of the number of people he had to choose from than it is a measure of his desperation.)

I objected. If God had intended for me to sit on this panel, I told Al, He would have provided me with an amount of time adequate to the task of preparing some material for it. This statement went over about as well as a declaration of disobedience by a G.I. during the middle of an enemy attack. For a moment there I thought I might be shot as a deserter.

"You're a nice guy," I wound up telling him. "Here I write you an article well over a year ago, you never acknowledge or publish it, and now you intend dragooning me onto a panel that starts in three minutes. Let me write down your name so that I can be sure to remember you at Christmas." I tried to look suitably miffed.

This, of course, resulted in the mutual discovery that the article had been lost in the Post Office, and we exchanged all the usual smalltalk which might arise as the result of such a revelation.

Then Al said: "Did you make a copy of the article?" I responded guardedly, "Maybe."

"If you did make a copy," Al speculated, with the urgency gone from his demeanor (it was replaced by a rather calculating look, I thought) "do you suppose you could get it to me before the convention is over?"



"It might be arranged," I told him. "Phoebe is coming down tomorrow for the day, and she might be able to dig it out." I added: "If it exists."

"That would be really great, Dave."

"I could go call her from my room right now, and ask her to look for it. Don't you think that would be a good idea?"

"I agree wholeheartedly," Al said, with much enthusiasm. "No sense taking a chance on forgetting it, or not being able to catch her at home later on."

"That's the way I feel about it."

"When can you let me know if the copy is located?" he asked. "Well," I said, "when you get done with the panel you could meet me in the bar, buy me a drink, and hopefully I'll have some good news by then." He told me, "Don't push this too far, Dave," as he grabbed a passerby and duckwalked him into the function room and up to the podium.

Well, I never said that bribery only worked in one direction.

The other example of an interesting method of plying is that which is practiced by my Good Buddy Dave Hulan. Dave learned early in the game that his many talents did not include any significant skills in the art of plying. He just doesn't have many abilities in that particular direction, but we still like him despite this shortcoming. In fact, we like him better because of it, actually.

If Dave had a talent for putting the bite on fanwriters, there probably would never have arisen the wonderful situation whereby Marcia Hulan could have assumed the position of Staff Solicitor for contributions to Dave's occasional genzines. I'm not certain how she came to take over this function, but it is a marvelous thing to behold and my only wish is that Dave would publish a genzine more often.

Come to think of it, Marcia's method for plying fanwriting has nothing to do with elevators, either, but we'll get back to that subject in awhile. I really do intend to tell you about it. Try to show some patience.

Marcia, for the benefit of those who are so unfortunate as never to have met her is... is... well, she's Marcia; that's what she is. And she has this extraordinary talent for convincing the local fanwriters that they really wish to write their little hearts out for the next issue of Dave's genzine. You have to see this to



appreciate it, and you have to experience it to really understand it. Somehow it lacks something merely to state that she will go up to a fan at a party, hold his hand (oh: did I neglect to mention that she specializes in soliciting fanwriting from the male members of LA fandom? Sorry about this flagrant oversight), look him right straight in the eyes, and quietly say something about how wonderful a fanwriter he is and how great it would be to have an article from him. The people being approached all have a tendency to respond in a somewhat uniform manner. One common reply, often overheard, is something like "Will fifty pages be enough?" The magic of her formula, I'm afraid, is a picture worth much more than all the wordage I have expended.

It's all a shtick, of course, but I would resent it were anyone to tell me that I should not take it seriously... Of course, considering my friendship with Dave, it's totally unnecessary that I be plied at all should he wish me to write an article for him, much less that I be plied in such an interesting fashion. However, I wouldn't want anyone to tell him that.

I might also mention, since I've already digressed this far anyway, that I additionally do a fair amount of material for Jackie Causgrove's fanzine. This doesn't have anything to do with elevator stories, either, except that Jackie was trapped on the same elevator at Confusion. The connection is tenuous at best, when you consider that not once during the hour spent on that elevator did she attempt to ply me for a fanzine contribution. However, that's beside the point as I wanted to tell you about her method of soliciting material from me. I'll try to digress to the elevator story when I finish.

Back when we were corresponding, Jackie asked me for my secret to getting contributions. She was starting up a new fanzine, you see, and wanted to seek out possible new ways of insuring a steady supply of outside material. I wrote back and told her that I was partial to lining up columnists as opposed to soliciting individual arkles. With enough columnists, one didn't need to constantly go on plying for articles. Made sense to her, apparently, as she promptly wrote back asking me how she should go about lining up columnists, and whether I had any ideas as to who might be willing to do a column for her.

This method of soliciting fan material is called, I believe, the suggest-it-yourself technique. It involves a fair amount of subtlety, as well as requiring enough inner strength to avoid chuckling at the time you make your approach.

That was back when we were corresponding. Now that we're living together, Jackie still solicits my fanwriting for RESOLUTION, and her method for obtaining this material has altered somewhat.

Now we were going to talk about elevator fandom. I've done this, actually, but I suspect that Mike would accuse me of incomplete coverage if I didn't fill in a few more details.

I went to this convention in Ann Arbor in the middle of January, and got stuck on an elevator for an hour with four Star Wars fans (Star Warriors are we calling them?) and also four people. Or do you remember that joke? Anyway, we drank beer and worried about eliminations problems until finally we were rescued, and then some of us moved along to the bar which was what we had been heading for in the first place (remind me sometime to write an article around the theme of encountering obstacles while innocently trying to obtain a drink. It might even be a better story basis than this one about elevator fandom). When we got to the bar I made

overtures toward punching out the bar manager as I was displeased with him, and he called the police, but we wound up apologizing to each other and shaking hands and I stayed in the bar and had a few drinks just like I usually do when I stay in a bar. And, back while we were in the elevator, Jack Chalker made up signs reading "Free The Ann Arbor Nine" and posted them around the hotel. Jack was drinking at the time.

My next installment for Mike, which will be entitled BEYOND THE SHIFT KEY: THE ART OF FLYING FOR FAN ARTICLES, may offer me the opportunity to digress and tell you a few things about elevator fandom. Or possibly it might lead to telling a few details about the time I got humped riding a unicycle. We'll have to wait and see. I hope that Mike appreciates my willingness and ability to create material which caters to editorially suggested subject matter.

-- Dave Locke

((Glyer here, sneaking into Dave's column through the back door. Dave has outsmarted me again. At that Petards party, he realized I still haven't forgotten his comment in GORBETT 8 that "saying 'terrific convention report' is like saying 'a terrific piece of garbage'." Full of enthusiasm, inspired by I know not what, Dave outlined this complex proposal that he write either a convention report or a fanzine review column for me. I knew which one of those suggestions was most wonderful: that he go on writing his regular column. I could not believe that the man who had devoted years to eradicating convention reports, and considered fanzine reviews useful only as an emergency substitute for the Sears catalog, would go back on his beliefs. Still, I had spent several minutes rolling on the floor after Dave and Jackie related their experiences at Confusion. Was I enough of a gambler? Absolutely -- try and name the risk I would refuse to take in getting excellent verbiage for STPR -- kof koff. And now you also understand why the LASFS Friday night card players own a lien on my transplantable organs...))



STAN BURNS REVIEWS

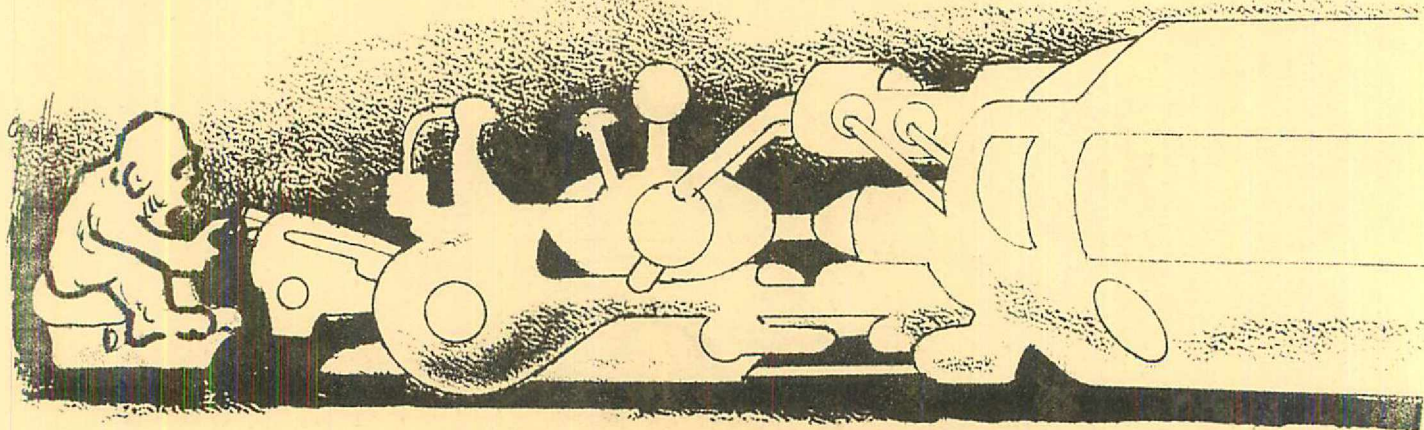
THE HOSTAGE OF ZIR by L. Sprague de Camp
Berkeley/Putnam 1978 \$7.95

Back in 1969, when I had just returned from spending the summer in Europe, I had an idea for an sf novel. The main character was a tourist traveling the Universe with a backpack and a limited amount of funds, clutching his bible -- THE UNIVERSE ON 50 DOLLARS A DAY. Like most ideas, I soon put it in the back of my mind and promptly forgot all about it. Now de Camp has used a similar idea, and much better than I ever could. Reith is a tour guide on the first tourist excursion allowed into the wilds of Krishna (made famous in De Camp's earlier Zei novels and COSMIC MANHUNT). He finds himself in de Camp's usual witty predicaments -- having the hotel accommodations cancelled out from under him, trying to keep a mob from lynching one of his group who 'borrows' a religious statue to get a better look at it outside the temple in daylight, trying to keep the group's photographer from falling off buildings and into ditches as he loses sight of everything trying to get his pictures.

While parts of this novel read like they were lifted straight out of the other Zei novels, other parts are hilarious -- they are so true they had me laughing til I cried. This may be more like COSMIC MANHUNT or the sequels to GOBLIN TOWER than a major de Camp novel like THE GOBLIN TOWER. But the idea behind it is superb and de Camp milks it for all it's worth. I've been a de Camp fan from when I first started reading sf, and I look forward to all of his novels -- I have yet to be disappointed.

ZANDRA by William Rotsler
Doubleday 1978 \$6.95

A plane loaded with passengers on their way to Europe passes over the Bermuda Triangle -- and disappears into a strange landscape of mountains and rivers. As the passengers panic, and a few cool heads try to maintain calm, the crew desperately searches the airwaves for a radio signal that will lead them to an airport for an emergency landing. Failing that they ditch in a -- hopefully -- soft riverbed. The survivors find themselves captured by aliens and sold into



slavery... This is an intelligent man's GOR novel, with enough logic behind it to make what happens plausible. It suffers from some flaws -- foremost, the lack of a map. Rotsler could also use an appendix describing the myriad alien races he throwd out. This novel, in the Burroughs tradition, is the first of a series, so it has an annoying open ending. However the characterization is above average and the writing doesn't get in the way of the plot. Rating: Good.

THE GODS OF XUMA by David J. Lake

DAW UW1360 1978 \$1.50

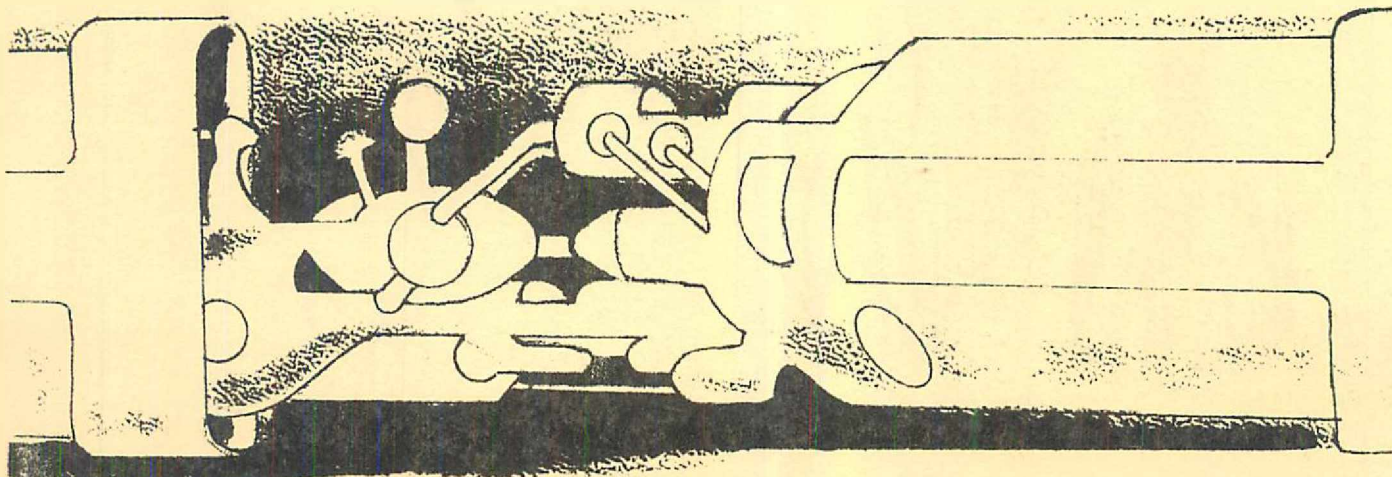
Set in the same universe as his previous novel, WALKERS ON THE SKY, Lake returns to follow another colony ship sent out just before the Earth was destroyed in an atomic war. This ship comes to a planet that bears a striking resemblance to the Mars of Burroughs -- complete with canals, deserts, ice caps, and redskinned hominid natives. But here the similarities end. Natives go through four distinct periods of sexual development -- first as neuter children; then as males (those that turn female are considered perverted); then as females, who are the natural rulers; finally as neuter Elders who teach the children, take care of the canals, and remain apart from the warring city states that they inhabited during their previous phases in this two million year old civilization.

The Earthmen, naturally, come with lasers and other powerful weapons, to make themselves rulers. For the Elders have kept the planet in the same technological niche (the level of the 18th century) for countless centuries, trying to form a long-lasting stable civilization. The Earthmen soon discover that the 'backward' natives are not as simple as they seemed at first and that their dominion mayt be a short-term affair. Lake creates an exceptionally detailed alien civilization in this carefully crafted novel. The writing is far above average, and the characterization is good. He does, however, tend to pull rabbits out of his hat for an ending. Still, this is a well-thought-out, entertaining novel. Rating: Good.

STAR SONGS OF AN OLD PRIMATE by James Tiptree Jr.

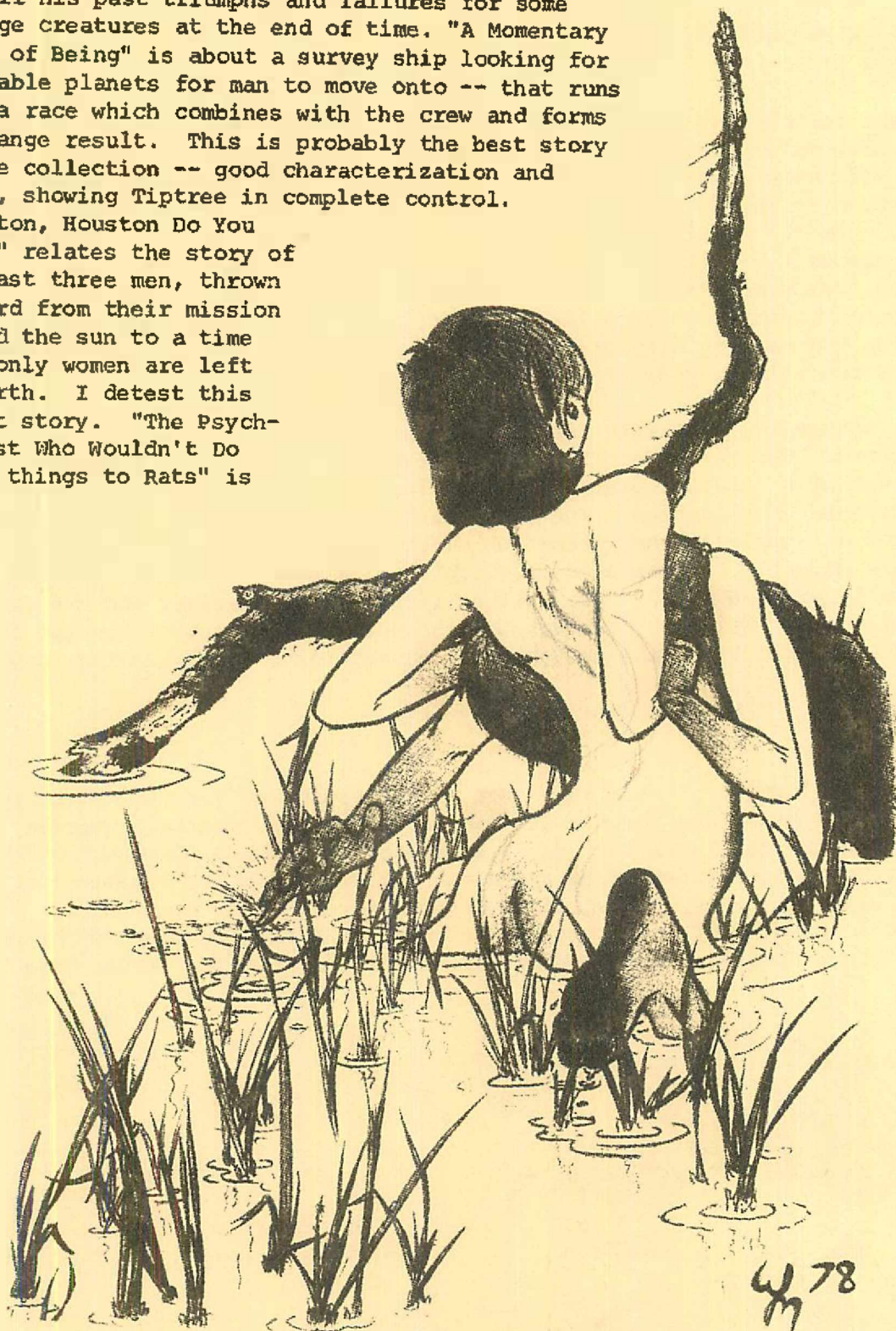
Del Rey 1978 \$1.75

Tiptree's third collection of stories is not as satisfying as the first two were. Despite the award nominations for two of these stories (and "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?" won the Nebula) I have never liked either of them. Contents of the collection: "Your Haploid Heart" requires a man to determine the "humaness" of an alien society with two races, biologically different. It is an interesting story, although I have never felt comfortable with the first-person-present-tense, used here ("I stood" has read more easily for me than "I stand"). Aside from this



purely personal prejudice, the story is flawed because Tiptree brings in a group to save the narrator from way out in left field, destroying the credibility of the narrative. "And So On, And So On" tells of the passengers of a transgalactic flight with their examination of what has happened to them since all their goals have been reached. Interesting but minor. "Her Smoke Rose Up Forever" tells of a man trapped in time, reliving all his past triumphs and failures for some strange creatures at the end of time. "A Momentary Taste of Being" is about a survey ship looking for habitable planets for man to move onto -- that runs into a race which combines with the crew and forms a strange result. This is probably the best story in the collection -- good characterization and style, showing Tiptree in complete control.

"Houston, Houston Do You Read?" relates the story of the last three men, thrown forward from their mission around the sun to a time when only women are left on Earth. I detest this sexist story. "The Psychologist Who Wouldn't Do Awful things to Rats" is



about a researcher who discovers that his 'subjects' have combined to form a new type of existence which he cannot share. This story leaves me cold. "She Waits For All Men Born" tells of a strange mutant woman searching for something in a post-holocaust world, but finding that she can only destroy the few pitiful survivors who fear her and try to kill her. Another minor Tiptree. The book also has an introduction by Ursula K. LeGuin. I suppose I should comment on the revelation that Tiptree is female. I never suspected it -- so much for my critical faculties. But it does bring something to an examination of the stories in this collection. For example, there is a lot of blatant phallic symbolism in several of the stories -- "Smoke" and "Houston" in particular. The male characters in these stories are very stereotyped -- much in the macho Hemingway mode. When Tiptree is writing propaganda stories -- as many of the stories in this collection are -- the stereotypes show far more than when she concentrates on simply telling a story and using characters of either sex to make her point, rather than trying to make characters fit the point of view she is trying to convey. Forcing characters into stereotypes has hurt her writing the past couple years. "Houston" does not get its point across nearly as well as "The Women Men Don't See." In that story she was much more concerned with her characters than with trying to prove a point and the story was more successful for that reason. In all this collection of Tiptree's recent stories is disappointing. The only really fine story here is "A Momentary Taste of Being."

DANCERS IN THE AFTERGLOW by Jack Chalker
Ballantine 1978 \$1.75

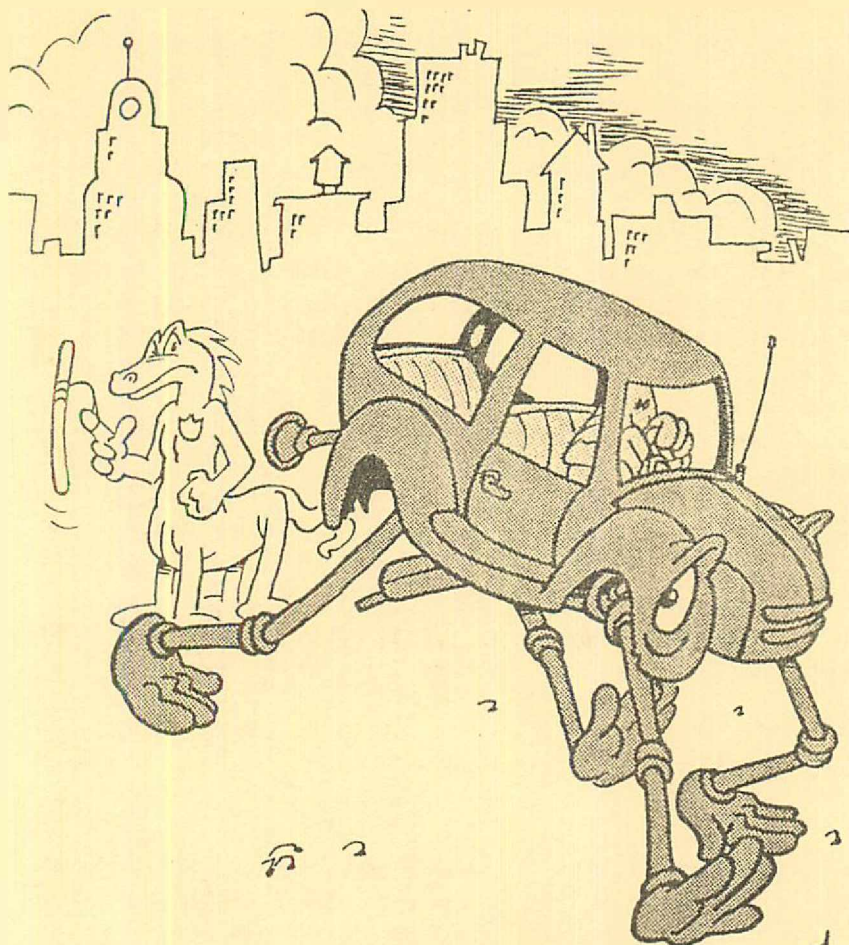
In the future, Humanity is at war with the Machist -- a war that humanity was losing, but is now stalemated unless the Machist takes over Ondine, a luxury planet. Earth sends its secret weapon to Ondine to delay an enemy takeover til a rescue fleet can be dispatched.

When the Machist takes over a planet, they use a series of brain washing experiments to turn the population into something that is no longer human. Daniel, suffering from his loss of humanity, must try and stop this; or at least slow it down until help arrives. Daniel is no ordinary man, but a man's brain -- all that survived his ship's destruction in war -- tied to a computer and controlling 22 robots sent down to the planet. Chalker's style and plotting have improved since his first novel, but the spectacle of an entire world being mentally and physically destroyed is still depressing.

BLIND VOICES by Tom Reamy
Berkeley/Putnam 1978 \$8.95

This novel reminds me of SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES and THE CIRCUS OF DR. LAO -- until the last couple chapters when Reamy turns it into DEATH WISH by killing off almost all his major characters. In the 1920s in a small midwestern town Haverstocks Traveling Curious and Wondershow arrives -- the same day as the first talking picture is due to premiere at a local theater. Three teenaged girls are drawn to the show, and to their eventual predetermined fates. Reamy captures the feeling of such a time and place. His style and characterization are well above average. Unlike some of Reamy's other fiction this is undeniably fantasy, involving esper powers. The climactic sequence leans strongly on the climax of FREAKS, an underground classic film of the thirties. But there is just too much gratuitous violence in the novel's ending to be successful.

Tom Reamy died last year and this will be his only novel. The promise of this novel toward larger, more important works will never be realized -- one of the great tragedies of sf in the 70s.



BIRTH OF FIRE by
Jerry Pournelle
Pocket Books 76/78 \$1.75

Reprint of one of the few good Laser books. Being the only adult caught in a gang fight where a killing occurs, Garrett Pittson faces a choice between a long jail term or enforced colonization of Mars. Once on Mars, a world controlled by Earth and giant corporations who can afford the high cost of mineral exploitation, Garrett is befriended by Sarge (who seems modeled on a local fan) and hires on to help at Sarge's farm. It is understood that if he works out, Garrett will be staked to a farm of his own later on. But Earth is worried about the independence of the farmers and miners on Mars, and takes

steps to insure that Earth remains in control. An excellent juvenile with a distinct Heinlein flavor. Characters are real, plotting good. It is very difficult to put this novel down once you have started it.

MASTODONIA by Clifford Simak
Del Rey 1978 (\$7.95 hard/\$1.95 paper)

This book is something of a departure for Simak, as it is the first one of his I can recall told in the first person. An archeologist, having 'retired' to a small farm in the midwest where he was born and raised, makes contact with a stranded alien scientist -- an immortal who has been on Earth for a million years, and who has the ability to open gates in time. Along with an old girlfriend, the archeologist opens up these gates and exploits them by making a deal with a safari outfit to send groups of hunters back in time to hunt the dread Tyrannosaurus Rex. Simak manages all this with his usual rural wit and style. No one considers how travel in time will affect human history -- a point I thought Simak overlooked, but which has been so well explored in sf that it is probably an understood cliché by now. Not the best book Simak has produced by any means, but still a quite readable adventure story.

GORDON R. DICKSON'S SF BEST
Dell 1978 \$1.75

Collection of Dickson's short stories, the best of which is "Call Him Lord." Why they didn't include "Soldier Ask Not" is beyond me. Other stories: "Hilifter", "Brother Charlie", "Act of Creation", "Idiot Solvant", "Tiger Green", "Of the People", "Dolphin's Way", and "In the Bone". Includes complete bibliography.

(continued from page 40)

Eliot portrayed the moment of revelation as an ambiguous one. The thunder's noise, monosyllabic tones ("DA") were interpreted by the poet/prophet Tiresias as three philosophical principles with which to live one's life. If we have abandoned the traditional religious values because they no longer have meaning ("I can connect/ Nothing with Nothing"), he nevertheless suggests that values must be devised and lived by. What they are is not as important as their existence. The thunder approves any interpretation of its utterances in Eliot's THE WASTE LAND.

The revelation -- a light show, as well as one of sound -- is also ambiguous in CLOSE ENCOUNTERS. In its otherworldly beauty, however, there is no question that it has revived the sense of wonder and dreams of all who are witnesses -- or who will be witnesses to the images Truffaut collects that night. As in the Grail Romances, one one quester successfully completes the quest. Jillian Gulier (Galahad?) remains behind, not quite pure of heart enough since her desires are primarily tied to her son, Barry. The revelation in the form of the arrival of the alien ships and aliens' disembarkation is timed for Roy Neary's arrival; his questions and confusion are at last answered. A sense of wonder is apparent on everyone's faces: the land and the community (not to mention the audience) feel a palpable sense of joy and renewal. It is the movie's audience whose feelings the film is constructed to reach, of course. WE are the Waste Landers that the poet/prophet filmmaker must touch and spark. And Neary leaves the earth with the aliens (coincidentally at the auspicious age of 33), leaves in a literal sense the earthly world for another, rather than in the poetic sense of the Grail Romances.

Of course this kind of discussion of CLOSE ENCOUNTERS touches only on the underlying themes and archetypes used in the film. It says nothing of what could easily be another essay of praise for Spielberg's technique, of the powerful drama and remarkable comic sense demonstrated in CLOSE ENCOUNTERS by that director. Also there is Douglas Trumbull's triumph in the development of special effects, so much better than those of STAR WARS because they subtly shift ordinary events into fantastic ones and so are eminently suited to the story that suggests the possibility that the extraordinary can spring from the mundane.

As did Eliot's work, in an earlier time, suggest the possibility of new spiritual values for people who have discarded others, Spielberg speaks to a people who have discarded belief in magic and the fantastic, who live with too few dreams (Perhaps this is why SF fans did not feel this to be a science fiction film).

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS is a truly extraordinary achievement on all levels for the hope and beauty it portrays.

THE FANIVORE



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SCIENTIFRICTION 9 arrived here today, and is quite impressive. I found myself sitting down and reading (or skimming, depending on the nature of each piece) right through -- something I do all

too rarely these days with new fanzines. (I think I've become an Old Fan And Tired...) (...catchphrase courtesy EYE 3, circa 1955...)

No MAJOR ARCANA included with my copy...change your mind or was I shortchanged? ((Changed my mind and did something crazy -- I started a newszine. Its first

issue, FILE 770:1 -- was distributed to all STFR recipients in place of MAJOR ARCANA. Those who wondered why I bothered to list fanzines received, and no addressees, in that issue just ran into a throwback to the listings I've been running in STFR. They existed only to tell faneds whether their zines had made it through the mail, and to acquaint anyone curious with all the titles and faneds presently active. Every so often a zine trade of mine gets disconnected because the postal disservice loses my or the other editor's zine, and we grump off in mutual fits of hubris, erasing each other from our mailing lists.))

Harry Warner's piece is sensible to a fault, and at once disappointing and reassuring. Disappointing, because I've looked forward for years now to a good history of fandom in the '60s -- my most active period -- and reassuring because after reading A WEALTH OF FABLE I have to agree with Harry that he's not the person to write that history. In fact, he probably was not the right person to write AWOFF, inasmuch as his fanac was too confined to FAPA in the fifties, and he had to rely far too much on what fanzines were available to him. (The omission of Cliff Gould's OBLIQUE and its place in the post-PSYCHOTIC period, circa 1956-7, is only one example of AWOFF's failure; there are a remarkable number of errors and omissions in the piece -- Terry Carr says they add up to almost one a page!) (I hope to write a series of parallel articles that fill the holes and correct some of the errors, for MOTA.)

On the other hand, I can think of no one other than Harry who had the basic knowledge and experience, the good will, and the determination to carry through a project of that size for that length of time. And for that reason I strongly doubt that we will ever see another work the equal of ALL OUR YESTERDAYS and/or A WEALTH OF FABLE. Instead, if we're lucky, we'll see a few personal memoirs and histories of narrower segments of fandom.

If I was going to write a history of the sixties, and I'm not, I think I would identify the sixties as a period of fundamental change for fandom -- the decade in which fandom finally outgrew its original small-community outlook and size, lost much of its sense of continuity, and suffered a series of barbarian invasions which changed its tone from an almost insular in-groupishness to that of its present day multiplicity.

I recently unearthed a copy of VOID 15, which Greg Benford and I published in 1959. In it I reviewed a fanzine called TWIG ILLUSTRATED put out by Guy Terwilliger and Dan Adkins. The main thrust of my review was that TWIG was a fanzine outside the main traditions of fandom, and with its own coterie of readers who were largely unaware of the rest of fandom. I bewailed this "breaking down" of fannish communications, this "fragmenting" of fandom into separate groups with minimal communication between groups. That seems awfully quaint, in light of subsequent events, but may have been a precursor of today's fannish state. Ah well...

I was remarkably taken aback by Jon Gustafson's characterization of Phil Foglio as (with Rotsler) a "brilliant humorist." Really? "Brilliant" is not a word I'd throw around that casually. I can think of a number of artists and cartoonists I'd rank ahead of Foglio in the "brilliant humorist" category. Many weren't even on the Fan Artist Hugo ballot. Several can be found in this same issue of SCIENTIFRICTION.

To me, all of Gustafson's prosing about Art is rendered suspect by his characterization of Foglio.

There are two aspects to any cartoonist that must be considered: (1) the actual nature of his art; (2) the nature of his ideas and (if any) writing. Where the actual drawing is concerned, Foglio is at best a journeyman. His technique is hardly



"A DOPPELSTEALING DEMON"

refined; his work looks like hasty sketches in all but a few instances. It lends itself better to mimeo -- uniform thickness lines, no brushwork -- than it does to offset or electrostencilling. The basis of the style comes from Bjo Trimble's art -- wherein the same style has been developed to a considerably more mature realization (not surprising when you consider that Bjo has been doing it for more than twenty years and was further along even fifteen years ago), and with greater use of subtlety. In terms of craft -- use of tools and techniques -- Foglio is barely even a journeyman. His work looks like the work of a beginner with some (largely undeveloped) potential. (In oils Foglio looks like a rank amateur -- the display of his painting at the Suncon was a genuine embarrassment to the Art Show, if not to him personally.)

But cartooning is not fast sketches alone. It also depends for its impact on ideas, the gags or whatever, which support the art. This is where I am stunned by Gustafson's characterization of Foglio as a "brilliant humorist" along with Rotsler. Rotsler's ideas are subtle and insightful. His timing (in his strips) is fully professional. (What a shame "Sam Martian" never made it into the newspapers!) I see little or nothing of this in Foglio's work, which is typical high school yearbook stuff -- sophomoric at best, silly and pointless at worst.

Yet Foglio did win the Hugo, didn't he? Why?

I think it goes back to what I said before -bout the way fandom has changed. Foglio is the darling of a sizeable group of Midwestern people who have invaded fandom in the past two or three years. At MidAmeriCon -- within a year or two of his appearance in fandom -- people were wearing large buttons urging Foglio for a Hugo. Who were these people? No one I had ever seen before. No one -- I think it's safe to say -- who had the vaguest idea who else was in the running (or deserved to be) for the Fan Artist Hugo. No one who had any real acquaintance with Sanz (more than one or two, more than those in which Foglio appeared), or fan art. Foglio entered fandom with a full-blown clique -- a group of people who appear to number between one and three hundred!

Needless to say, this is not the way fandom used to be, and when you have power-cliques casting block votes in these numbers, the voting for fan Hugos becomes absurdly meaningless. I am not saying that Foglio shouldn't be in line for an eventual Hugo -- some day, when he has matured both in personal outlook at ability -- but that jumping him to the head of the line over people like Rotsler totally devalues the award. It means now that the contest (which the Hugos originally were not)

is between those who can rally the largest cliques of block voters, not those who believe their work should stand on its own merits.

Turning to the pro artist awards, I think Gustafson was correct in his assessment of what the voters usually prefer, but he reckoned without two things. One is the fascination of sf fans for art which uses superbly detailed machinery. In a phrase, the Bonestell fixation. Although Sternback is not quite as good as Don Davis at depicting machines in space (and attendant phenomena), he is very good at it, and -- unlike Davis, who had the misfortune to appear first on the cover of AMAZING, a despised magazine -- he's had excellent exposure on the covers of ANALOG. Never sell that short; Freas' wins are probably more due to his ANALOG work than his, say DAW book covers. (Which reminds me of a related point -- are these awards for color work now? What about black and white illustrations? They seem to go all but unsung.)

But Sternback is a very limited artist. He can't render human beings even as well as Bonestell did. His GALAXY covers (apparently mercifully forgotten by the voters) were wretched embarrassments, crude and ugly by almost all criteria. His line-drawings waver between adequate and inadequate. (Some are soon to appear with a couple Dell books; I'm told they're awful.) Compared with DiFate, Sternback can't cut it.

But he won. Why?

Well, although I find Foglio obnoxiously conceited, I like Rick as a person, so this is not easy to say. But I think Rick has become very good with the Glad Hand, doing with the pros what Foglio has done with some fans. The end result is that the voter, pondering his ballot, considers not the relative merits of the art by each nominee, but what he knows about the nominee. And when he gets to Sternback, he says to himself, "Hmmm, Rick Sternback...Good fellow. Fun at parties...He's done a couple of nice pieces, too; guess I'll vote for him."

There was a time when I regarded the Hugos as "better" than the Nebulas, because the Nebula Awards have been decided by cliques from the beginning. But these days I see little to choose between them. Admitting that these awards are not based on quality of achievement but on popularity doesn't excuse the way they're being exploited. Face it: a Hugo (in the pro categories at least) means Bucks for the winner. As Harlan Ellison showed us ten years ago, if you want the award badly enough and have the necessary skills to exploit the voters, you can get yourself a Hugo and promote yourself into the Big Bucks thereby.

Increasingly, I think, this factor will determine who wins future awards. Maybe we should change the name to the Hustler Award.

Jumping ahead to your comments (in the letters) about the control of sf by "a small group," I think one's reaction to this state of affairs will depend on how one gets along with that group. What bothers me is that increasing the "small group" of NYC editors is made up not of people who have any real background in sf, but of people who lucked into an sf position at a given publisher's because



they held their hands up when asked if they had ever read any sf. These people are not familiar with the history of sf or anything which happened in the field before, say, 1960 (maybe I should have said 1970!), but their taste, or lack thereof, are beginning to dominate the field. Some are proving to be good editors; others are not. But all are entrenched; the bad will play musical chairs with the good. And so it goes.

I myself am about through with the sf field. I am disgusted by the way "sci-fi" success has taken over.

I've been doing a radio show since last summer. I'm now getting into record production and engineering. With two partners I'm starting a record company. I look forward to the day when it will be financially possible for me to leave the sf field behind. I'll stay in fandom -- or at least the neglected corner where my friends are -- but TV ads for STARLOG ("Those crazy conventions!") and stuff like that will no longer concern me. Lou Stathis' excellent article contains a few other reasons why I look forward to that day.

((Deprived of my italics this issue, I shall have to tough it out the way my technically limited forebears did. All that primitive stuff -- rubbing two sticks together, chipping stone knives, stencilling without a Selectric... On the matter of Foglio, isn't it somewhat unfair and irrelevant to carp about his alleged lack of humility? If modesty was a requirement for a Hugo winner just think how many people would have to give their rockets back. It also seems contradictory to accuse a person of courting a bloc vote whom one has also accused of very unattractive personal behavior. Nevertheless I share your belief that Foglio's work is not the best fan work being published. Why, then, did he defeat the field in 1977? Rotsler, who always had an uphill fight against conventional illustrators, let his level of activity lapse, probably due to the amount of work he was putting into his pro writing. Canfield, a versatile and original talent, has very seldom used his cartoons for criticism of fans or people in general -- kind of strange considering his writing for WASTE PAPER. But when I think of Canfield I think of robots and nude ladies -- as well as he does them, I personally have found it a lot easier to vote for Rotsler and Shull in the past few years. There are a lot of good artists -- so there comes a time to evaluate what each does with his art. As for Kirk, he's the only nominee whose past Hugos actually exceeded the number of fanzines he appeared in. Shull can do many things excellently: cartoons, illustrations, beautiful fantasy scapes, satire. But he hasn't got the time to turn out much work any more, as he is in charge of the graphics department at an oil company. So into this scene you toss Phil Foglio, whose work is visible, reasonably good, and who personally meets many more fans than the rest of the nominees. He comes from the Midwest where the votes are. It's not too tough to figure out how he beat these others.))

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Let me get this off my chest right off the top: do me a favor and jug your book reviewer and do your own reviews. Even if it means only having as many as you do in this issue it would be

worth it. Your review of THE DARK DESIGN is careful, thoughtful and perceptive. The only virtue of Stan Burns' is their brevity. (He has joined the group calling "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?" repellent, which I find awfully interesting -- as I do the liberal use of "humanist" and "widening gulfs." That last bit reminds me of the cant Nixon's troops used to discourage investigation into

Watergate.) It's not that his reviews are particularly bad, just that they're typically superficial.

I approached Lou Stathis' article with the attitude that "oh fuck, yet another slushpile reading story", for really, I've seen entirely too many of them. But... I liked this. Not because he said anything that hadn't been said before, but because he said it well. The piece has personality and more than a modicum of wit and sensitivity.

"Cat Versus Dog" was actually funny. Jesus, I can't make that out -- fanzine humor is never funny, is it? But I sat there, chortling and snorting while I read it. You figure it.

I'm sorry that I didn't see the last issue of STFR so that I could get involved in the original discussion of Malzberg vs. Del Rey. I gather from context that you defended Lester, although I don't know on what grounds. In your response to Arthur Hlavaty you commented that his mind is made up regardless of what evidence is turned up (about Del Rey's integrity). All right, all right, I've got to admit that my taste and Del Rey's are about 180 degrees apart. What really irks me is that his column appears in the sf magazine with the largest circulation, and a lot of people reading it are likely to avoid the books he pans. I don't agree with you that his audience shares his parameters of sf. It's more than a little possible that they have that view, if they do, because they've been listening to people like him for entirely too long. If they tried other forms, that aren't so restricted, they might well like them. They certainly aren't going to find out if they continue to follow the advice of a reviewer who so blatantly displays his own limitations. And they are limitations, like; all this business about "filthy lucre" and "little literary magazines" is just a red herring. Why is it that little magazines always get dragged into any criticism of pulp writing? They have their defenders, certainly, but I doubt that many of the people who disagree with Del Rey about literary values are really talking about that particular genre. Your argument reminds me of those who used to defend the quality of television programming. It's always "the public gets what it wants" when in reality the public hasn't had a whole lot of choice. There's no way to find out if the public will appreciate good television programs if they're not offered the chance to find out. Although Del Rey "only promotes -- he doesn't decree", the very size of his potential audience gives him a lot of clout. (Specific:) If he tells his audience that a book like the Strugatsky's *ROADSIDE PICNIC/TALE OF THE TROIKA* isn't very good, the chances are they'll pass the book by. And that's a mistake; the book is incredible! It's not literary magazine fare, it's beautifully written, engaging well-plotted, and has excellent characterization. It contains two of the best short sf novels I've ever read, and it pisses me off that people might pass it by because of something Del Rey was too obtuse to get -- namely the satire of the second novel.

((Damn. Without those italics to let me heedlessly interrupt paragraphs, I'm really having to mind my manners this issue. Before nitpicking, I will agree with your basic premise that if Del Rey blows it, a lot of people will be put off from a good read. But in general do you doubt that the readers of ANALOG buy it for any other purpose but to read relentlessly logically developed, scientifically sound adventures -- provided the editor has managed to buy any that month? If Del Rey's conservative parameters are not wholly agreed with by ANALOG's readers, they are certainly nearer to the readers' than any other prozine book reviewer's. //As to the way I bludgeoned the little magazines, that's the inevitable way to fight back at critics who insist on comparing pulp stories with handpicked literary masterworks (Joyce, Fitzgerald) rather than the equivalent product in that genre.))

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Your commentaries on your political involvement, especially your interest in JFK, struck home. He was my idol -- I was only 12 when he was elected, and I don't know quite why he seemed to be the

savior. I know my family was definitely against Ike and Nixon -- I grew up hating Nixon, and knowing Ike was ineffectual; my parents and grandparents were one of the few Democrats in a very strongly Republican suburb, and mistrust of Tricky Dicky was as natural as the sun rising in the morning. I didn't know enough about politics to know which one was "right" (Nixon or Kennedy), just that Nixon had to be wrong. My grandparents were Catholic, so that didn't hurt Kennedy's cause. Besides (and this is from a pre-pubescent outlook), Kennedy was just such a hunk: he was youth, and "vigah" and everything would be coming up roses once he got elected. It annoyed me no end, later in the 60s when I was more politically aware, to see Johnson getting all the credit for civil rights legislation and other programs that Kennedy had initiated (but couldn't get past the divided Congress) being passed 'cause LBJ had so many favors owed him by the largely Democratic congress he had worked so long in.

I had shaken Kennedy's hand when his motorcade got stuck at a stoplight, and was overwhelmed by the man. His assassination really got to me -- the school started broadcasting the radio commentaries without any preliminary announcements: I was in Chorus, and barely heard anything -- til a couple of us realized what was going on. Our director was the Republican committeeman in our town (I was living in New Jersey at the time) and he insisted that -- despite what had happened -- we continue rehearsing Christmas carols for our winter concert. About five of us walked out; he later passed out one-hour detentions to us, which we protested and got him overruled on. It was just so inconceivable that such a thing could happen....

When Bobby was shot, that really took the cake, as far as I was concerned. I wasn't that fond of his politics; he did seem a bit brash -- but it was the Kennedy charisma vs. old hard-party-line LBJ, and I felt involved enough that I started working at his local campaign headquarters (by then I was back living in Pittsburgh). We had celebrated the California primary victory at the office (being SURE he would win), and I was watching tv at home when he was shot -- actually being a witness to the whole thing wrecked incredible havoc on my mind...I'm getting chills writing about it now -- almost 10 years later.

Lou Stathis' dealings with Sol Cohen remind me of my own experiences with Atlantic Records. I'd been a record reviewer here in Pittsburgh for about 2½ years; had columns in all the college papers, plus in a weekly that was put out downtown, so I had a fairly large, diverse, on the whole well-educated readership. I took a lot of time on my columns, not just the commentary ones, but the concert reviews, and record reviews especially. I subscribed to all the major pop publications, plus BILLBOARD, CASH BOX and RECORD WORLD. I kept files on all major artists, including copies of reviews of past albums, biographies, etc. Filled an entire filing cabinet. And this was for something that I was not paid well for -- I'd be lucky to make \$30 a month. But it was worth not getting paid, 'cause I was having fun, being able to express myself creatively, and getting into all those shows and receiving so many freebie albums. And I worked damn hard, listening to albums two or three times before I'd start writing, incorporating past history and comparatives to other artists. I wasn't going to submit something I wasn't proud of. Because of my writing, Sandy Gibson, who was then head of publicity at Atlantic, offered me a job as her assistant -- to write publicity releases,

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FANIVORE



handle correspondence from writers, baby various artists, arrange press parties, etc. I was thrilled to say the least -- getting a job in THE BIG APPLE, and just generally being a success. Found the job to be ridiculously overworked and underpaid; I was little more than a slave to Sandy's whims. But what hurt most was discovering what happened to all of my (and other writers') hard done reviews: If they were favorable, I wrote a nice letter thanking the reviewer, and filed the favorable review in the artist's file -- if it was an especially nice review, I'd send a copy to the artist's manager. If it was a lukewarm or negative review, the reviewer was demoted to a lower record list (ie, he didn't get the

good stuff any more, he only got the ones we were trying desperately to push). If he kept writing negative reviews, even though there were some positive ones, he could find himself demoted off the list altogether. It didn't matter how well-written or constructive the review was, only the opinion. Lovely. (By the way, I used the masculine pronoun because the vast majority of the writers I dealt with were male -- like about 90%.)

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Mike Parkash's "Cat Versus Dog" is so funny I laughed till I cried. I tried to read it aloud to someone else, and couldn't do it -- had to hand it over to her to read herself. I think I'll

try again tonight when my brother and sister are over, but suspect I still won't be able to read it aloud for breaking up. (Actually I have other brothers and sister, but the sister in town with a cat and the brother who has a dog are the ones who will probably also be driven to weeping. What I'd like to do is corner them and read it to the two of them at once, but I suspect I won't be able to get past "Bites heads off chickens.")

Lou Stathis' "Urban Blitz" -- it's obvious from the article that most of what finally drove him off the job of slush-pile reader is inherent in the job itself. Reading bad stories is a job that wears out the reader eventually anyway, and reading bad stories for Sol Cohen, for the reasons Lou Stathis gives, is more exhausting than even the usual slush pile. But I also get the suspicion from the article that he made the job a lot harder for himself even than it should have been, by taking too idealistic an approach to it. An editor can't be a writing workshop leader, because there isn't time.

THRU THE SLUSHPILE

WITH RUBBER SHOES

I suspect, too, that the compromise he mentions -- making up a form rejection note with a list of reasons-why-this-rejected to check off -- is not a good idea. In most cases a story that's bad is bad all over, bad style, bad plotting, bad characterization, and it's pointless to tell the authors so, because if they could see how bad the work was in the first place they wouldn't have sent it in. A story that's pretty good but has one outstanding flaw -- say, bad characterization -- is likely to be either so "almost" that it's worth buying, and the editor will want to put in the time to ask for a rewrite with a letter explaining why, or else, if it doesn't seem salvageable, it's not worth checking off the general remark "bad characterization", because the writer probably knows where the weak spots are and is hoping the strong spots would pull it through.

Besides, my own experience in collecting rejection slips is that editors are not particularly good at defining what's wrong with a story. A rejection slip from an editor I respect is a strong indication that something is wrong with the story, but I don't usually find that I can agree with what the editor points to as the source of the wrongness. I get told a lot that my stories are too quiet, but I get told that about stories that I wanted to be quiet in mood. Probably the editors are overstocked with stories of that sort, and what they mean by "too quiet" is simply "overstocked" or possibly what they mean is that they just don't like that kind of story, but in several cases it's seemed to me, when I went over the stories, that there were things wrong with them, but not in the tone.

A friend of mine who writes sharply satirical stories often gets told that her stories have no point. (I've suggested to her that she type them on triangular paper.) Her favorite for honest rejection slips is Robert Silverberg, whose rejection slips to her usually amount to "I'm not sure why, but I don't want it." She has a lovely matched pair acquired over a couple of months from him, one saying "I like this, but it's not science fiction," and the second, "This one is science fiction, but I don't like it."

What most of the editors seem to do with any form of personal rejection slip is not to criticize but encourage the "almosts". For writers who don't seem to the editor good enough to be treated as an "almost", a simple hypocritical form letter expanding "thank you, but no thank you" to whatever length fits nicely on the stationery is as good as anything. The only really useful criticisms I've ever gotten from editors were on stories they thought good enough to buy in the first place -- comments like "the title is too romantic" or "the surprise should be placed closer to the end, at the very end if possible."

I think my favorite rejection slip recently is on two poems the editor didn't read. She answered my letter of inquiry, "We do indeed have record of your poems, and they were checked out to a reader shortly after they arrived. I have done everything possible, including threaten homicide, to induce this reader to return your poems so that the final decision can be made, but he simply refuses to return them." So she apologized and said I should send them elsewhere. I plan to watch the obituary notices for news of the reader's demise, which sounds imminent.

TARAL

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Popeye's tattoo was on both arms, and he once displayed a magnificent rendering of the USS Arizona on his chest as well. On several other occasions, however, his naval pageantry was

absent. We can only guess the fate of that notable tattoo.

The Non-Interference Directive in Star Trek always drove me up the wall. Suppose there are advanced beings hovering over Earth right now. I want them to interfere. I don't want to continue paying income tax, obeying primitive clothing taboos, developing dental caries, wallowing in ignorance, waiting for WJ3 or Ecocatastrophe, and eventually dying of old age (which I'm sure is avoidable), just because some parallel Captain Kirk has such an underdeveloped sense of ethics that he can treat aggregations of human beings like an abstracted entity for his study. That's a favorite game of Marxists and Keynesians. I don't want to be anybody's shrunken head in a glass case. If it's possible to live forever and travel to the stars and do all those wonderful things that arouse our sense of wonder in sf, then I want to. If you disagree, picture yourself a Brazilian head hunter and ask yourself if you wouldn't be better off where you are now. If you answer you're better off in the jungles of Brazil, then you're free to go there. The Brazilian native isn't free to come here. That's an important difference.

Kennedy was probably the first American president I noticed. (Probably I noticed him long before I noticed whoever was Prime Minister of Canada at the time.) First thing about him I can recall is his appearance on tv for what I think was his inauguration, or possibly the election coverage itself. I was building things out of "Lincoln Logs" and thought the whole business was a drag. Later he was just a father figure with a smile, an odd way of talking, and charisma, before charisma was even fashionable. I remember being excited about the Cuban missile crisis, and not knowing whether to be disappointed or thankful that Cuban missiles couldn't reach Toronto. Or could they? When Kennedy was shot I remember being in a grade four classroom, and thinking "Oboy! History! And maybe they'll let us out of school early too!" I knew it wasn't nice to want the president to die, but I also knew it would be so much more interesting and dramatic if he did. As everyone knows in this time line he died shortly after. By the greatest of coincidences, my family went to see PT 109 the next night, as we had planned to for a week. Although the temptation was enormous, when I became older I manfully resisted the urge to publish a memoirs of Kennedy to cash in on the fad.

If Harry Warner, Jr. is stepping out of the fan history scene, there are at least two replacements in a specialized part of fandom. Victoria and I are interested in Canadian fandom, and one or the other of us may write a substantial history of Canadian fandom in the future. The main drawback seems to be the difficulty of getting source material, and the congenital reluctance of surviving Canadian fans to discuss the follies of their youth. A marginal fan here, Anne Sherlock, once decided to research Canadian Fan history, and even collected together a few zines of the Old Derelicts era, but when she interviewed old fans the process went something like this: "Hi, I collect Canadiana, and I'd like to learn what sort of asshole things you fans did when you were too young to know any better. If you're too ashamed you can just tell me what some of the others did, and they'll tell me about you." "Umph - grrr. Can't remember. Bye." She gave up in despair a little while ago. No doubt this will make the job harder for following acts, but I think with a more sympathetic approach not all is lost.

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Let me say first of all that I really enjoyed STFR despite the fact that I still consider Stan Burns' reviews too short to be useful. For example, he says Dickson's prose is dull, but I find quite the opposite. I might be able to refute him if he'd said anything specific.

The rhyme you couldn't remember is:

X is in the White House
Waiting to be elected
Y is in the garbage can
Waiting to be collected

I agree strongly with your contention that at present any deviance from the accepted feminist position seems to be considered treason or chauvinist idiocy, depending on one's gender. There is a disturbing trend in most movements for social change toward homogeneity. Blacks were openly saying that one should not criticize another publicly, that it was important to present one monolithic program rather than a variety. Bullshit, I say. If feminism is to promote more options for people, then it should be possible to hold a number of different positions within feminism. God save me from my allies.

My admittedly less than perfect knowledge of US-Chinese relations seems to contradict what Harry Rose says. It is my understanding that the Chinese were relatively pro-US even shortly after the Communist takeover. Russia is the traditional enemy, and Mao and his associates wanted the US to lend its weight to their new government, particularly since the US had been somewhat neutral during the Boxer Rebellion, and therefore didn't have a legacy of interference in Chinese affairs. The animosity became apparent because then Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was anti-Mao, and publically snubbed the Chinese government, refusing even to shake hands with Chinese officials. The obvious enthusiasm for Nixon's rapprochement by the Chinese seems to support this view.

((The feelings of the Chinese seem difficult to fathom where they concern the US. Whenever it has been convenient to have the US as a balance against their traditional enemy the USSR, the Chinese leadership was capable of warming to America. But in the Chinese press there is a never-ending stream of anti-American reportage, to judge by our own press reports. One can just imagine the situation you described, though given America's role in supporting Chiang Kai-shek one has to wonder whether it was more than a stab at self-interested realpolitik -- not a basis for cultural and economic exchange.))

MIKE GLICKSOHN
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The one thing a letter-
hack who is five-
seven and weighs a
hundred and fifty-
five pounds when
soaking wet wants to do is please an editor



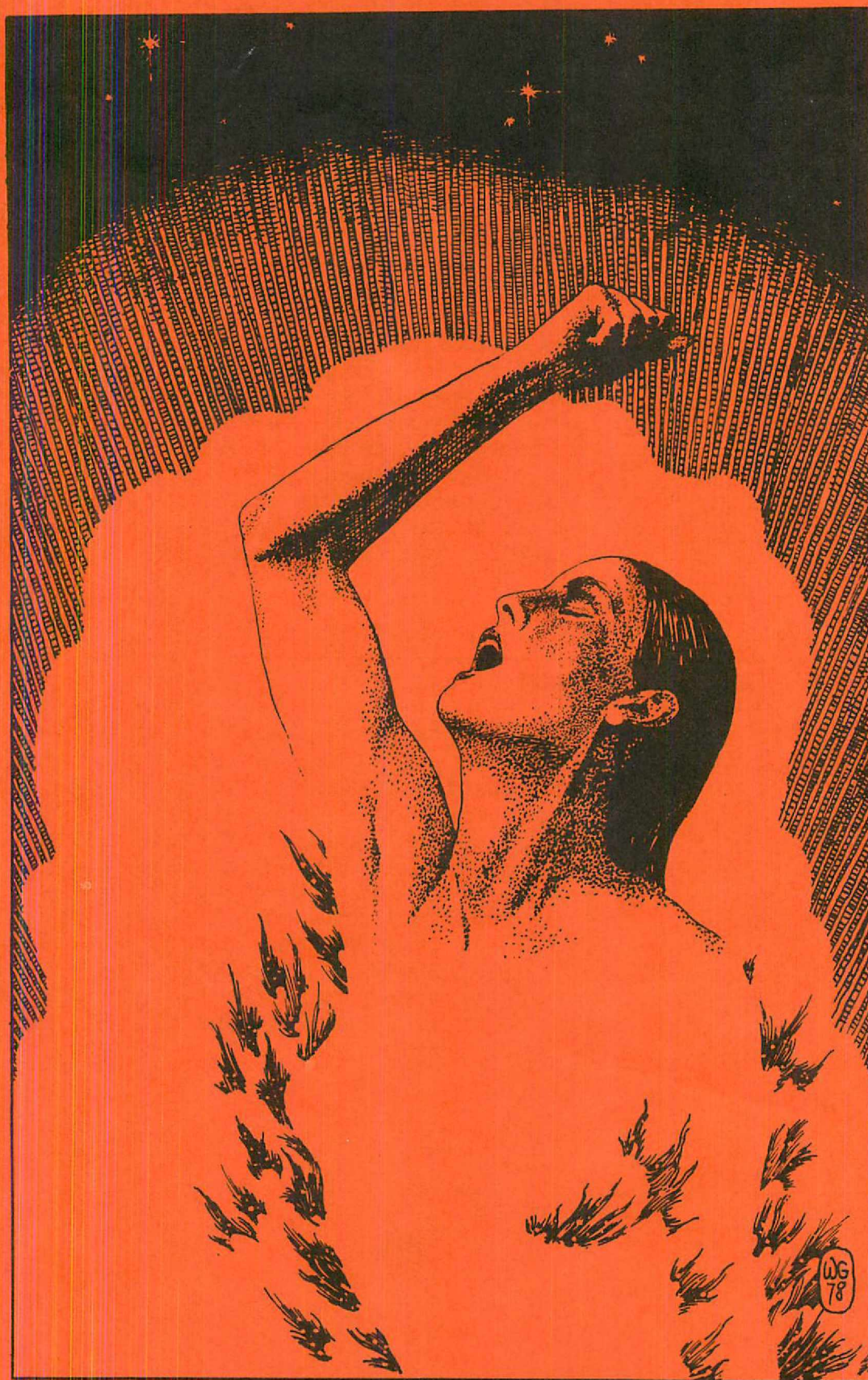
who masses over three hundred pounds and has to duck when entering single storey buildings but you make it rather difficult for me to do that! It appears from your comments on my reaction to your previous two issues that I'm supposed to react to each issue in a way that corresponds to how you feel about it. Otherwise you're in a daze and a dazed Glycer careening around California crushing small villages and destroying orchards, compact cars and one room schoolhouses is simply too horrible to think about. But it's all well and good for you to tell me now that #8 was "a ton better than #7" and you're in a daze trying to figure out why I didn't notice it (it says here right on page 65, you see). How does that help me know whether or not I liked this issue? Suppose I mistakenly thought it was terrific and you were disappointed with it? Or I found little to say about what you thought was your best issue ever? Either way I've got a dazed iLike Glycer again and -- squish! -- there goes Torrance! (One can at least hope that Dave and Gil enjoy that last final farewell orgasm. Or does that just come to those who are hanged rather than crushed to death?)

To avoid the decimation of Los Angeles, I've devised a plan. I suggest that instead of those silly "Why You Got Thish" lists some people waste a page of their fanzines on we introduce a "What I Thought About Thish" page where the editor can tell us how we're going to perceive the issue. All you'd have to do would be to check the appropriate box in a graded list, perhaps something along the lines of "Definite Hugo Winner", "Strong Hugo Contender", "Better Than Bowers", "Solid Interesting Issue", "Competent", "Lower Than Locke", "Beware: Junk Fanzine", "Better Than Poke In The Eye With A Sharp Stick", "Ignore This Crudzine", or "Riverside Quarterly". Please feel free to utilize this concept in your next issue.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM...

SCIENTIFRICTION 10 violates a lot of the concepts I've subscribed to over the years, and this terse letter section is another. The response to STFR 9 was the most voluminous since I've been publishing -- the WAHF list is three times as long as some lettercols I've run. Thanks go to the people published and to: Eric Lindsay, Brian Earl Brown, Ben Indick, Harry Warner, GRR Martin, Neil Kvern, Harry Bose, Arthur Hlavaty, Roy Tackett, Mark Swanson, Jim Meadows III, George Faczolt, Mike Bishop, Buck Coulson, D. Gary Grady, George Flynn, Hank, Franz Zrilich, J. Owen Hanner, Alexis Gilliland, Wayne Hooks, Lou Stathis, Dave Piper, David Govaker, Laurine White, Tony Renner, Leigh Strother-Vien, Alexander Yudenitsch, Alan Bostick, Victoria Vayne, Dr. A. D. Wallace, Roger Dutcher, John Boston, Al Sirois, Jim Hershberg, Denice Hudspeth.





WG 78