SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL

SF/Fantasy News/Review 'Zine -- 5th Nov. '73 Issue -- (Vol. 20, #3; Whole #117) Editor & Publisher: Don Miller -- -- -- 25¢ per copy, 10/\$2.00

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In Brief --

As most of you probably saw from the repro for SOTWJ #117. our emergency "field maintenance" didn't work, and the inking problem was still with us. However, we ran off TGL #66 the next day, and there seemed to be much less of a problem; so we'll run this issue off immediately, and keep our fingers crossed—if the inking is still bad, forgive us; we'll just have to live with the problem for a few issues until we can get it fixed (or find out it can't be fixed)—as long as it's legible, this shouldn't present too great a problem.

No word yet on our eye operation; we should know for sure sometime next week (this is Nov. 23): as of now, it looks like "Go".

(this is Nov. 23); as of now, it looks like "Go".

No change since #116 in status of TWJ #80; if this issue shows an improvement in the inking, we'll resume typing of stencils for #83. Deadline for #83 still loc. 173.

Will postpone our detailed comments on George Fergus' letter until #118 or 119.

More bad news--we had been hoping to get by with current sub rates when postage
goes up in Jan.; however, mimeo supply prices have just jumped dramatically--ink
from \$3.75 to \$4.10/tube, corflu from \$1.10 to \$1.50(!) a bottle, stencils from
\$3.65 to \$4.00/quire (in quantities of 10 quire or more)--with paper expected to
go up even more drastically "when current stock is exhausted" (any day now). So...
price will go up sometime in Jan.; resub before 31 Dec., and get current rates.

SOTWJ is at least bi-weekly; subs: 25¢ ea. (10p), 10/\$2 (80p) or multiples thereof; all subs incl. any issue(s) of THE WSFA JOURNAL pubbed during sub (count as 2 or more issues, dep. on length). For info on airmail, "Collector's" (3rd-class) subs, ads, Overseas Agents (list in \$\frac{1}{2}95\), w/revisions in \$\frac{1}{2}114\), etc., write ed. Address Code meaning in \$\frac{1}{2}115\) (&\$\frac{1}{2}118\), but note that K, Something of yours is mentioned/reviewed herein; N, You are mentioned herein; X, Last issue, unless...

TWJ/SOTWJ

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BOOK REVIEW (Reviewer, DON D'AMMASSA) --

The Fabulous Clipjoint. by Fredric Brown (Bantam Books) ..

The late Fred Brown was more prolific in the mystery field than in the SF genre, and his reputation there was at least as high. The Fabulous Chipjoint was Brown's first full-length mystery novel, and also introduced Ed Hunter, who returned in several of his many later mystery nevels. Ed Hunter, now 18, joins his Uncle Ambrose in tracking down the murderer of his father. The trail leads through his father's past, through a bevy of gangsters and other unsavoury characters, to its inevitable conclusion. Along the way, Ed Hunter's character matures smoothly and logically. Mystery fans will undoubtedly spot the murderer early in the novel, but after all, this was Brown's first attempt at a mystery novel. Read it anyway, if you can find a copy.

MAGAZINES RECEIVED -- .

THE ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE VI: (Aug. '73) ("A Quarterly Journal devoted to the appreciation of Mystery, Detective and Suspense Fiction"; Allen J. Hubin, 3656 Midland, White Bear Lake, MN 55110; offset; 4/06 U.S.; 4/07 elsewhere) -- 106 pp., incl. cover (by William Dixon); no interior illos; Dedication and Tribute (to the late John Creasey); "The Case of the Underground Man? Evolution or Devolution?", by G.A. Finch (re Ross MacDonald's The Underground Man); "The Problem of Moral Vision in Dashiell Hammett's Detective Novels" (Part II: Red Harvest), by George J. Thompson; "The Rocky Steele Novels of John B. West", by Darwin T. Turner; "Mystery Master: A Survey and Appreciation of the Fiction of George Harmon Coxe" (Ch. 3), by J. Randolph Cox; "Roland Daniel--Prolific Mystery Writer", by W.O.G. Lofts; "Sports and the Mystery Story" (III. Baseball and Basketball), by Marvin Lachman; short paperback reviews, by Charles Shibuk; Classified Ads; "Disposing of a Pair of Chosts", by Jacques Barzun (re T.L. Davidson and a Cornell Woolrich collection, Dark City, Dark Men); "The Hammett Checklist Revisited", by William F. Nolan; quiz; movie note (The Glass Key); "1973 Crime Writers Association Conference", by Deryck Harvey; "A Checklist of Mystery, Detective, and Suspense Fiction Published in the U.S., April-June, 1973", by George J. Rausch; reviews of current books, films, plays, TV shows, etc. (incl. many also found in SF-related media); "Retrospective Reviews" (reviews of older books); lettercolumn; "Index to Volumes 5 and 6 of THE ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE"; "Book Exchange" (wants & offers); Continuation of Bibliography of Crime Fiction (H-3 thru H-28 this issue). ## A really fine magazine -- wouldst that the SF field had a magazine as comprehensive as this one Much in recent issues of interest to SF/Fantasy fans. Highly recommended. (Anyone have any back issues for sale or trade? We want 'em. --ed.)) THE MYSTERY TRADER #7 (June '73) (Ethel Lindsay, 6 Langley Ave., Surbiton, Surrey KT6 6QL, England; mimco; no schedule given; 8" x 10"; 4/50p or \$1.25 (4/\$2 overseas via airmail)) -- 22 pp., incl. cover, plus flyer/ad; cover not credited; illo by Morris; mostly ads/lists of books for sale; plus editorial notes; reviews by Ted Serrill, Al M. Brummor, and Bob Adey; "Victorian Book Production", by N.C. Ravenscroft; short list of Periodicals & Lists Received; letter column. ## Ethel says she wants more articles and general material, and we wish her success (there's nothing we'd like more than to get a regular mystery column going in TWJ and SOTWJ; Al Gechter and Ted White both started columns in TWJ some time ago, but Al moved and ran short of time, and Ted's too busy with AMAZING & FANTASTIC).

REVIEW EXTRACTS (From the Press) --

THE WASHINGTON POST 21/10/73, reviewer Jean M. White: Trial and Terror, ed. Joan Kahn (Houghton Mifflin; \$8.95; anthology of 25 pieces: "an inspired collection of fact and fiction . . . a brilliant assortment" incl. works by such as Kafka, Hammett, Balzac, Sartre, Wallace, Coates, Sayers, etc.). The Times of London Anthology of Detective Stories (John Day; \$6.95; 10 stories chosen out of over 1,000 entries in 1972 TIMES OF LONDON detective story competition: "an uneven collection, and some of the better entries suggest quiet terror . . "). Please Pass the Guilt, by Rex Stout (Viking; \$5.95; Archie Goodwin & Nero Wolfe are back!).

Moderan, by David R. Bunch (Avon Books). (Reviewer, DON D'AMMASSA) When I was first reading SF (ten years ago), I kept running across these strange little Moderan stories by David Bunch. They never made much sense to me, and I never was particularly fond of them. Nevertheless, Bunch was years ahead of his time, anticipating the New Wave and writing a damn sight better than most of them. Reading the Moderan stories now, collected into book form, I find the younger, shallower me a bit embarrassing. Bunch's ability is unbounded. His skill with language surpasses that of any SF writer I can think of. His plot element is insignificant. Essentially, we are shown glimpses of a world in which so much of the human body has been replaced by prosthetic devices, the nature of humanity is open to question. Most of mankind has retreated into the Strongholds and engages in incessant war. We follow the career of the resident of one of these Strongholds as he attains pre-eminence in the world of Moderan. This is not a book for the casual reader, and it is not a book to read at one sitting. It is designed for the careful reader who is more interested in language and symbol than in plot.

Down in the Black Gang and Other Stories, by Philip Jose Farmer (Signet). (OZANNE) An uneven collection of stories, all of shich have appeared in the prozines (though the title story was rewritten for this and I haven't checked the extent of the rewriting).

"Down in the Black Gang" is a weird story which postulates that our whole universe is some kind of gigantic spaceship, run by essentially human-sized beings. Not enough story for the idea, for my money.

"The Shadow of Space" is another weirdy. A spaceship gets outside the

universe and as big as it. Slight.

"A Bowl Bigger Than Karth". I have the feeling I have read an expanded

version of this somewhere. Odd story of a kind of life after death. .

"Riverworld". Presumably among the earliest of this doomed series to be published, and one I had missed. Tom Mix meets Jesus Christ! (Tom Mix was the cowboy nero when I was a kid, you youngsters.) For me this was worth the price of admission. Why doesn't someone collect all these stories in one place? If you never read a Riverworld story, this is probably not the best place to start. But then everyone has road one, hasn't he?

"A Few Miles" introduces John Carmody, the hero of Night of Light (which will be reviewed fairly soon-- I will be finishing it as soon as I stop writing the current batch of reviews), and is a better story than the novel. I have the feeling that Carmody is not fully consistent in character between the two--but I doubt the point is worth trying to establish firmly by chapter and verse.

"Prometheus" continues the last story and is better than it (I was thinking of both when I wrote about the last one). This tells of Carmody attached to the egg of a semi(?)-intelligent bird and of his dealings with the bird race.

"The Blasphemers" is a not particularly well done version of a familiar story. "How Deep the Grooves" is minor and thoroughly unpleasant.

Quincunx of Time, by James Blish (Dell Books). (Reviewer, DON D'AMMASSA) James Blish's latest novel is an expansion of his earlier short story "Beep". As he admits in his introduction, the expansion is essentially an extension of the discussion of free will and predestination beyond what was possible in the shorter work. Agents of an interstellar empire centered on Earth attempt to discover how a private intelligence organization has acquired knowledge of their experimental Dirac transmitter. This device enables instantaneous transmission of information across interstellar distances. Blish has his little joke by having his characters peek into the action which takes place in another novel, Midsummer Century, but there is essentially no action. The book is nothing more than an illustrated philosophical ramble.

(Over)

S.F. PARADE (Continued) --

Chimera, by John Barth (Random House '72; Fawcett Crest '73). (BARRY GILLAM)

One of Barth's previous books, Giles Goat-Boy, has had some notice in fandom. In that book, as in most of his earlier novels, the fictional engine bears a freight of mythological allusion. The weight of the allusion was unfortunately such that the fiction often chugged desperately and occasionally fruitlessly to reach its destination, the reader. In Chimera, though, the mythology is the motive force in the work. It is no longer reference but subject. And Barth is wonderfully, grandly at ease retelling the tales of Scheherazade, Perseus and Bellerophon.

The first, "Dunyazadiad", in which Scheherazade's sister tells her story; is not only the best in the book but also Barth's masterpiece: a funny, provocative, warm embracing of the methods of myth by the art of the storyteller. At the same time, it considers the impulses behind both fiction and fantasy. That there should be either in a myth and that this consideration is actually part of the characterization suggests the complexity, the depth and the wholeness of Barth's achievement. The other, longer tales become somewhat needlessly abstruse, but there are still brilliant passages and the book is well worth reading. ((If memory serves, Chimera was a National Book Award winner. --ed.))

Lucky Starr and the Pirates of the Asteroids, by Isaac Asimov (Signet). (D'AMMASSA)

The second volume in Asimov's unfortunate series of juvenile SF novels pits

David Starr against an army of pirates who use the asteroids as their base, and
who ally themselves with the alien Sirians against Earth. Starr falls into their
clutches so many times, the reader cannot help but wonder why the Earth government has so much confidence in him. Although not as condescending in tone as
the first volume, the novel is obviously written down to what Asimov or his publishers consider a juvenile mentality. Incredible coincidence, melodramatic
situations, and black and white characterizations are among the more obvious
shortcomings.

Call Me When You Find America, by Garry Trudeau (Holt, Rinehart & Winston).(STEVER)
Being the fourth volume of the chronicles of one Michael J. Doonesbury, erudite Yale student, and one of the most popular cartoon characters in America today. This strip has been growing since 1970, and just as one checks on Peanuts, The Wizard of Id, and Broom Hilda, everyone reads about Mike and B.D., and Zonker and all them good people down at Walden Puddle Commune. This book retells how Mark Slackmeyer was thrown out by his father (remember reading that?), his and Mike's trip across country in 1972, and their meeting Jeanie Caucus, the Denver housewife who was running away from home--plus lots more good stuff and fun reading. These books are not straight reprints of the dailies, but they give you a chance to get the vast majority of Doonesbury together in uniform editions. At \$1.50 a pop, they come higher than the latest volume gleaned from MAD MAGAZINE, but then one always has to pay more for quality....

Seetee Ship, by Jack Williamson (Mayflower '69; orig. pub. '51 under pseudonym "Will Stewart"). (Reviewer, KEN OZANNE)

I must have been thirteen when I was given the sequel to this (Seetee Shock) as a birthday present. I thought that was real great then and I wanted to read this immediately. It only took eighteen years to find! And it wasn't really worth the wait. Not that there is anything wrong with the book--I suspect that I might have thought this "real great" then, too.

It's an average-quality story telling of attempts to work with seetee matter. A bit gimmicky for my present taste. Williamson has done much better. Not particularly recommended.

((Remember, reviews are welcome from anyone, be he WSFA member, SOTWJ subber, trader, or just a casual reader. Short reviews go in SOTWJ, long ones in TWJ.--ed.))

DENNIS LIEN, 2408 Dupont Ave. S. (Apt. 1), Minneapolis, MN 55405. (11 Nov '73) Feedback on SOTWJ #'s 101-113:

101: No special comment.

102: Re D'Ammassa's review of Marshall's (Dion of) The Lost Land, said to be "as much an insult as a waste", I fail to see how the reprinting of any book, no matter how bad, can be an "insult" to a reviewer. I wouldn't buy it new and will almost certainly never read it, but as a collector I'm glad to see old stories coming out in paperback, good, bad, or indifferent (though as a reader, I'll admit to being even gladder with the good ones).

"Usurp the Night", the Howard story reprinted in HAUNT OF HORROR, was previously published in a 1970 issue of WEIRDBOOK (#3), a semi-pro mag. a la ETERNITY. Another such horror mag. of the same period is ANUBIS. I believe both have since ceased publication.

103: No special comment.

104: Thanks to Nick Jones for mentioning the existence of The Goon Show Stripts: I'll have to try to find a copy of that. I might mention for other Spike Milligan fans in your audience that The Bed-Sitting Room is available in hardcover (though perhaps only in British edition--I'll have to recheck). This is a play; the movie version of it was nominated for a dramatic Hugo at Heidelberg and got a good review in the April '71 F&SF. I'd love to see some con show it, so I can see if it really is as funny as it reads. (Co-authored by Spike Milligan and one John Antrobus.)

As for your reply to Hall Hall re the quarterly prozine index--"since we give page #'s for entire book review column, is it really necessary to also give page #'s for individual reviews?": I wouldn't say that it is necessary, but it would certainly be helpful--I work in a library, and have in the past worked in the interlibrary loan department, so can assure you that specific page numbers would be of use in such situations.

Minn-STF minutes printed in

#92 never did get reprinted in RUNE

105: I agree with Barry Gillam that Vonnegut's Breakfast of Champions is a "fat, lazy novel", but disagree with his statement that it is not SF-on p.292, Vonnegut teleports Kilgore Trout four times within seconds by mind power alone (including to the surface of the sun). Of course, as he points out throughout the book, he has created Trout and all the other characters, so he can do with them as he wishes--and one can thus argue that the teleportation is not "real"-but if it is not, we are faced with the "fact" that Vonnegut on p.274 has his toe broken by a character he has created. One way or another, this makes the book SF of a sort--not a very interesting sort to me, though.

of the best serials ever made", the others must have been truly wretched--I've seen seven or eight scrials in fairly complete versions, and wouldn't rank it in the top five of those.

.107: No postage due problems with the issue. No other comment: always glad to get the quarterly prozine index.

108: Re Warren Johnson review of <u>To Die in Italbar</u>: there is no "telepathic girl" in the story; the girl and Matacar achieve a telepathic link only via Matacar's alien companion.

109: No special comments.

110: No special comments.

111: No special comments.

Desmond's SF Magazine Checklist 1961-1972 is 15, a copy direct from the Archival Press. Have noted one error in it: the last three issues of START-LING MYSTERY STORIES are left out. That is: Summer, 1970, v.3 no. 4, Fall. 1970, v.3 no. 5 March, 1971, v.3 no. 6. (Whole numbers 16, 17, and 18.) Otherwise looks good; Desmond has even dug up references to two one-shots of which I'd never heard: GHOST STORIES for April, 1963; and a reprint mag. called BLOCH AND BRADBURY

. (Over)

EN PASSANT (Continued) --

for Feb. 1972. Anyone know of them? Note: semi-pro mags. à la ETERNITY, ANUBIS and WEIRDBOOK are not included; the last two issues (7 and 8) of WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY, which were sold only through the mail, are. And I'm dubious about listing MAN FROM UNCLE and GIRL FROM UNCLE as SF magazines. Quibbles aside, I recommend it.

113: ((He sent his Hugo nomination recommendations in response to David Stever's suggested poll; note that poll does not actually begin until 1 Dec. '73, so we will hold all suggestions received before that date and publish them in first SOTWJ in Dec. --ed.))

((According to THE WASHINGTON POST BOOKWORLD, The Goon Show Scripts, written & selected by Spike Milligan, w/drawings by Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe & Spike Milligan, was published by St.Martin's, and sell for \$5.95. ## As for the book review page numbers, we'll consider adding them to the 1974 series. ## If we remember correctly, we have the 4/63 GHOST STORIES and some other items not mentioned in Desmond's Checklist; when we get time, we'll pull them out, and will let him and SOTWJ readers know what we discover. --ed.))

We Also Heard From:

Richard Delap -- "I'm still trying to figure out Schmitz's remark in SOTWJ #84. I have no idea what he's talking about, unfortunately. I assume he's referring to my remarks on his stories in ANALOG, but it's only an assumption. What, what? If so, at least he's responding, which amounts to something. I've been receiving a lot of author comment lately, which I like. Some have even bothered to explain where I've gone right, or wrong, which is of great help to me in assessing their intent and subsequent success of failure...as well as my own."

Don D'Ammassa -- "You might find it interesting to hear that we founded recently the Rhode Island SF Association and decided to put out a newsletter of some sort. So naturally the title that immediately came to everyone's lips was RISFA JOURNAL." ((He also sent his own Hugo nomination suggestions, which we'll publish in the first SOTWJ in Dec., as noted above re Lien's remarks on #113. --ed.))

George Fergus -- Found the missing letter, in which he notes that Isis Center News is his "nominee for the 1973 Most Uninteresting Feature in SOTWJ award. Followed closely by 'Misc. Non-SF Books Received for Review' and the movie & radio nostalgia stuff. Just because Berkley sends you everything, instead of just their SF, for review, do you have to list it all in SOTWJ?" He goes on: "You seem to be willing to publish reviews or lists of just about anything, and I wonder if you really know how many (if any) subscribers are interested in some of these peripheral items? I was struck by Warren Johnson's comment in #104: 'I personally don't care much for the hard-core fantasy and mystery elements in SOTWJ . . . but I guess others do since they're there.' I've sent in an occasional mystery/suspense book review for much the same reasoning -- since you've published such things in the past I've assumed there was an audience for them, perhaps unwarrantedly. I'm not sure that I like being called a hard-core mystery element. I'm usually motivated to do a review only of disappointing books by established writers or good books by unknown new writers, or if I run across several novels with similar themes that lend themselves to simultaneous review. What would I have to do to escape the hard-core label -- review only items like Jack Vance's latest mystery? (Bad Ronald incidentally features a boy who makes up a medieval-type fantasy world for which he draws maps, invents history, etc.) ## "I notice that you try to alternate reviews by different people in S.F. PARADE. Since my interest in a review depends on who is doing it, I would prefer that all the reviews in an issue by one person be together. ## "Despite these negative comments, I continue to enjoy SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL, even if that is a terrible name for it." ## ((We'll answer your letter in more detail on pg. 1 or in coming SOTWJ (running out of space): for now: there are several mystery fans known to us among SOTWJ readers; we are planning another poll at year's end to determine how current SOTWJ features are liked or disliked; what do other readers think about our alternating book reviews?; name change will come if SOTWJ and WSFA part company. --ed.))

I. MAGAZINES COVERED.

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#111	6th Oct. 1973 Issue	1.0	A,B,C,R,S
#112	7th Oct. 1973 Issue	10	A,B,C,R
#113	1st Nov. 1973 Issue	10	A, N, P, T, W
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II. SECTION HEADINGS.

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