

# SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL

SF/Fantasy News/Review 'Zine - - - - - 3rd June, 1973 Issue (#93)  
Editor & Publisher: Don Miller - - - - - 25¢ per copy, 10/\$2.00

## In This Issue --

IN THIS ISSUE; IN BRIEF (misc. notes/comments); COLOPHON ..... pg 1  
S.F. PARADE: Book Reviews, by Don D'Amassa (The Terminal Man, by  
Michael Crichton; Mayerne, by E.C. Tubb; The Godmakers, by Frank Her-  
bert; Syzygy, by Michael G. Coney; The Starbrat, by John Morressey) . pg 2  
MILITARY IMPERATIVES VS. DIPLOMATIC NECESSITY, by Alexis Gilliland .... pp 3,4  
DISSECTING THE HEART OF THE MATTER: Richard Delap reviews March '73  
Prozines (AMAZING, ANALOG, F&SF, GALAXY) ..... pp 5-9  
THE CON GAME: Early July Conventions ..... pg 9  
THE AMATEUR PRESS (U.S. Fanzines Received) ..... pg 10

## In Brief --

No word yet on missing stencils for TWJ #82. After a number of calls, we have determined that they were either picked up by Ron Bounds for delivery to Alexis Gilliland in between meetings, or were delivered by us to Alexis' house at the first meeting in May. They were in a Gestetner stencil pack (red and green on white), which, in turn, was probably in a brown paper bag. We now have the necessary paper, plus some publishing help for this issue, and have started running it off. But before it can come out, we need the missing 22 stencils....

As for TWJ #80--no word from Brian Burley. We assume he's working on the issue.

There is some confusion over our trade policy. Basically, we are merely trying to assure that all of our traders--plus those who send in their 'zines for review--receive something in return. In the past, this has been on a hit-or-miss basis, since TWJ has become so irregular. Now, all 'zines received in trade (unless separate arrangements have been made) and for review receive in return a "Trade-Sub" to SOTWJ--i.e., so many issues by 1st-class mail, the number to be determined by the cover price of the 'zine(s) received according to formula published in SOTWJ #89. We generally continue to trade all-for-all with 'zines received at least once a month--but all-for-all trade copies of SOTWJ are sent 3rd-class, 2-at-a-time, unless otherwise arranged. Subscribers to SOTWJ who send their 'zines for trade or review receive an appropriate number of issues added to their subs.

The Gilliland article in this issue was sent some time ago for TWJ, but is being run here before it becomes too dated. Perhaps Alexis can be persuaded to do an occasional column for SOTWJ; he writes so well on such a wide range of subjects, we're surprised no one has yet tapped him for a column. Alexis?

We're not happy with the "Local Scene", "National Scene", etc. breakdown of contents in the "news" issues, and may drift back to more individualized headings.

SOTWJ is at least bi-weekly. Subs: 25¢ ea., 10/\$2 (UK: 10/80p) or multiples thereof; all subs incl. any issue(s) of THE WSFA JOURNAL (at least thru #82) pubbed during sub (count as 2 or more ish on sub, dep. on length). For info on airmail, ads, Agents, etc., write ed. Address Code meaning in #84 (and maybe in #94).

-- DLM

TWJ/SOTWJ  
% D. Miller  
12315 Judson Road  
Wheaton, MD  
U.S.A. 20906

TO:

FIRST CLASS MAIL

FIRST CLASS MAIL

The Terminal Man, by Michael Crichton (Bantam Books).

I must confess that I sat down to read this novel with the firm intention of disliking it. Much to my surprise, I found it to be one of the best SF novels I've read in months, and "hard SF" at that. Harry Benson, subject to violent brain seizures, has electrodes implanted in his brain, connected to a miniaturized computer in his neck. The computer is programmed to detect the onset of an attack and generate electric stimulation to prevent it. Unfortunately, Benson is also insane, firmly believing that computers are attempting to replace man. Crichton develops the suspense skillfully and inexorably. There is the sense of a burning fuse from the first page on. His characters and situations are fully realized. There is a particularly fine sense of ceremony; the staff meetings seem to occur in the room with the reader, so real are they. Additionally, Crichton deals with an authentic human problem--free will--and speculates on the ethical responsibility of the medical profession. There is much that our more genre-oriented writers could learn from Crichton.

Mayenne, by E.C. Tubb (DAW Books).

This is the ninth interminable adventure of Earl Dumarest, an Earthman wandering through the galaxy searching for his home planet. Dumarest is being chased by members of the mysterious telepathic society known as the Cyclan, from whom he has stolen secrets that endanger their plans to control the universe. This time Dumarest crashes on a planet that is one gigantic intelligent entity, who wishes to experiment with humans. Stanislaw Lem would be saddened to see the basic idea of Solaris so misused. This is by far the worst of a mediocre series.

The Godmakers, by Frank Herbert (Berkley Books).

Contrary to the blurb on the cover, this is not another Dune. Neither is it Herbert's worst novel, but it is close in the running. Lewis Orne, agent for a post-galactic-war empire, is recruited into an organization determined to prevent another war. After a variety of adventures, Orne becomes aware that he is developing psi powers, which eventually make him omnipotent--in fact, God. Herbert changes the scene constantly, particularly in the first hundred pages, which makes it very difficult to develop a sense of the reality of the universe. He makes Orne into a superman, and it is obviously impossible to identify oneself with a god. There are too many sub-plots for the length of the novel: secret military organizations, an underground group of female super-scientists, a religious underground, first contact with an alien race, rivalry between two branches of the investigatory service, love interest, and so on. It appears that the story ran completely away from Herbert--few readers will be fast enough to catch it for him.

Syzygy, by Michael G. Coney (Ballantine Books).

Coney's first-sold, second-published novel tells us more about its author than about its characters. The six moons of the colony world "Arcadia" are due to appear simultaneously in the sky for the first time in 52 years. On the previous occasion, the planet was wracked by inexplicable riots. The perceptive reader will have solved the mystery by page 32, and the remainder of the book features the hero hiding from the rest of the characters. Along the way, Coney indicates those aspects of society which he dislikes: youth, women, clergy, democracy, promiscuity, homosexuals, government, and people in general. A modest list. If you can ignore his grouching, it's a well-written potboiler.

The Starbrat -- John Morrissey (Curtis Books).

A young man is kidnapped by space slavers and sold as a gladiator on another planet. He rapidly becomes a top-ranked gladiator, wins his freedom, wanders through space to find his home planet, and unravels the secret of his birth. Along the way he polishes off various aliens and baddies. If you can stand to read as overworked a plot as this, you'll find it mildly interesting.

-- DON D'AMASSA



# MILITARY IMPERATIVES VS. DIPLOMATIC NECESSITY

by Alexis A. Gilliland

The case of General Lavelle, USAF, may be the forerunner of things to come, but it is undoubtedly precedented.

Consider, for example, General MacArthur, as he advanced on the Yalu River in express defiance of President Truman's orders to stop. Whatever his motives, militarily, the diplomatic consequence was the entry of Red China into the war, which, until then, had been the whole world against North Korea.

This conflict between military demands and diplomatic requirements is as old as warfare. When Alexander the Great laid siege to Tyre, a Greek city on the east coast of the Mediterranean, he had a great deal of difficulty, and sent an envoy offering terms substantially the same as that which Tyre had asked in the beginning. Alas, the heat of battle--and the losses--had blown the cool of the Tyrean commanders, and the diplomatic necessity that Alexander's terms should be accepted was ignored. And to make sure that he wouldn't go away, Tyre put his envoy to death. What happened? Well, "One with Nineveh and Tyre" is Kipling's version of being dropped in the dustbin of history.

More recently, the German General Staff has shown remarkable insensitivity to the nuances of diplomacy. Bismarck won his greatest victories over his fellow Prussians, and his finest hour was when he brought Moltke to heel in 1870.

Paris was under siege, but France was raising fresh levies in the south and Moltke--Helmuth von Moltke--was by God going to fight them. Bismarck, on the other hand, was very worried about the possible intervention of England and Russia to mediate a peace, perhaps even becoming co-belligerents with France.

Moltke dismissed the subject entirely: "That is diplomacy, and has nothing to do with fighting a war."

The Emperor Wilhelm I (who was still only the King of Prussia in those days) was fond of his military men. A despot, the army was the taproot of his power, and he found himself simpatico with his bullet-headed, bull-necked officer corps. He distrusted Bismarck profoundly, even though Bismarck had served him well, because Bismarck had a strong following in the country, and because he was intractable, stiff-necked and excruciatingly difficult to deal with.

When Moltke saw the King in the morning, Wilhelm was all enthused about smashing every French army in sight. When the King saw Bismarck in the afternoon, there was a short stormy session in which Bismarck gave the King his choice: war with Moltke, or peace with Bismarck. The great attraction of peace was not to be with Bismarck, but to quit winners. And the more the King thought about it, the more he liked the idea. (By contrast, when was the last time the U.S. has had a chance to quit a war while winning? 1945, is when!)

Under Bismarck, Prussia fought wars with Denmark, Austria and France, and not only won the wars but also won the peaces. This was done by both diplomatic and military means. The German General Staff bitterly resented the intrusion of diplomacy in "purely military matters", despite the unbroken record of success.

Bismarck was intrigued against. For a time, the post of military attaché rivaled that of ambassador in relative importance. (In the good old USofA we have observed the CIA taking over the nouns and verbs and leaving the State Dept. with the adjectives, nicht wahr?) Matters came to a head when Bismarck, in the process of trying to disentangle Germany from an alliance--purely defensive, of course--with Austria, heard that the military attaché in Wien (Vienna to you Anglo types) had taken Emperor Franz-Josef (of Austria, natürlich) aside and told him that if Austria attacked Russia (or provoked Russia to attack Austria by attacking a Russian ally like Serbia) Germany would come to Austria's aid with promptness and enthusiasm.

(Over)

MILITARY IMPERATIVES . . . (Continued) --

This directly reflected the view of the German General Staff that war with France and Russia was inevitable, and that therefore a prophylactic war should be fought against Russia.

Bismarck said: "Fighting a prophylactic war is like committing suicide because you fear death."

Eventually the military attaches were shrunk to size (the one from Wein was chewed out by Bismarck personally, but aside from the verbal reprimand-(which went into Bismarck's papers) he went unreprieved and unpunished) and the diplomatic corps restored. It is worth remembering that Bismarck didn't want a war with Russia, and while he was Chancellor he didn't get one.

The military hated him.

Moltke, after the Franco-Prussian War, spent many years trying to separate the spheres of tactical command and diplomacy. However, Moltke was a renaissance man and world-traveller compared to his successor, von Schlieffen.

General von Schlieffen thought about nothing but war-- tactics, strategy, logistics, artillery, everything down to the last detail of the buttons on the dress uniform. His plan--based on the assumption that war was inevitable--envisaged a holding action against Russia while France was smashed by driving through Belgium (Und der gerichtmost man von dem gerichtmost flank vill haiff eine boote in der Englishe Channel!). This was to end the war in 40 days, and there were other assumptions that would have turned a diplomat's hair white: "England, for instance, would not enter the war in time to make any difference, if, indeed, it entered the war at all. Schlieffen seems not to have thought about England.

Anyway, it was just as well that he had replaced Moltke. That prophet of doom and gloom had figured the war was likely to last for "seven years, or maybe thirty". 1914 to 1945 is 31--not a bad guess at all, and a hell of a lot nearer the mark than 40 days. Such pessimism is unbecoming of the Chief of Staff, however. Next thing you know, he'll be advocating peace by diplomacy.

Eventually, Wilhelm II came to power. He was hard-working, like all proper Germans, but a light-weight, and he dropped Bismarck because he figured he could do better.

The antics of the German General Staff, however, are seemly and responsible compared to behavior of the Japanese Kwantung Army.

Without going into detail, Col. Itagaki usurped command and conquered Manchuria against direct orders, while zealot lieutenants performed gekokujo on the political opposition at home.

So we again come to Gen. Lavelle, USAF, now retired.

What did he do? Well, mainly he ignored diplomatic considerations to bomb enemy concentrations while lying to his superiors. The diplomatic lull which he considered moderately promising was just prior to Hanoi's spring-summer offensive of 1972. It is very difficult to consider Lavelle guilty of provoking that offensive; it was, in all likelihood, set and ready to launch by General Giap, without regards for diplomatic nicety.

So the question arises: do the Americans, who have subordinated the military to diplomacy, do better than the Germans and Japanese? Vietnam included, I think the answer is yes. It wasn't Gen. Westmoreland who kept us out of China, remember.

Of course, our diplomacy has been pretty bad. The Lusitania, of World War I fame, was an armed auxillary cruiser, paid for by the British Admiralty, and carrying ammunition when it was sunk (because Winston Churchill, Lord of the Admiralty, refused it a destroyer escort hoping it would be sunk, thus bringing the U.S. into the war), and Pearl Harbor was the direct result of Cordell Hull failing to realize that when he told the Japanese to get out of China, he was also including Manchuria in his ultimatum. Korea was the result of Dean Acheson drawing a line and changing his mind, while Vietnam...well, perhaps Vietnam was the result of the diplomats relying on military intelligence.



(dissecting)

SOTWJ-93/5

^ THE HEART OF THE MATTER:  
Magazines for Mar., 1973

Operational Procedures  
Supervised by  
Richard Delap

Quita a mixture of stories this time, from the best to the worst, with F&SF again making the best showing and ANALOG producing a real loser issue. Ted White is still beating the worldcon issue in his AMAZING editorial, which apparently keeps him too busy to notice the wrongly punctuated and wrongly dated--on the cover--and misspelled--on the contents page--abortions of the title of Jack Vance's new novel. (Well, you know, some cats are black, some gray, but one's always asleep on the wharf.) I think special mention should be made of Leo and Diane Dillon's superb wraparound F&SF cover illustration for a new Ellison story. ANALOG offers cover prints but F&SF hasn't done so in several years; they should do so with this one--simply beautiful! (It would be interesting to know if the Dillon cover registered a drop in sales, as was reportedly the case with the Ace Specials--Mr. Ferman??). A weak spot here and there but nevertheless a respectable showing this month.

AMAZING STORIES -- March:

Serial:

Trullion Alastor: 2262 (part one) -- Jack Vance.

Short Stories:

Hard Times -- Geo. Alec Effinger.

A short story doesn't offer much room to elaborate and intensify a background, but Effinger insinuates enough to make his future world of frightening governmental tactics provide needed conviction. Applying for a position in Federal Services, Justin Benarcek must undergo a series of psychological tests, and the reader is taken along for a journey that slides ever so gently into a loathsome and inescapable trap of chicanery. Displaying our own humanitarian urges as a possible weapon to be used against us, this story teaches us to watch for the signs (so prevalent today) of the perversion of ideology. Well done.

Two Men and a Rock -- Joe Haldeman.

Though Haldeman has a bit of a problem making his characters act and sound like anything more than bald stereotypes, he manages to make them almost an advantage in this tale of two men mining the asteroid belt and the hassle they encounter with the laws of physics in getting the job done right (and safely). The first-person narrative is clipped and to the point, imparting a no-nonsense dimension of terseness, with a credible solution culminating from a series of dangerous but believable mishaps. Good of kind.

Agony in the Garden -- Thomas [F.] Monteleone.

~~Like~~ many initial stories Monteleone's suffers from a pretentious and over-written excessiveness in which symbolism (the Christ figure) fights against rather than blends with bouts of relative realism (drunken street bums, crowded subways, murder and apathy), straining to encompass both in a series of "visions" that plague the disillusioned Christ. "Myths don't evolve, they die", says Monteleone, just before he expands this simple statement into a rather silly scene of Christ's attempted escape on an FTL starship. The nice touches of imaginative color are just not enough to disguise the clumsy technique of the whole. Fair.

Feature:

The Clubhouse: The Enchanted Duplicator (part three) -- Bob Shaw & Walt Willis.

Science:

Death of a Minor Star -- Greg Benford.

\* \* \* \*

(Over)

DISSECTING THE HEART OF THE MATTER (Continued) --ANALOG -- March:Serial:The People of the Wind (part two) -- Poul Anderson.Novelettes:Who Steals My Purse -- John Brunner.

In a hop-skip-and-jump method Brunner tries to assess the difficulties that come with interpreting political actions through half-knowledge filtered by propaganda, individual loyalties, and mass-media speculation. He concentrates primarily on the efforts of a political reporter digging for information and a poor Asian farmer whose very existence seems to hang by a thread. The hostilities Brunner presents are without a doubt real ones, but the contrasts he offers, especially in the contrived climax, are much too silly to have the effect Brunner seems to want. Such optimism is like saying there might be gold on the moon--then going there on a kite. The simplicity borders more on idiocy than on optimistic humanitarianism, and makes unconvincing drama. He Fell Into a Dark Hole -- Jerry Pournelle.

Although the CoDominium keeps a tight lid on original "unsanctioned" scientific writings and expressed thought, it becomes necessary to have such thought to power a rescue team which hopes to find an important senator who has disappeared near a supposed Black Hole in space. The missing senator is the father-in-law of the rescue ship's captain, and the captain's wife and child had disappeared in exactly the same way five years before. The unsanctioned thinker is a woman convict. They all get together to battle for their lives against the "enormous gravitational anomalies" of the Black Hole, but the plot comes apart under the stress of two-dimensional characters plodding through soap-opera charades. Pournelle is capable of much better than this.

Short Stories:Death of God -- Herbie Brennan.

A group of British soldiers in Tibet stumble onto a remote Himalayan monastery where the monks are friendly and helpful, offering to guide them out of this frozen area before the coming snows. But there is a secret here, one which sends one man into severe shock and gives the others determination to unravel the mystery. Brennan makes a valiant attempt to tie up Christian mythology, Eastern color, and a Chariots of the Gods answer, but his story is mostly fancy trimming for a rather mundane proposition. Fair.

Hard Workers Only -- Mark K. Roberts.

In a letter to his wife a man explains his long absence from home as because of his new job. Jobs are scarce in the automated world of 2058, and this man, who has "strong feelings about the responsibilities of a married man", obviously finds his presence less necessary to his family than his pride. A "twist" ending is included, but it does no more than emphasize the story's lack of content, thought, or even moral standpoint. As far as I can see it has no point at all.

Science:The Eyes Have It -- R.I. MacDonald.

\* \* \* \*

FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION -- March:Novelettes:The Trouble with Project Slickenside -- Dean McLaughlin.

Project Slickenside is an experiment to create minor earthquakes so that the mechanics of them may be understood and preventative measures undertaken. One man, Saunders, seems to be the only project employee to realize that geological forces are only part of the problem--the opposition forces of people may be the more troublesome in the long run. McLaughlin begins his story well but erroneously guides it into a corner from which the only out is a cliché character

(Cont. next page)



DISSECTING THE HEART OF THE MATTER (Continued) --

called the Guru, the predictable madness of crowds, and the even more predictable obstinancy of stubborn officials. Disappointing.

The Deathbird -- Harlan Ellison.

There may be some who'll scream that Ellison can't make up his mind, either thematically or stylistically, in this story of Mankind, his beginning and his end. They will be wrong, for in perhaps no other work has Ellison so carefully and cautiously counterpointed the beauties and horrors of both legend and everyday minutiae. The resulting story bridges the span between prehistory and future history by tracing the link formed of mankind himself--of his imagination, of his "soul". It is not necessary to believe or even want to believe the reversal of traditional Christian concepts to understand that at the core of this tale is a word that encompasses and surpasses all the words that fit into its mold. That word is "friend", and not respect, admiration--no, not even love can replace or substitute for it. Ellison's varied "tests"--some multiple-choice questions, discussions, an essay, a symbolic short story--are embedded and clearly labeled, but are not included merely for dash and ambiguous tease. Each one has a distinct purpose, and to be confused by them is only to ignore what Ellison urges you to do as you read, which is: consider the possibilities. (As a personal statement, I must say I am totally at odds with the base of Ellison's symbolism, yet willingly admit that I was completely moved by its purpose, which transcends mere symbols.) This is the best story Ellison has done in at least five years, and any SF fan worthy of his calling should read it. Excellent.

Short Stories:Brother Dodo's Revenge -- Thom Jones.

In a forest clearing gathers as odd an assortment of animals as you're ever likely to meet...or would ever want to meet, considering the revengeful plans they formulate to do away with the human race. Diversity is carried to incautious lengths, however, as Jones steelarms every sort of humor--from Disney-cutesiness to Pogo-smugness--into an otherwise toneless lecture. Never really funny, never really frightening, it simply comes apart before it ever gets together. Fair.

Chalk Talk -- Edward Wellen.

A professor of linguistics tries to explain to his class the meaning of "deep structure" in words, the "Freudian jungle" which lurks beneath a simple statement like "John loves Mary". And with a light touch of fantasy, Wellen casts an amused but professionally quick eye on the deceptive clarity of words. A love story, a fun story, an educational story, all in a small and entertaining package.

A Coffin in Egypt -- Chris G. Butler.

Butler's story deals with obsession, both personal and cultural-social, and brings a surprisingly effective emotional level into play as it tells of a man whose life's desire is to be aboard the first ship to the stars. What is especially nice about this tale is the astounding way the author distills human-to-human, human-to-machine, and human-to-society relationships in quick deft touches that capture the whine of a monolithic culture replacing its own heart with a stainless steel substitute. I'm not sure I really approve the ambiguous religious tendril snaking into the final paragraph, which seems to me a rather baseless presumption on the author's part, but it doesn't make (or break) a story which has so many strengths in the telling. Very good.

The Zombie Butler -- Gahan Wilson.

Here's what we don't get much no more--a slightly grisly, impeccably mannered and monstrously funny short-short. The title character perfectly fulfills the needs of a middle-aged couple from Cleveland; in fact, he's a little too perfect and just a bit too indestructible. Wilson comes closest to filling that empty spot left by the late Fredric Brown, and I for one hope he'll keep these gems coming. Delightful.

(Over)

DISSECTING THE HEART OF THE MATTER (Continued) --Spirit of the White Deer -- Waldo Carlton Wright.

There's some effective atmosphere in this story of a hunter, his Indian love and their two children--snowbound forests, the mysterious, perhaps mystical, deer of the title, and the blunt simplicity of the characters. Atmosphere, however, is not quite enough to bring real life to a plot that not only lacks surprise and suspense but curtails the beauty of its fantasy element with a quasi-realistic narrative tone that engenders skepticism rather than just question. Routine.

Solar Shoe-Salesman by Ph\*1\*p K. D\*ck -- John Sladek.

Someday I suppose Sladek will collect all his SF spoofs (in a book titled "The Best SF by Famous Unknown Authors"), and this wheels-within-squares-within-rhododendron-ovoids will have Philip Dick's fans marveling at how Sladek managed to compress the intricacies of Dick down to such a finely-sculptured miniature. Dick's whole career is packed in here, so compressed that I couldn't possibly condense it any more in attempted explanation. Just read it--and laugh.

Sareva: In Memoriam -- Andrew J. Offutt.

Offutt accurately pigeonholes his characters--a young advertising executive whose rise to power is the result of his beloved wife's special talent, witchcraft--when referring to them as "like the silliest cornball lovers in the silliest cornball movies". He writes of romance as an obsessive indefinable thing (which to some it may be) but his descriptions are shallow, his dialogue hollow and trite and uninteresting. Even the climax, which comes on as a hefty kick-in-the-guts psychological weapon, loses its power from the preceding mess, a plump raisin in a sea of pabulum.

The Manya -- Michael G. Coney.

Donald Lackland leaves the 21st century and time-travels to the distant future where he meets the smallish green-skinned men and women whose lives are plagued by primitive war and superstition. The Poli villagers accept him as a god, hoping he will aid them in defeating the enemy villagers of Breda. Coney's story is a little too simplistic, sometimes more concerned with the forced humor of cultural misunderstandings than with the actual results of such errors; but the story is swiftly done, hinting at more than is told (at least two more stories are to follow) and occasionally capturing a sort of fairy-tale beauty. Okay of kind.

Verse:

The Mad Old Man -- Walter H. Kerr.

Science:

Down from the Amoeba -- Isaac Asimov.

\* \* \* \*

GALAXY -- March-April:

Serial:

Project 40 (conclusion) -- Frank Herbert.

Short Stories:

The Girl and the Dolphin -- John Boyd.

There is a minor unreality to the pace of this story about the first woman to make verbal communication with a dolphin. It moves so swiftly that one feels the detail has been sacrificed for the speed. Yet in the end one comes to realize that the conviction of detail would more likely slow the story too much and bring on the even less satisfactory condition of thin content matter. With such consideration in mind, I believe Boyd, in his first SF short story, has chosen the lesser of two evils and emerges with a hurried but ultimately quite moving interspecies love story. The literary humor is sparkling and ~~delights~~ the intellect without misshaping the story's basic structure. Very well done.

Interference -- William Walling.

On the moon a group of men have maintained a radio-telescope station, and the puzzling incidents which happened there are recorded in one man's diary of

(Cont. next page)



DISSECTING THE HEART OF THE MATTER (Continued) --

irregular but sometimes telling notations. On Earth a trial is later underway to determine what happened at this station to cause three deaths and a disappearance, and the answer seems to rest in the diary (which forms the mid-part of this story). Walling's most interesting work to date, and surely the most carefully written, the story suffers only from a rather ineffectual, unexplained fate that befalls the diary's author and leans more toward desperation than rationality. Despite this strain at the climax, the story is still quite engaging and a good read.

Crimescan -- Colin Kapp.

Interested in both the technique (here a camera which can record past or future events) and the social-political implications of crime solution, Kapp weaves a tale that delineates a cross-section of ideals in a group of characters who suit specific purposes--a psychotic murderer, the idealistic but not stupid "Crimescan" team, the Police Inspector who wants only to find the criminal, and the government security man whose interests are strictly professional and therefore insensitive to the individual. The plot gets a bit thick at times but the characters manage to carry it off nonetheless. Good of kind. The Last Hunt -- A. Bertram Chandler.

A direct sequel to a previous Commodore Grimes story ("The Dutchman", GALAXY, Nov.-Dec, '72), this one has Grimes "whaling" in the sea of space with Captain Haab, whose prosthetic leg plays a pivotal role in the climactic confrontation with Moebius Dick, an energy-eating space creature. The concept is sort of fun, but Chandler still shows a tendency to let his easy familiarity with the Rim Worlds setting stand in for character detail and good pacing. Like most of the Grimes' tales, this one just chugs along and then ends in a brief flurry of action. Fair.

Six Men from Alpha -- J.B. Clarke.

After an absence of 49 years, Earthtime, six men have returned to Earth from the fifth planet of Alpha Centauri, only to find at the close of their moon-base quarantine period that they must remain under close scrutiny. In their absence an experiment has shown that an inexplicable madness may strike them and that they may very well become rejects from their own planet. Clarke handles the speculation here with just enough detail to make it ring true as the returnees are proved "the first representatives of a new breed". The incumbent psychological problems are expertly threaded into the plot and give substance to the characters. There's enough material here to nearly fill a novel--at short length, it makes for a concentrated but extremely provocative work. Very good.

-----  
THE CON GAME (info from SOG, LUNA MONTHLY, LOCUS, CONTACT, & misc. flyers) --

June 28-July 1 -- D-CON '73; Sheraton-Dallas Hotel, Dallas, TX; GoH, Harlan Ellison; Fan GoH, Jerry Bails; Artist GoH, Burne Hogarth; Comic GoH, Bill Gaines; regis.: \$7.50; rooms: \$15 Single, \$19 Double; Banquet, \$5.75 (Sat. eve.); Art Show; Trivia Contest; Amateur Film Festival; Door Prizes; Auctions; Costume Party; Program Booklet; huge Dealers' Room; Films galore, incl. 3-D films Dangerous Mission, Cat-Women of the Moon, Devil's Canyon and two others; serials Mars Attacks the World, Planet Outlaws, Commando Cody, Red Barry and others; features Invaders from Mars, Silent Running, Transatlantic Tunnel, Dr. Phibes Rises Again, Marooned, Dr. Phibes, King Kong, Vampire Lovers, Assassination Bureau, Demon with a Glass Hand, and the like. For info, etc.: P.O. Box 242, Lewisville, TX 75067. (Received to date: PROGRESS REPORTS 1 & 2 (8 pp. ea., offset) and flyer.)

June 30-July 4 -- WESTERCON 26; St. Francis Hotel, San Francisco, CA; GoH: Larry Niven; Fan GoH: George Barr; regis. \$6; special GoH: James Nelson Coleman; Banquet; full program, incl. fashion show, film program, games room (space war), etc. For info., etc.: Sampo Productions, 195 Alhambra St., #9, San Francisco, CA 94123.

July 13-15 -- A-CON; Central New Jersey; regis. \$1.50; for info.: Flo Newrock, R.D. #2, Box 270A, Flemington, NJ 08820.

(Rest of July cons in SOTWJ 94 or 95.)

CAPERNICUS-MUSHROOM #2 (Sept. '72) (just rec'd....) (Bill & Mary Capron, 149 Ridgedale Ave., Madison, NJ 07940; irregular; mimeo (offset cover); no price given) -- 22 pp., incl. cover (by Sally Wilson; repr. from THE TYME CHANGETH); Editorials; Carissima on the telephone dial; poetry by Wally Howard, Kathy Van Dyke, Jean Gearing; column by Marty Gill; short story by Rich Geer; lettercolumn; short material. ~~##~~ Much-improved, if memory serves, from last fanzine received from Bill. (Incidentally, address on envelope is: 361 4th St., NE, Atlanta, GA 30308; assume this is later address than one in 'zine.)

FINDERS KEEPERS #2 (Wint '73) (Donald Jackson, 1043 Vine St., Adrian, MI 49221; semi-annual; 50¢ ea.; offset (bound down middle and folded over, giving twice as many pages, ea. 4 1/4" x 11")) -- 32 pp., incl. photo-covers; this issue dedicated to Buddy Holly fans; Detroit Triple Fan Fair photos; "Rap with Nick Kamin"; short lettercolumn (excerpts); "F:K Best Music from the Past Decade"; "Highlights of the 10th Annual Ann Arbor Film Festival"; "David Bienstock Interview"; "Buddy Holly", by Gary von Tersch (repr. from FUSION 13/11/70); Buddy Holly photo center-fold; "Even Dozen Top Choice Film List of 1972"; "A Conversation with Jeff Jones"; "Vaughn Bodé Interview"; short book reviews; notes/announcements; short pieces; illos by Jeff Jones, Vaughn Bodé; photos. ~~##~~ A most unusual fanzine, both in appearance and content; not much here in the way of SF/fantasy, but plenty for fans of popular culture/arts.

IT COMES IN THE MAIL #3 (undated) (Ned Brooks, 713 Paul St., Newport News, VA 23605; no price given; mimeo (offset cover); no schedule given; SFPA 'zine) -- 12 pp., / cover 9 by Vaughn Bodé; a Geis-type "calendar" of fanzines received, books and letters received, etc., with thoughts/comments/reviews of same. ~~##~~ A most useful type of 'zine, and recommended highly as such.

KWALHIOQUA (Ed Cagle, Rt. #1, Leon, KS 67074; monthly; mimeo; 50¢ or contribs) -- #6 (May '73): 26 pp.; illos by Jeeves; editorial thoughts/commentary; "Special Report: The Kwalhioqua Papers", by Ben Indick; "A Highly Moral Tale for Young and Old", by Aljo Svoboda; Kris Walker on the St. Bernard next door; "Instant Story Titles", by Donn Brazier; Richard Delap on SF and sex; Jackie Franke column; letter column; misc. short bits by Frank Balazs, James Hall, Darrell Schweitzer, Jack Wodhams, Claire Beck. ~~##~~ #8 (June '73): 38 pp. / covers (by Bangsund & Birkhead); illos by Canfield, Jeeves, Franke; Editorial notes/comments; "How Green Was My Writing Career", by John Bangsund; "The University of Ard-Knox", by Bangsund; "Classyfyde Ads" (homor); "The Unusual Need Not Be in Tibet", by Donn Brazier; Richard McGavran on politics; "Old Waves in Science Fiction", by Douglas Leingang; John Carl on issue #1 of VERTEX; "Talking with: Bruce Gillespie"; "Australiana Unlimited", by Paul Stevens; Lou Stathis reviews fanzines; lettercolumn; Ed Cagle reviews fmz; short bits by Dave Piper, Kathy Coons, James Hall. ~~####~~ One of the funniest--and most enjoyable--fanzines around today.

TABEBUIAN #5 (Aug. '73) (David Jenrette, Box 374, Coconut Grove, Miami, FL 33133; no schedule given; offset; 4 1/4" x 7"; 10¢ ea., 6/\$1 ("service charge")) -- 16 pp., incl. cover; Editorial; Ms. Jenrette on producing a thesis; list of freebies avail. from ed.; on building (unsuccessfully) sailboat models; "Sex Thing, The"; "In Search of the Elusive Tabebuian", by Joanna Albert; on the "Gor" series; on the Asimov article to appear in the nextish; "The Evening Game"; "How to be Literate"; "How to be Numerate!"; misc. short bits & pieces; "Crossword Puzzler". Also, TABEBUIAN PRESS (8 pp., as above; an advertizing flyer/editorial substitute, ~~##~~ Odd little magazine, which we found entertaining enough to want to see #6.

TANDSTIKKERZEITUNG #2 (22/4/73) (Don Markstein, 2425 Nashville Ave., New Orleans, LA 70115; mimeo (offset cover: Charles G. Finney photo); no schedule or price given) -- 8 pp. / cover; composed entirely of editor-written commentary on numerous subjects, ~~##~~ Personalzine, and as such, strictly a matter of individual taste. (We liked.)