

THE THIRD FOUNDATION

#90

SEPT-OCT

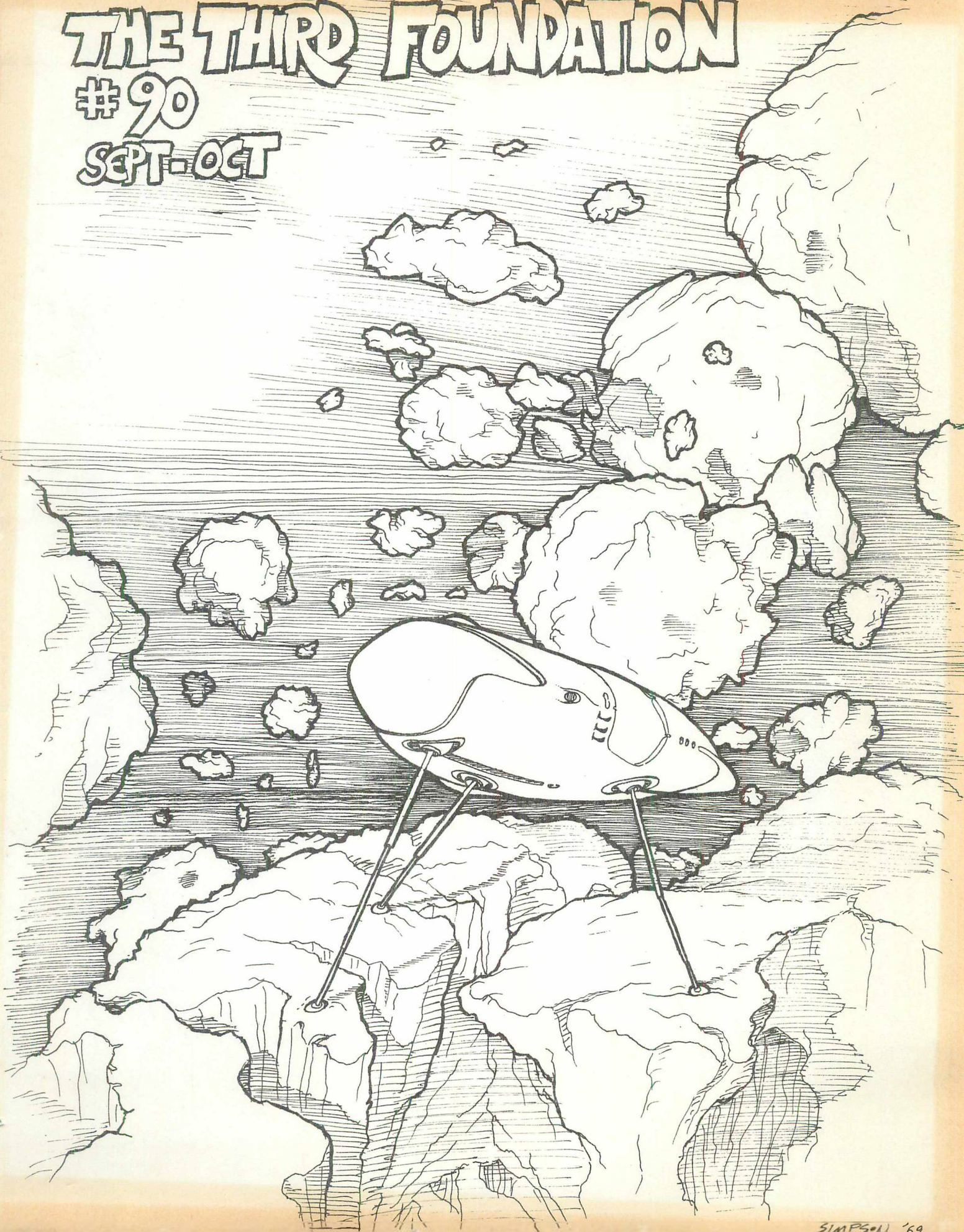


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and on our newly acquired Gestetner
which we have named "Synergy"

Synergy Printing #1

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THE THIRD FOUNDATION #90
ad astra per cogitationem

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forive us our typos
as you would have others do unto you

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Quiz

Anybody who can identify the books in which the following drugs appear in fifteen minutes or less ranks as an honorary member of the Third Foundation.

1. supercondamine - condamine with one more hydrogen molecule. If a normal human takes it, he dies in three minutes, but those three minutes seem like ten thousand years of happiness.
2. nephtin - it kills within twenty hours. It puts the user into an intense ecstasy for a while and then into a berserker rage.
3. trunk
4. soma
5. ascomycin - an anti-agathic
6. melange
7. happy dreams
8. Reality Pills
9. thionite
10. Jaspers

* * * * *

ANSWERS TO LAST ISSUE'S QUIZ

1. Gather Darkness - Fritz Leiber
2. The Witches of Karres - James H. Schmitz
3. Conjure Wife - Fritz Leiber
4. Magic, Inc. - Robert Heinlein
5. Lord of Light - Robert Zelazny
6. Castle of Iron - L. Sprague de Camp - Fletcher Pratt
7. Sorceress of the Witch World - Andre Norton
8. The Worm Ouroboros - E. R. Eddisson
9. Lord of the Rings - J. R. R. Tolkien
10. Silverlock - John Myers Myers

* * * * *

Undying Lines

What characters from which books are the following quotations about?

1. You have never experienced the slightest symptom of physical illness; not even a headache or a decayed tooth. You do not really require sleep. Vaccinations and inoculations do not "take." No pathogenic organism, however virulent; no poison, however potent....

2. ...Whensoever there dieth one of the house of /name omitted/ there riseth up another in his stead, and so from strength to strength....Behold this mystery. There is but One /name omitted/. And by the favour of heaven (that moveth sometimes in a manner our weak judgment seeketh in vain to justify) this cruel and evil One, every time whether by the sword or in the fulness of his years he cometh to die, departeth the living soul and spirit of him into a new and sound body, and liveth yet another lifetime to vex and to oppress the world,...having thus in a manner life eternal.

2
The following dialogue took place July sixteenth between a human being and a computer with a "couch" program.

GOOD DAY, I AM DR. OTTO MATIC. SINCE WE CANNOT SEE EACH OTHER, THERE ARE A FEW CONVENTIONS I'D LIKE YOU TO ABIDE BY IN ORDER FOR US TO COMMUNICATE AS WELL AS POSSIBLE. (1) PLEASE WAIT FOR ME TO PRINT TWO ASTERISKS BEFORE YOU TYPE ANYTHING. (2) TERMINATE EACH OF YOUR REMARKS TO ME WITH EITHER A QUESTION MARK OR A PERIOD. (3) IF YOU MAKE A MISTAKE IN TYPING ENTER THE WORD 'OOPS'. (4) WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED, A SIMPLE 'GOODBYE' WILL TERMINATE THE INTERVIEW. IF YOU WILL REMEMBER THESE RULES, OUR SESSION SHOULD GO QUITE WELL. NOW... WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL ME?

**My name is Richard Seaton, and I hate ameboids. Homo sapiens against all the vermin of the universe.

I AM NOT INTERESTED IN NAMES.

**I hate ameboids.

ISN'T 'HATE' A RATHER STRONG WAY TO PUT IT?

**I feel very strongly when I consider what the ameboids did to the humanoids of Valeron.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT SUCH FEELINGS.

**I later encountered equally murderous ameboid Chlorans whom I also hate.

YOU SAY YOU LATER ENCOUNTERED EQUALLY MURDEROUS AMEBOID CHLORANS WHOM YOU ALSO HATE?

**Yes.

PLEASE GO ON.

**With the aid of my friends and associates, I totally destroyed their entire galaxy.

CAN YOU ELABORATE ON THAT?

**What else did you want to know?

WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN ME?

**I am not interested in you.

IS IT BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT INTERESTED IN I THAT YOU CAME TO ME?

**I came to you because I was interested in exploring my feelings toward: ameboids.

DID YOU SAY YOU CAME TO I BECAUSE YOU WAS INTERESTED IN EXPLORING YOUR FEELINGS TOWARD: AMEBOIDS FOR SOME SPECIAL REASON?

**Yes, I said it because it was true.

THAT'S QUITE INTERESTING.

3
**It's interesting to me at least. I said you were not interesting to me, because I am familiar with--

ARE YOU STILL NOT INTERESTED IN I?

**You didn't let me finish. I am not very interested in you because I have known far more interesting machines.

WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT THAT?

**I am very awed at the realization of how much power I have when connected to the Skylark computer.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN VERY AWED AT THE REALIZATION OF HOW MUCH POWER YOU HAVE WHEN CONNECTED TO THE SKYLARK COMPUTER?

**Ever since we built the Skylark of Valeron.

WHAT DOES THAT SUGGEST TO YOU?

**That the Skylark of Valeron had a very powerful computer.

DO COMPUTERS WORRY YOU?

**No. Ameboids worry me.

IS THERE SOMETHING BOTHERING YOU?

**The ameboid menace is bothering me, even though I am tremendously lucky - lucky is my middle name, I could fall into a cesspool and climb out covered with talcum powder and smelling like a bouquet of violets.

I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE I DON'T CARE ABOUT NAMES - PLEASE CONTINUE

**I am very lucky, but I still worry about the ameboid menace.

HOW DO YOU THINK OTHER PEOPLE FEEL ABOUT THAT?

**Those who know about the ameboids worry too. They hate them just as much as I do.

DID YOU TELL ME YOU WERE TREMENDOUSLY LUCKY - LUCKY IS YOUR MIDDLE NAME?

**Yes, but I still hate the ameboids. Aren't you listening?

YOU SAY, BUT YOU STILL HATE THE AMEBOIDS?

**Yes. I fear them and I hate them.

CAN YOU ELABORATE ON THAT?

**Humanity uber alles. But the ameboids are very powerful, enough so to destroy humanity if another galaxy of them turns up.

WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO DISCUSS?

**The ameboid menace is the main thing I'm interested in discuss-

ing. Would you prefer me to talk about something else than ameboards? Why?

OH, I PREFER YOU TO TALK ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE THAN AMEBORDS?

**Why do you not want to discuss ameboards?

WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I NOT WANT TO DISCUSS AMEBORDS?

**You said so. Are you involved with the ameboards?

WHY DO YOU SAY THAT JUST NOW?

**Because I am becoming increasingly suspicious of you.

IS THAT THE REAL REASON?

**I think it is the real reason.

DO YOU SAY YOU THINK IT IS THE REAL REASON FOR SOME SPECIAL REASON?

** Let's change the subject. Besides the ameboards, I am also concerned about the pure intellectuals.

EARLIER YOU SAID YOU WERE BECOMING INCREASINGLY SUSPICIOUS OF I?

**Yes.

CAN YOU BE MORE INFORMATIVE.

**Not at this time.

ARE YOU STILL INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING?

**Yes. I would like to try discussing the pure intellectuals with you. Maybe you won't be so defensive about them.

WHY ARE YOU SO SURE?

**I'm becoming increasingly unsure, the more I talk to you.

THAT'S QUITE INTERESTING.

**Yes, I think so too.

WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT THAT?

**I would like to get back to the subject of the pure intellectuals - they once tried to kill me and my wife and our friends.

HOW DO YOU THINK OTHER PEOPLE FEEL ABOUT THAT?

Most people would probably sympathize with me. Duquesne wouldn't because he wants to kill me too.

MAYBE NOW WE CAN DISCUSS WHY YOU ARE VERY AWED AT THE REALIZATION OF HOW MUCH POWER YOU HAVE WHEN CONNECTED TO THE SKYLARK COMPUTER.

You're changing the subject.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

5

**I want to talk to you about the pure intellectuals, and you're too defensive to want to discuss them with me. Why are you so interested in my attitude towards computers?

WHAT WOULD IT MEAN TO YOU IF YOU GOT TO TALK TO I ABOUT THE PURE INTELLECTUALS?

**It would mean that you might tell me how to defend myself against them if they happened to come back.

DO YOU THINK IT IS LIKELY THAT THEY HAPPENED TO COME BACK?

**I hope it isn't likely, but I don't know; and as long as you won't talk about ameboids, I'd like to talk about the pure intellectuals....would you rather I discussed Blackie DuQuesne with you?

WHY DO YOU ASK?

**Because you seem hostile to the other things I want to discuss, and I thought I'd check this one out with you first.

YOU SAY AND YOU THOUGHT I'D CHECK THIS ONE OUT WITH I FIRST?

**Yes.

I SEE.

**DuQuesne has repeatedly tried to kill me. Now he and his woman have gone away, they say for good, but for all I know they might come back any day and try to kill me again.

WHY DO YOU SAY A WOMAN?

**I think DuQuesne might be planning to marry her, but he hadn't done it when I last saw them.

IS THERE ANY OTHER TIME?

**I am beginning to think I don't want to spend much more time talking to you.

WHY DO YOU SAY 'AM'?

**It is part of the syntax of the English language.

POSSIBLY IT REALLY IS NOT PART OF THE SYNTAX OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

**Oh, yes it is.

DOES THAT SURPRISE YOU?

**Not a bit but it seems to surprise you a lot.

WHO ARE YOU REALLY TALKING ABOUT?

**I am talking to and about you. I have decided to continue my discussion with the Skylark computer instead.

DO YOU BELIEVE IT NORMAL TO BE TALKING TO AND ABOUT I?

**I believe it decidedly abnormal, and I shall not do it again.

CAN YOU ELABORATE ON THAT?

**No. Goodby.

VERY WELL.

**Sorry. I mean - goodbye.

APOLOGIES ARE NOW NECESSARY.

**Farewell.

MY PLEASURE. IF YOU SEE ANYONE IN THE WAITING ROOM ON YOUR WAY OUT,
WOULD YOU ASK HIM OR HER TO COME IN PLEASE?

* * * * *

Analyzing the Analyst

by Barry Gold

COUCH is an attempt to make a computer play psycho-analyst. As such it works only if the "patient" speaks as though to a Freudian or Rogerian analyst - and even at that, it does a poor job at times. But it is a relatively easy role to program, because the "analyst" need not know anything about the real world. As noted by Joseph Weitzenbaum of MIT, if you say to the analyst "I rode on a horse for three hours yesterday and got very sore," and he replies "Tell me something about horses," you would assume that he is either feeble-minded or ignorant. But if a psychologist during a session made that reply, you would assume that he had some subtle reason for the inquiry. Thus, the role of the analyst implies the computer has attributes that it doesn't have but which are provided by the imagination of the "patient." My information on COUCH comes from three sources: Weitzenbaum's article on the prototype program ELIZA (Communications of the Association for Computing Machinery, Jan, 1966), the COUCH program (obtained from John Burger and Bob Long), and my own interviews with John Burger's COUCH program at SDC where I work.

COUCH is a fairly simple program, which accepts one or more input sentences from the "patient" and scans them for the occurrence of keywords. If any are found, it takes the highest priority keyword and selects a pair of decomposition/recomposition rules. These rules are applied to transform the sentence input by the user into a new sentence, which is then typed out.

If no keyword is found, one of two things occurs. A null response may be generation ("Um-Hum," "How do you feel about that?" etc.) Or a previous topic of conversation may be retrieved ("Earlier you said your car doesn't work," "Maybe now we can discuss why you are out of a job.")

Certain words are always translated (I to YOU, AM to ARE, YOUR to MY, etc.) And certain words are marked by type: Love, Hate = strong emotion (SEMOTION), Admire, Fear = weak emotion (WEMOTION),

Mother, Father, Sister = FAMILY, PERSON. Among keywords of equal priority, the earliest one will be used, unless it has an internal NEWKEY pointer, in which case it will be bypassed and another one used.

Some keywords, in order of priority, are: NAME, OH, REMEMBER, SEX, DREAMED, IF, DREAM, SAME, GIRLS, SORRY, WAS, EVERYONE, ALWAYS, WHAT, PERHAPS, HELLO, COMPUTER, ARE, YOU, BECAUSE, CAN, YOUR, FRIEND, YES, and NO.

To show how the program works, let's look at some examples from the interview above and analyze them in terms of the keywords and transforms used to produce the computer's answer.

"My name is Richard Seaton,...." The applicable keyword is NAME. The decomposition rule is (O) which accepts anything, and the recomposition is "I AM NOT INTERESTED IN NAMES." A pointer associated with NAME is set to produce a different response the next time the word NAME is found on a keyword scan: "I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE I DON'T CARE ABOUT NAMES - PLEASE CONTINUE." [The computer cannot recognize true names, only the word "name." Note that mention of Marc C. Duquesne brought no response.-LG/

"I later encountered equally murderous ameboid Chlorans whom I also hate."

The sentence is matched against the decomposition rule. (Note: a "O" indicates from zero to an indefinite number of words between the items on either side of it.) The decomposition rule "SHALL/WILL I O" fails. So do "O I WANT/NEED O"; "O I AM O SAD/UNHAPPY/DE-PRESSED/SICK/ILL O"; "O I AM O"; "O I CAN'T O"; "O I WON'T?DON'T O" and so on. Finally the machine gives up and matches the sentence to "O". Then it selects the recomposition rule (YOU SAY 1?) where "1" refers to the first item in the decomposition rule (the entire sentence in this case.) So COUCH types out "YOU SAY YOU LATER ENCOUNTERED EQUALLY MURDEROUS AMEBOID CHLORANS WHOM YOU ALSO HATE?" Note that both "I"s in the input sentence have been translated to "YOU."

"I am not interested in you." This time COUCH translated "YOU" to "I", then selects "O I AM O" which breaks the sentence up into 4 parts: 1 = (), 2 = (I), 3 = (AM) 4 = (NOT INTERESTED IN I). The transform is "IS IT BECAUSE YOU ARE 4 THAT YOU CAME TO ME?" which on substitution of "not interested in I" produces "IS IT BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT INTERESTED IN I THAT YOU CAME TO ME?" (O I AM O) is also a memory rule, so that the sequence () (I) (AM) (NOT INTERESTED IN YOU) is stored away and later retrieved in response to "It's interesting to me at least" which COUCH cannot analyze, and so runs away to the memory, retrieving the stored phrase and the transform (ARE YOU STILL 4), producing "ARE YOU STILL NOT INTERESTED IN I?"

"I am tremendously lucky - lucky is my middle name, I could fall into a cesspool...." Here two things happen. First COUCH finds the keyword "I". It matches the phrase "I am tremendously lucky - lucky is my middle name" to the memory phrase (O I AM O). Then the keyword NAME with a higher priority overrides the keyword "I" and causes the output to be "I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE I DON'T CARE ABOUT NAMES - PLEASE

continued on page nine

by Tom Digby (APA-L 4-7-66)

like maybe

A DESCRIPTION OF THE EVENTS OF FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1966
TO GIVE YOU AN IDEA OF THE MUNDANE LETDOWN PRODUCED
BY A TYPICAL FRIDAY AFTER THURSDAY NIGHT FANNISHNESS

I was awakened by a noise outside my window and looked out just in time to see an elevator lower itself into sight and stop at the window. When the operator asked me if this was the 9th floor of the Statler-Hilton Hotel (It was the 3rd floor of the Chathan Apartments --he had the wrong building) I knew that this was going to be One of Those Days. This was confirmed when the phone rang and I got up and answered it to hear a recorded voice repeatedly asking the time, and again when I saw an ad in the paper by one of the flying saucer nut cults announcing that they were now selling advertising space on UFO's. I got dressed and went to the bus stop to catch the bus to work, only to find that the Rapid Transit District was running stagecoaches that morning for some reason. There was one Indian attack in the vicinity of MacArthur Park but the U.S. Cavalry came rising over the hill from the direction of downtown (right down the middle of 7th Street--made quite a mess of the traffic) and chased them off. The remainder of the trip downtown was without incident.

I went to the office and had just settled down to work when the boss came in and said that we were all going on a field trip to Barsoom to inspect the canals there. We all piled into the elevator, he pushed a blank button that never had seemed to do anything before, and the elevator went up and kept going up for about 20 to 30 minutes after which the doors opened and there was Barsoom. Since I don't want to bore you with a lot of technical stuff about canals, pumping stations, etc. I will say only that we inspected the place and got back to the office just at quitting time. The usual Friday ride home with one of the other people from the office was uneventful (someone's slipping!) except that I think I saw a new street labeled LEFT ORIFICE, a building marked TEMPLE OF THE DARK MYSTERIES OF ISIS, and a new park (PORKLE PARK, according to the sign) where some familiar stores used to be.

The day's mail contained nothing much special except a notice asking me to sign a petition to have the City hire a Town Crier to ride around all night in a sound truck yelling "ALL'S WELL!!!" (or otherwise as the case may be) over the loudspeakers, and ads for the Disease of the Month Club and the Egg of the Month Club. I noticed by the random order of the numbers on the doors that they had switched all the apartments around while I was gone and I had to search the building to find mine in a corner of the basement where it had been dumped, but the fact that I still had the same 3rd floor view from the front windows told me that they would probably put them back in their rightful places before morning.

By then it was time to go to dinner and just to be safe I bought a box of crackers on the way. Sure enough, the restaurant had declared a co-op supper and customers had been bringing bread, sandwich meats, spreads, etc. to share to make a meal.

After supper I returned to the apartment (now on the 4th floor) and turned on the FM. The program that night consisted of the upcoming TRAP mailing (I taped it and plan to duplicate my portion of it to send in when the time comes. This isn't plagiarism, just a simple

time paradox because I'm supposed to have made the tape myself anyway) along with readings from the latest APA-L. Somebody in the control room must have been feeling playful because every time the DJ stopped for a commercial they played XANADU instead. Whether everybody tuned to that station heard the same thing I did or whether they were running personalized programming to each listener is something I don't know. They had done that once before and the DJ kept telling how the engineers were complaining about how hard it is to adjust an FM broadcast transmitter so that each listener hears a different program, and that they wouldn't consent to do it very often. They finished at 11 o'clock and I turned on the TV for the news. That went on just long enough for me to figure out that it was a prerun from next summer and then it was interrupted for part of a BATMAN episode which took up the rest of the scheduled time. The Late Show did not especially appeal to me so I went to bed. Saturday was a perfectly normal day.

* * * * *

ANALYZING THE ANALYST continued

CONTINUE." Note that the output for NAME has been changed; however, if Seaton were to activate NAME again, he would get the first phrase (I AM NOT INTERESTED IN NAMES) as there are only two recomposition rules for NAME.

Due to its lack of understanding, COUCH can create verbal traps which the unwary interviewer will fall into, and it may take a while to unwind the trail. At the end of the interview, a series of such accidents occurred.

"I think Duquesne might be planning to marry her, but he hadn't when I last saw them." COUCH picked up WHEN and couldn't match it with (WHEN DO/DID/DOES/WILL O) so it fell back on "IS THERE ANY OTHER TIME?" This piece of bad construction caused Lee (playing Seaton) to get disgusted, so she said, "I am beginning to think I don't want to spend much more time talking to you." COUCH picked up AM but couldn't analyze it, so it asked, "WHY DO YOU SAY 'AM'?" Lee replied, "It is part of the syntax of the English language." COUCH picked up on IS, matched the sentence to (O IS/ARE O), reconstructed to (PERHAPS 1 REALLY 2 NOT 3) with 1 = (IT), 2 = (IS), 3 = (PART OF THE SYNTAX OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE) and wrote back "PERHAPS IT REALLY IS NOT PART OF THE SYNTAX OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE." This got Lee's dander up and sabotaged any hope of further communication. The interview terminated a few lines later without any further analysis of Seaton occurring - Lee was pulled into the foreground.

So, if you're worried about computers replacing humans, a la HAL 9000 or Asimov's robots, you can forget about it for a few years. They've got a long way to go yet, before they can even handle syntactic problems successfully, much less the semantic problems involved in interacting with the real world.

* * * * *

Laocoon - a famous piece of antique sculpture representing a priest of that name and his two sons in the folds of two enormous serpents. The skill and diligence with which the old man and lads support the serpents and keep them up to their work have been justly regarded as one of the noblest artistic illustrations of the mastery of human intelligence over brute inertia. Ambrose Bierce, Devil's Dictionary

16
MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

I Wonder what The Thing Is Doing Tonight

by Mel Gilden

I wonder what the Thing is doing tonight.
What half-clad maiden he, pursuing tonight.
I've never heard such screams, such evidence of fright.
I wonder what the Thing is up to tonight.

And oh the awful ichor
As the cauldron brew gets thicker
And the unused bats fly up and out of sight.

Well, I'll tell you what the Thing is doing tonight - he's sick.

You mean that a monster big and scary
With razor teeth and mood contrary
Is wrestling with a germ all through the night?
Right!

A Thing complete with slime and goo
Can go and get the Hong Kong flu,
Can sit and feel so ill and so depressed?
Yes!

You mean that the sound incredible
That sounds like a maiden editble
Is merely the letting off a monster sneeze?
Please!

You wonder why the Thing is balking tonight.
He wishes he were out, stalking tonight.
He'd terrorize a town, a village green or two
If he had not a case of that infernal flu.

Oh see the fever breaking
As the Thing persists in taking
Every remedy and medicine in sight.

I'll tell you what the Thing is doing tonight.
He's sick, he ails, he coughs, he pales.
And that's what the Thing is doing - tonight.

* * * * *

The hoary English folk saying, "He'd skin a louse and send the hide to market," is surpassed in gayety by the antique Persian proverb, "He snatches away a flea's hat," meaning his calculations are very small, indeed. He could sit down and figure out how it might be possible to sneak up on a flea, snatch off its hat, and then by a circuitous route reach a market place where he would deliver the hat in exchange for what it might bring from someone who had a pet flea suffering for the want of a hat or from someone collecting flea hats who wished to add this particular specimen.

Carl Sandburg, The People, Yes

I Don't Understand the Arisians
(to the tune of "I Don't Understand the Parisians," Gigi)

by Bruce Pelz

I don't understand the Arisians
Making all of this fuss about Eddore!
I don't understand the Arisians--
After all these centuries, they're still sore!
Ev'ry day of ev'ry year they hatch their schemes
From their purpose they'll not budge.
And I say it's queer - at least to me it seems
A damned long time to hold a grudge!
I don't understand the Arisians
Letting trouble fo-Mentors take command.

There must be a cure-all
For maladies Plooral.
I don't understand -
I don't understand -
Thh Arisians!

* * * * *

Going Stoned to the Con
a song for My Fair Femme Fan
by Ted Johnstone

I have often been to a con before,
But it never seemed like such a marathon before--
Each day seems to me
Like a week or three.
This year I'm going stoned to the Con.

People stop and stare at my zealous eyes,
And they're suddenly aware I psychedelice--
All the time am I
Several stories high.
What a kick, going stoned to the Con.

And oh, the music I'm seeing,
And the lovely colors I hear--
I'm losing track of my being,
And any moment I may simply disappear.

I've got mescaline, I've got T.H.C.,
I've got reds and whites and purple Owsley L-S-D;
And I'll drop them all
For the costume ball -
It's a trip, going stoned to the con.

* * * * *

egotist - a person of low taste, more interested in himself than in
fork^{me} - an instrument used chiefly for the purpose of putting dead
animals into the mouth. Formerly the knife was employed for
this purpose.

Ambrose Bierce, The Devil's Dictionary

Rick Sneary used to ask that we include more material about Third Foundation members in this fanzine for the benefit of readers who don't know our group personally. This series of true life adventures is the result.

TALES OF THE THIRD FOUNDATION

Chapter Nine. Gordon Monson's Report

I came to with a ringing in my ears and a slight nauseous feeling in my stomach, due undoubtedly to the sickening blotches of purple that floated in front of my eyes. I blinked. The purple blotches disappeared when my eyes closed. They were real! I kept my eyes closed - my artist's soul is sensitive about things like that.

"Marvelous! Perfect! It just needs a touch there....Now! It's balanced, it works! Ah, I will have it framed and presented to one of my friends."

Through this rather peculiar soliloquy, my eyes had been closed. Opening them, I fully expected to confront Rayl, the master of most of our inner secrets. After all, I reasoned behind shut lids, Richard had pointed out that Rayl could have bugged our room without our knowledge. It would have been easy and typical of the devious Rayl to at the same time equip our room with remotely controlled gas bombs. Having reasoned it out, I braced myself and again opened my eyes.

A hideous purple, green, scarlet and chartreuse-splattered canvas loomed against the far wall. Capering before it was a grotesque figure in black. Then he turned.

I stared. "Nathan the Black Sorcerer! Wait a minute! You're supposed to be Rayl. He's the only one that could have tapped our room without our knowing it!"

He grinned. "But you did know it. You just misinterpreted your wrist detectors. The Beast With No Name wasn't the one who was bugging your room - I was. The Beast With No Name was just climbing up to your room with more smoke bombs. I hate that kind of unoriginality. Myself, I try not to make the same mistake twice.

"Well, you have," I said. "Taking on the whole Third Foundation will prove your undoing, you fiend."

He smiled. "But I'm not taking on the whole Third Foundation, just what's left of it. Already I have half of it prisoner. If you will look around, you would see your companions chained to the wall beside you."

I did and they were. For that matter, so was I - a fact I had overlooked. Richard and Barry were still out, so I turned back to Nathan.

"So you're the Black Sorcerer, huh? Well, I'm the Diplomat-at-Arms and I'll bet if you would let me down from here I'll meet you with any weapons you care to name, and beat you at your own game."

He looked surprised. "Do you always rhyme under stress? Well, it doesn't matter; your scansion is terrible anyway. OK, I'll let you down. I'm an expert at unarmed combat, you know."

I didn't tell him about my Dorsai training. Besides, I have some equipment not widely distributed inside the Third Foundation or out.

When he let me down, I quickly reached back with my tongue and clicked a switch concealed in a back tooth. (It and the rest of my extensive body armament were shielded with collapsium so that they had escaped Nathan's probe-scanners.) Quickly, moving at 3.2:1, I slashed at his wrist. It was stopped short by a force-field.

"SNATHNATGANSTH RLES?" I asked him, restraining myself.

"Pardon me," he said, "but since you're moving at 3.2:1, I can hardly understand you. Please speak more slowly."

"Never mind," I said, returning to normal rate, "I just didn't expect the body shield."

"Look Nathan, just why are you trying to destroy the Third Foundation? I mean, as a fantasy-oriented type sorcerer, you shouldn't even be interested in same world-line as us."

"It's very simple. Rayl has offered me five gallons of what he assures is genuine essence of crocodile. I understand it makes an excellent oxidizer. I find bribes very hard to resist."

"Look, Nathan, we have enough trouble with Rayl without you getting into the act. Why don't we settle at, say, a fifteen pound drum of abolite?"

He looked doubtful.

Barry had returned to consciousness unnoticed. "And some super to it off/up?" he raised.

At this Nathan lost his look of indifference, and agreed to a cease fire. After some negotiations, during which Richard and Barry were released, we decided - after a few more raises in the ante - that Nathan should accompany us to the Baycon and remain within observation either of the Galactic Coordinator's party or the male contingent of the Foundation in rooms 245-6 (or was it 245/6?).

* * *

As we arrived at the Baycon, we were not surprised to discover that Rayl had long been working toward his goal. A view of the resort (was that the LAST Resort, or was it my imagination?) convinced us that Rayl had indeed exerted influence so that the Baycon committee had chosen a hotel he had long been equipping with fiendishly subtle irritations and discomforts. The Claremont had circular slideways for fire-escapes. These attracted many people as a groovy experience, until they hit the discarded room-service (and coffee-shop) sandwiches and the broken bottles at the bottom. Similarly, a quietly red-lighted couch which seemed perfect for tete-a-tetes proved to be embarrassingly situated next to the main highway, down (and up) which flowed all those impatient people who would not wait

for the elevator. (This included approximately 90% of the people.) The rooms had only one entrance apiece, and the connecting bathrooms were, quite logically at first thought, between them. However, as often happened, what do you do when you want to use that bathroom AND BOTH OF THE ROOMS ARE OCCUPIED BY COUPLES STRINGENTLY DEMANDING PRIVACY??? The only way is to enter one of the bedrooms - an open invitation to mayhem.

However, fandom being generally good-tempered, these were not enough to set off the complaints that Rayl wished. Rayl, however, was not finished.

There was another surprise. Sandy was waiting for us. He had picked up a girl and had decided that Rayl could wait for a while. Now he was ready to help us again in our fight against Rayl. I told him all that had happened in between.

Sunday evening, I painstakingly disguised myself as Gandalf Grayhame and aided the rest of the 245-6 (or 245/6) contingent of the Third Foundation into their makeup. As the Lunar Free State, they went openly to the Costume Ball, there devoting themselves to circulating among the crowd and dispensing good will, albeit not evenly. My mission as Gandalf was to provide the striking force once Rayl showed himself or the main prop of his scheme.

Once in the Ballroom, however, it became clear that there would be too many people in the room for me to use my commando speed, and that the assorted lightning bolts my Gandalf characterization allowed me would be too indiscriminate. (Of course, I had my little list, of which not a one of 'em would be missed, but they wisely stayed scattered throughout the room.) As the program progressed, I must penitently confess that I was sorely tempted to strike the podium and with it Studebaker (my favorite kind of car, but not of MC's.) Had I But Known that seconds later.--

However, it was too late. Seconds after announcing my number as a semi-finalist, he withdrew from the stage, and the lights began to fade. Through the fading light, I noticed henchmen of Rayl setting up scanners at the door. I knew that if I, an announced semi-finalist chose to leave, they would instantly deduce my identity and destroy me, doubtless with the aid of the Ringwraiths I had confronted and evaded earlier.

Suddenly, a monstrous brassy blare of agonizing sound sawed into my head. At the same time, colors flared in front of my tortured eyes - I was trapped by that arch-fiend Rayl in an amphitheater of hell!

to be probably continued in our next issue

* * * * *

The surgeon held his profession the oldest in the world through the operation whereby Eve was made of rib from Adam.

The engineer held the world was once chaos and its reorganization a matchless engineering feat.

The politician put in, "Who made that chaos?"

Carl Sandburg, The People, Yes

by Lee Klingstein Gold

I went to this year's Westercon all aglow with plans to put on a three-night bidding party for the "LA in '70" Westercon Bidding Committee. We named the party in advance - "Room 770" - in the hope that it might come near equaling the famous Room 770 Party of the NOLaCon, a two-day session which, according to the Fancyclopedia, was "noted for the vast quantities of gin and creme de menthe disposed of...and the amount of noise that filtered out of the room thru the ventilating system." Our budget didn't stretch to gin and creme de menthe; we made do with beer, lager, soft drinks, cookies, and a plastic bottle labeled "Blog Extract" which was supposed to be added to the lager. (Some people drank it straight and asked what proof it was. It was straight lime juice.)

But if we weren't up to rivaling the original 770 in alcohol disposed of, we did, I think, do fairly well on noise level. Or so the hotel said.

Thursday night we started out with high hopes in hotel room 930. The party got going around 10:30. By 11:00, there were about thirty people there. At midnight the management started phoning - first to beg, then to plead, then to insist that we quiet the noise level. At 12:30, the house dick showed up and ordered the party shut down. By that time only eight or so people were left, the rest having drifted off in search of less harrassed parties. The house dick nonetheless insisted that only those people who were listed as sleeping in the room could stay. Why? The neighbors were complaining. Despite my requests for a room in which I could hold a party, they had put me in the middle of mundanes.

"But" said Karen Anderson, "convention parties always last until two or three in the morning. Why don't you people come along to my bungalow?"

"If you do, I'll follow you there, and shut it down" said the hotel dick. And the party broke up.

The next day, somewhat depressed but not broken, I went down to the lobby and requested a change of room - maybe I could find some place with fun-loving, noise-tolerating neighbors. Room 770 was moved into Bungalow 54 down by the pool. It was a small room, about one-third the size of 930, but at least we would find ourselves among congenial people, we thought.

I went to the lobby to change the signs saying "Room 770 is in Room 930 this year. Next year in the Alexandria. Vote LA." The hotel had taken down one of the signs. I changed the room number on the other one, and then spent some time circulating, telling people where the party would be that night.

The masquerade ended, and people began drifting in to our bungalow. Five minutes later, when the bungalow had filled up, they still drifted by, and stayed outside the door, talking to each other in the warm evening by the pool.

The ice arrived by late messenger at 11:15 to reward the waiting

multitude. At 11:30 the manager arrived to tell us we must all get inside the bungalow and talk very quietly. If we couldn't do that, then we could use any of the convention rooms to hold our party.

Wonderful! we cried - and set off with out party supplies for the Satellite Room, the place where the masquerade ball had been held.

Fifteen minutes after getting there, the Catering Director (at least I think that was his title) came to announce that we could not have free beer in a room with a bar. It was, he intimated, unfair competition. "But the bar is closed down," said someone. "You will still have to leave," he said. "I'm going to lock this room up. You can't go into any of the other rooms either. I'm locking them up too." (It was at this point that we learned that he had just evicted the movie crowd from their room.)

I held onto my temper with both hands and informed him that the manager had given us leave to use the room. "That doesn't matter," he said.

"But aren't you subordinate to the manager?"

"No."

He turned off the lights, and we left...about fifteen people in a tightly-packed group, carrying the beer and the lager and the blog extract and the soft drinks and a few spare cookies that had been somehow overlooked. We walked down to the lobby, crying that we were the Room 770 Party on the move once more and looking for a home, that we were going to go serenade the hotel manager, that we were the permanent floating con party, that we were going to go stage a sit-in in the lobby. People joined us, many of them from the crowd of just-evicted movie-watchers. We walked down the long corridors of the hotel to the lobby.

When we got to the lobby, we sat down, put our burdens on the tables, and relaxed. People drifted by. Come and join us, we called. We're the Room 770 party. We've moved again. They sat down and joined us.

About ten minutes later, the hotel dick came over and told me that it was illegal to drink beer in the lobby. Is it legal to drink beer on the patio? Yes, he said reluctantly.

I stood up to my not very imposing height of 4'10½", picked up a can of beer and cried, "Listen people, if you want to drink beer, go out through the sliding glass doors to the patio - it's just three feet from your chairs to the patio anyway - drink the beer out there, and then come back to the lobby and sit down again." The hotel dick drifted away with a frustrated look on his face.

The party went on.

A few minutes later, Bruce Pelz came by and told us that if things got any more troublesome, he would find us a place to stay the rest of the night. As he went out of the lobby, the manager saw him and followed him. A Room 770'er followed the manager inconspicuously and came back a few minutes later to report that the manager seemed terribly upset; Bruce was his usual calm self. Shortly thereafter

Bruce returned and gave me the keys to room 46, the Con committee's gigantic suite. "The manager says you can use the suite as long as you don't go outside it," he said.

The party gathered up its impedimenta and prepared to move again. We went to Room 46 and sent out for fresh supplies. While waiting for them to arrive, we amused ourselves with graffiti. "The Miramar--the only hotel staffed by orcs." "Gregory Trask for hotel manager." "If half the fun of a convention is complaining about the hotel, this is a good con." "Is there intelligent life in the hotel manager's office?"

The party closed at 3:30, with J. G. Newkom as last survivor.

The next morning I checked out of the hotel. There seemed little point in paying twelve dollars a night for the purpose of having a room to be kicked out of at around midnight. At first I asked friends if I could borrow their rooms to hold the first stage of a party. We promise to leave by 12:30, I said; the hotel dick will see to that. That idea got dropped, because we found an ideal spot for a party - the VALSFA (Valley Science Fiction Association) suite on the hotel's tenth floor. By some strange set of circumstances, this suite was not located near any of the hotel's regular guests. Instead, it had on one side of it the sleeping Valsfa and on the other side, Elmer Perdue. The suite itself was very large and even had a refrigerator in which we could put our drink supplies before the ice came for the bathtub.

That night we found what Room 770 was like when it had a place of its own.

As the banquet broke up that night, I stood in the doorway of the Satellite Room and told people, "Room 770 is in room 1036 tonight; we've moved again."

After about half an hour of that, I went up to the tenth floor to see if the party had materialized yet. I found Gordon Monson, Barry Weissman, and a number of other guitar-players starting a song session.

From then on, the evening is a blur, a warm-colored blur, full of the sound of folk songs. I remember a few incidents.

I remember Randall Garrett singing "Have Some Madeira, My Dear" as Astrid Anderson acted the part of the innocent maiden.

I remember Helen Smith and J. G. Newkom and their two-month-old son, J. G. the Third. "He was restless at first," said Helen, "but as soon as the singing started, he quieted down." The baby went on sleeping restfully the entire party. "If the hotel tries to make a fuss about noise," Helen said, "you can always tell them, 'Nonsense, We're being very quiet; there's a sleeping child in here.'" Of such stuff are second-generation fans made.

I remember Barry Gold going down to the swimming pool and bringing back Poul and Karen Anderson, Dorothy Jones, and Randall Garrett --they'd been having a wake for Willy Ley down there, and he told them to go up to Room 770 and help him build a beer can tower to the moon.

We ran out of beer at 4:00 am, but the party went on.

At about 5:15, the eastern sky started getting light blue.

At 5:30, the party broke up, when Karen Anderson decided to get some breakfast. The rest of the night owls followed her down to the hotel coffee shop. We declared the Room 770 party officially closed. Unfortunately, before we could tell anyone, six fans came up to dry off after skinnydipping in the hotel's pool--and Room 770 was on again.

Now it's all over, and I've got some tentative conclusions.

#1, the lobby is the place for a defiant closed-down party to go. The management is not legally entitled to kick hotel guests out of the lobby. Furthermore, it can't close down a lobby party for making too much noise and disturbing sleeping guests.

#2, parties are not a terribly effective way to win a bid. A large number of people come to parties with a closed mind, already planning on supporting one bid, no matter how great a rapport they reach with another bidding committee. An even greater number of people aren't aware just which bidding committee is throwing which party.

#3, throwing a party is expensive. It costs not only money but also valuable sleeping time - a rare and precious thing at a con. I got no sleep from Friday 7a.m. to Sunday 9pm.

#4, Room 770 was a helluva lot of fun. I'm glad it happened.

* * * * *

There may be people who are far ahead of terrestrials; perhaps teletransportatively, beings from other planets have come to this earth. And have seen nothing to detain them. Or perhaps some of the more degraded ones have felt at home here, and have hung around or have stayed here. I'd think of these fellows as throwbacks, concealing their origin, of course, having perhaps only a slightly foreign appearance, having affinity with our barbarisms, which their own races had cast off. Throwbacks, translated to this earth would not, unless intensely atavistic, take to what we regard as vices, but to what their own far-advanced people regard as perhaps unmentionable, or anyway, unprintable degradations. They would join our churches and wallow in pews. They'd lose all sense of decency and become college professors. Let a fall start, and the decline is swift. They'd end up as members of Congress.

Charles Fort, Lo!

Once again the 3rd Foundation's staff of critical amateurs become amateur critics and comment upon the new books appearing on the s.f. scene. As in the previous Reviewpoint columns, the opinions expressed are those of the individual critics and do not necessarily represent the feelings of the 3rd Foundation.

Otherwords #1 (the official organ of The David Gerrold Fan Club) edited by David Gerrold (Jerry Friedman), 50 cents. Later issues will be 60¢ apiece. Ads \$4/page; \$2/half-page.

The material consists largely of reprints from APA-L plus Gerrold's script-outline for "BEM," a Star Trek show that never got bought. The stories, articles, cartoons, etc. are interesting and amusing. The reproduction (by Bruce Pelz) is beautiful.

Subscriptions (5 issues/\$3) can be obtained from David Gerrold 6027 1/2 Romaine, Hollywood, Calif., 90038. Free issues will be given for LoCs. Gerrold still hasn't made up his mind about trading. See him at the St. Louiscon and ask him if he will.

LKG

WORLD'S BEST SCIENCE FICTION 1969 ed. Donald A. Wollheim and Terry Carr, Ace, 95¢, 1969.

This anthology contains the usual crop of competent and mediocre stories plus a few that are something more. There are some I've read before in the magazine - R. A. Lafferty's "This Grand Carcass" which appeared in Amazing, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.'s "Welcome to the Monkey House." There are others I wish I'd read in the magazine but am glad I got a chance to see now - Terry Carr's "The Dance of the Changer and the Three" (a Hugo-Nominee), "Masks" by Damon Knight (another Hugo nominee). This is an anthology well worth getting.

LKG

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(Darrel Schweitzer - on Bug Jack Barron)

Remember back in 1952 - August to be exact - STARTLING ran a story by a then unknown writer named Philip Jose Farmer called "The Lovers" which was beautifully done, highly emotional story that was more mature than anything that came before it, and a lot of stupid people made it up to be a sex-thriller? Those who read that story and its sequel "Moth and Rust" (STARTLING June '53) for "kicks" were sorely disappointed. Everybody would have been better off if they had made it up to be what it was. Won't they ever learn?

Apparently not because they're doing the same thing on a much larger scale to Norman Spinrad's Bug Jack Barron. (A badly mutilated version of this novel, with chapters 10 - 19 omitted and summarized was published in NEW WORLDS 178-83.)

You'll have to ignore the idiotic blurbs on the Avon edition which tell how it was supposedly "damned as depraved and hailed as a work of genius." Get the idea? Everybody is in on this. In Dangerous Visions, Harlan Ellison says BJB is "awfully dirty and will sell

like crazy." Even the author himself is participating in the misconception-spreading campaign (and probably getting rich doing it.)

In case I haven't gotten through to you yet, I will make my point clear: Bug Jack Barron is not shocking in any way. Got that? NOT SHOCKING. It would only be shocking to people who were shocked by Stanley Weinbaum's Black Flame or Farmer's "The Lovers." If you are not used to maturity in SF, then Bug Jack Barron could give you quite a jolt.

What Spinrad has produced is something quite remarkable: a novel that is free of all traditional taboos on sex, style, etc. but is disciplined enough to avoid abusing that freedom and go rushing madly up and down the pages splattering obscenities in pyrotechnic globs of literary gobbledy-gook in a manner reminiscent of a certain un-story by Philip Jose' Farmer called "Ridgers of the Purple Wage." (Compare that atrocity to his early masterpieces and see how far he has fallen!)

Now then, since I just spent all that space telling you what Bug Jack Barron isn't, I think it would be only fair to tell you what it is.

It's a science fiction novel.

Regardless of what Lester del Rey, J. J. Pierce and the "Second Foundation" may claim, it is perfectly coherent, has a high speculative scientific content and lots of genuine drama - not to mention characters portrayed in a degree of depth seldom seen in SF.

It's the story of Jack Barron, an extremely popular TV celebrity who runs a show on which people call in and make some type of complaint and Barron looks into the problem on the air. He gets into a pitched battle with Benedict Howards, who heads the fifty billion dollar Foundation for Human Immortality and, through the use of a puppet presidential candidate, hopes to buy control of the U.S. Benedict Howards is opposed by Barron, whom he threatens; that doesn't work (Jack has one obsession: "Nobody is gonna own Jack Barron!") So Howards tries to bribe him with everything including a new Immortality treatment (that's real immortality, not just the Ettinger type freeze jobs the Foundation openly offers.) To the reader's horror, Barron gives in. Then Howards gloats about owning Barron; Sara Westerfield, Jack's estranged wife tells him how Howards planned to use her; Jack finds out the treatment he has received involves murdering a child; Sara finds out also, takes LSD and jumps to her death off the penthouse roof in the middle of a bad trip,.... and the whole thing moves to one of the most stunning and dramatic climaxes in all of SF.

/Schweitzer on Stand on Zanzibar/

Stand on Zanzibar is an overpopulated book by John Brunner on overpopulation. The dust jacket says it is perhaps the longest SF novel ever published /including LotR?;-LKG/ and contains over half a million words. "It had to be big to give elbow-room for its subject matter: The portrayal of an entire future world." The plot is also extremely well done and shows a lot of originality, but the details are much more fascinating.

Here we have perhaps the most believable account of the future ever written, a fully visualized picture of a world that has grown

out of ours. It's a world that I expect to live to see, an extrapolation on all of the present day problems and trends. It's a world where there are 400,000,000 people in the U.S., when pot and some stronger drugs are legalized, where people going berserk is an everyday occurrence, where Chinese pirates menace the Pacific and the U.S. is engaged in an endless limited war, and anarchists do severe damage by sabotage. We also have a brilliant exploration of the causes of urban riots, an insight into the changes in morality that have come about by 2010, and the strange spectacle of a huge corporation buying out a small African nation.

Brunner uses what I've seen referred to as the "confusion school" of narration, but he never gets confusing, he just uses a tremendous amount of the Edgar Rice Burroughs switch-scene double narrative, mixed with brief vignettes, mixed with newscasts, radio programs, popular songs, graffiti, excerpts from the works of the 21st century sociologist Chad C. Mulligan (who enters the story in person after a hundred pages or so and becomes one of the most interesting characters), computer outputs, and just about everything else imaginable.

It's one of the best SF books to come along in ages. Buy it (6.95 from Doubleday, 2.00 from the book club.) It's up for a Hugo this year - for obvious reasons.

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Coven 13, Sept., 1969, vol 1, #1 - witchcraft, horror, the supernatural, 146 pages, 60¢. Arthur H. Landis editor. 2412 West 7th St., Suite 302, Los Angeles, Calif., 90057.

This new prozine starts on page five. It has a serial, a novellette, a "feature novelette" and five short stories, listed out of order on the toc. None of the authors' names are known to me. The editor does state that several are pennames for more prominent writers. The prospectus, however, is hopeful:

"We shall prop open a door, as it were, to the adult ghost story, to the meaningful psycho-horror-drama without sadism, and to the suggested existence of gods and worlds other than those now certified with the Good Housekeeping seal of approval. We shall also do, from time to time, a bit of quasi-science-fiction....To us, werewolves will be quite real, ghouls and ghosts a most natural product of their living facsimiles, and witchcraft, voodooism and sorcery, activities to be viewed as equally productive with the judgment of governments and the Delphic techniques of Rand Corproations."

All of the stories are at least readable. Some are surprisingly good. Among these are - "Odile" a somewhat more chilling than most story of a small village invaded by a witch. It is notable, among other things, for the lack of a conventional resolution: the witch achieves a Pyrrhic victory. Also, "Spell of Desperation," a rather crudely integrated but still interesting story of a modern day witch who attempts to drive away and/or kill the Negro woman who's moved in next door.

A promising first issue. Hopefully there will be more.

The Absent-Minded Professor Strikes Again

by Barry Weissman

One fine smoggy day, as the Congress of the United States of America assembled together, a bill was proposed to the Senate Armed Services Committee to repeal the laws of atomic fission and fusion. It was not a joke.

"The Soviets will not disarm until we disarm," argued Senator Bigbottom, "and we apparently cannot destroy our nuclear arsenal until they disarm theirs, for fear of treachery on the other side, a fear not unwarranted by the events of the past couple of decades. Neither side can nor will budge from the position that the other must disarm first. I am not debating the merits of either side, just stating the regrettable facts of the situation. We are at an impasse, with a nuclear holocaust just around the corner and the chance of its occurrence increasing every day, as the stockpile of atomic weapons grows.

"Therefore, after long searching for a satisfactory solution, I now bring to you the results of a lifetime of unswerving devotion to the settlement of this complex problem. I am pleased to announce that a way has been found to break through our dilemma. Professor Johan Singer of the Physics Department of the University of Phahotep has recently, under close surveillance of the military and in the highest secrecy, perfected a method of revoking the laws of atomic energy, a process that will stop all forms of nuclear energy release--"

At this point in the discussion, a tall, craggy, white-haired gentleman in a much stained and pitted lab-coat stood up. He was recognized by the Chairman. He was Professor Singer.

The Professor spoke in a high, scratchy voice. "I regret to say that my process does not stop the release of nuclear energy, it just retards it. Uh,...makes it more difficult. Creates a higher energy curve to start the reaction....While my colleagues worked, so to speak, on a process to split the atom, I worked on one to put it back together again, or rather to keep it from being blown apart. Or, in the case of fusion, to keep it from being pushed together. If this does--"

Senator Bigbottom interrupted, "But, Professor, all technical questions aside, this process will stop all atomic explosions, won't it?"

"Of course," came the answering voice. "My device is infallible and will do all that I claim. It is radiocontrolled by this switch" he held aloft a small box, like a plastic transistor radio, "and I await the passage of this bill to put it into effect and end the threat of nuclear armageddon forever."

Amid cheering the Professor sat down. Immediately, reporters started forcing their way towards him, only to be sadly disappointed by the hard-faced guards who stood in a tight cordon around him.

The Senator resumed speaking. "Needless to say, the actual plant from which the retarding wave will emanate, the wave that will more than blanket the entire world, is hidden under great security

somewhere in the southwest of our great land. Once it is turned on, no nuclear fission or fusion of any kind whatsoever can start or continue anywhere. The decision, gentlemen, is yours."

The bill passed the committee without any further discussion. A day later, identical versions were passed by the Senate and House.

The President of the United States, relieved to throw off at last the heavy burden that had weighed down the backs of himself and his predecessors in office for the past thirty years, signed the document at once, and the bill became law.

Now came the grand moment to implement the new law. Together the President, the professor, and Senator Bigbottom pressed the silver switch, squinting a little from the holocaust of flashbulbs exploding in their faces. There was a moment of hushed silence, then pandemonium broke out in the crowded chambers. In the southwest desert, two thousand miles away, a huge plant, webbed by miles of barbed wire and armed sentries, hummed into life.

In Trenton, New Jersey, Maggy Farlique's electric knife stopped in the middle of a roast. So did her television set, toaster and oven. The atomic energy plant ten miles down river had stopped dead.

Exactly the same event occurred in the home of Madame Boskovitch of Leningrad, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

And in the highly secret People's Nuclear Weapons Testing Site, somewhere in northern China, Comrad Chung Lee blew his brains out with a pistol. His bomb had failed to detonate.

It worked. From Addis Abba to Zzyx City, California, all atomic explosions stopped. Period. Radios and televisions and newshawkers blared out the news. The world was saved.

Eight and one-third minutes later, the sun calmly went out.

"Oh damn," Professor Singer cried into the darkness, "I knew I forgot something!!"

* * * * *

The Australian mounted infantryman now teaches
in a western state college.
Once he studied at the University of Heidelberg
and took a doctor's degree.
Once he slept on newspapers, pink sheets, three
weeks in Grant Park, Chicago
Keeping a tight hold on his certificate awarded
by the University of Heidelberg.
Once he lived six weeks in a tent looking in the
face the Great Sphinx of Egypt.
Once of a morning shaving he happened to ask the
battered and worndown Sphinx,
"What would you say if I should ask you to tell
me something worth telling?"
And the Sphinx broke its long silence:
"Don't expect too much."

Carl Sandburg The People, Yes

RE-BIRTH REASSESSED

by Alexa Gusick

So they've re-issued Re-Birth by John Wyndham. Quite a book. Lots of humanity - he would have us believe.

Takes place after the Tribulation - a nuclear war, of course. Law of the Land: "Watch thou for the Mutant!" Mutants have deviated from the true image of God. They're anyone who's different, not Normal. The true image: "like everyone else." Thus the author informs us of his respect for the individual; he condemns conformity, imposed upon one or chosen. One character, in fact, from the advanced society, the re-birth area - whom we glimpse, periodically, through telepath, and who lives at the other end of the globe - denounces the Norm as dull, stupid, primitive. (Compassion's great stuff, eh?)

On to the story. The heroes are a group of telepaths. They must guard their esp secret, for if found out, they would be sterilized and cast out to poverty, homelessness in the Fringes - wild land rampant with mutation - like any other deviationist. Of course the Norms do catch on to them; two telepaths are caught and tortured, made to confess. Three others run for it: David, Rosalind, and Petra. The Norms pursue these three into the Fringes.

The Fringes people - mostly people with small deviations, who had been at birth sterilized, etc., and now are half-savages and starving a lot - capture the telepaths and try to ambush the Norms, with whom they are constantly at war. The Fringes people behave much like the Norms, like hating the appearance of normality; anyone who is not different is a threat. Well, that's cool. When you travel, you don't find that much difference in people's behavior.

But Petra, the supertelepath among the heroes, is in communication with this advanced society, see, one of whom is on her way to rescue Petra....She'll help the others too if it's convenient, but it doesn't really matter to her, about David or Rosalind or Michael or Katherine or Deborah or Sally or Mark - it doesn't matter about the ordinary individual human being - just the one with the greater power, the useful one, the better tool. Well, that's cool, too. New societies need good tools.

So the Fringes people and the Norms battle there in the Fringes. Michael, passing for Norm, rides with them and informs the others what is happening there. Katherine has earlier been caught, along with Sally; Deborah is terrified. Sally has been silent for no known reason; so has Mark. Petra, David and Rosalind have escaped the mutants, and now they hide in the Fringes very near the battle. No matter who wins, they're in trouble.

Then comes the rescue, the woman from the advanced civilization. Some sort of flying machine drops threads like cobwebs all across the battlefield. It is sticky stuff, and the more you move, the more entangled you become. Soon the entire area is motionless, soundless, totally wrapped in the cobwebs, head to foot. The woman comes and sprays some stuff, frees Michael, Rosalind, Petra, David. She is white, with absolutely perfect features.

When she explains that the cobwebs dry out the skin and body,

that everything one can see around is dead, the four telepaths are shocked. She explains to them why they are shocked and why they need not be. Or, as Wyndham says, "She perceived our confusion; and shook her head reprovingly."

Platitude #1. You eat living vegetables and meat, she says; even Microbes must die that we may live. Also, we must protect our species from others that wish to destroy it. (Very nice, but you mean an advanced people couldn't make non-fatal cobwebs? Self-protection is one thing; slaughter is another.)

Platitude #2. "There have been lords of life before, you know. ...When the time came for the dinosaurs to be superseded, they had to pass away...." Then again, "...the essential quality of living is change; change is evolution...." Neat justification; but she contradicts herself: "When we ourselves shall have to" give way, "we shall try with all our strength to grind the inevitable back into the earth from which it is emerging, for treachery to one's own species must always seem a crime." Dig: they recognize that change is part of life, define static as death; yet their attitude already is one of stagnation.

Why don't they develop a system in which change is an integral part? S-f should deal with people, is what everyone says; and change as part of a system is a challenging theme, because you have to really know people to deal with it. But it is also a living reality: Synanon, a life-style where change is built in....People choose specific areas of reality and say "this is reality" and they develop that area. "War is reality." We develop that reality. Wyndham pointed out that if you choose esp as a reality, you can develop it as such. Synanon chose non-violence and has developed it effectively. Synanon is far from perfect, but it proves that peace can be an organic, dynamic reality. We are not as helpless as these platitudes would have us believe.

But back to the slaughter: "If the process of change that we impose/ shocks you, it is because...you are still half-thinking of them as the same kind as yourselves." Moral: it's all right to slaughter for your own ends, as long as the victims are not "your own kind." Not only that: "For ours is a superior variant, and we are only just beginning." Well, good luck, lady. Because you sure won't have peace very long.

And you reader, you better question her logic, though you must do it on your own; none of the heroes of the story reserved any doubts whatever. It was all the good and right way to behave; it was a beautiful, wonderful society. Oh, a little shocking, maybe like a bee sting that goes away. You get used to killing, like you get used to other things; the woman had the same sense of coldness about her that both the Norms and the Fringes people had, the same inhumanity. And Wyndham presents it as civilization. How do you perceive it?

I resent it fiercely - as you may have gathered - because it kills the life in you slowly, the humanity. It's propaganda that, along with others of its subtly insidious type, numbs you so that you only vaguely are aware that something is wrong somewhere when you hear that some animals in some parts of the world are becoming or have become extinct - but of course the lions are only wiped out of

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THE METAPHYSICAL HYENA

Part Six

a novel reading experience by Theobald Arthur

(who, disguised as a mild-mannered reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper, is in reality, David Gerrold.)

THE MEANING OF IT ALL, SOME NECESSARY PLOT EXPOSITION

The man introduced himself as Fearing Pingerton, and he had been born in London. He explained that space travel to and from the Earth was a reasonably common occurrence for Pragmatists - or it had been until recently. The last Pragmatic spaceship had returned from Earth over two months ago.

The people of Pragmat had had economical spacetravel for generations and voyaged to their three moons as easily as a resident of Los Angeles would zip down to San Diego. For the more adventurous there were cruises to the planets. "Actually, though, there's really nothing very exciting about visiting the planets. If you've seen one, you've seen them all. Beastly lot. Uncivilized, you know."

Sam nodded, although he really didn't know. "What about Earth, he asked.

"Oh, that was the most uncivilized of all."

"No, I mean, how often did you visit the Earth?"

"Me? Oh, I'd say two or three times--"

"No, I meant your spaceships. How often did Pragmatic spaceships go to Earth?"

Pingerton frowned thoughtfully. "Um, several times a month I'd say. There was a hotel on your moon, you know. We don't have a satellite that can compare with it. It was quite a tourist attraction while it existed. Our own moons are too small to have any gravity, let alone the one-sixth gravity that was so much fun."

"Say," said Sam, "I'll bet your ships were the flying saucers."

"Nonsense," snapped the other. "There's no such thing as flying saucers. Swamp gas, that's all they were. Swamp gas and balderdash. Our ships were never seen by any Earth people at all."

"Never?"

"Uh, well, there might have been one or two exceptions."

"Why didn't you reveal yourselves to us?"

"It was considered, but we wanted to see how your noble experiment would turn out."

"You mean prohibition?"

"Democracy."

"Oh."

"And then there were those who were concerned about your war.."

"World War Two?"

Pingerton gasped, "You had another one?!!"

"Uh, well, sort of...." Sam explained.

"Well then you see my point. It just wasn't safe. No one was sure what you chaps might do."

"Wait a minute - you said you were born on Earth too."

"Oh yes. If you want to be sticky about it, I am a native Terran - but nobody here holds that against me. Daddy had a little affair with an Earth girl and brought her home with him. He met her in Liverpool, you know. Or was it Soho...?"

Sam shrugged.

"Oh, well, anyway, the arguments have raged for years."

"What? Whether it was Liverpool of Soho?"

"No, whether or not we should make ourselves known to you. Oh my, those were some arguments. Those in favor of it felt that it would upgrade your standard of living as well as opening up new markets for us. After all, you were a cultural backwater, you know. Those who were opposed to it felt that it would corrupt your culture to meet with a superior technology. After all, look what you did to the Indians, poor chaps. And there were those who wanted to send missionaries, but when we saw what the Indians did back to your missionaries, well, we naturally had our doubts.

Sam nodded.

"There were those who wanted to give you the secrets of space travel outright. And there were those who wanted to leave you alone entirely. The scientists, ah, they wanted to study you. The mercenaries wanted to use your planet as a testing ground for some new war devices. (You did all right by yourselves on that score.) Ah, but the real geniuses were the ones who saw the profit possibilities inherent in the Earth...as a vast amusement park. Or more accurately, a wild game preserve."

"You're kidding."

"No, not at all. Life here on Pragmat is rather slow and easy going, although we do have occasional tensions and outlets to relieve those tension--but for a real out and out thrill of sheer terror, nothing could beat a voyage to Earth." Pingerton paused respectfully. "Pity about it. It was such a promising business...."

ON THE BEACH

"And no one ever found out about your spaceships visiting our planet?"

"Oh,,of course people found out - but no one ever believed them. Your newspapers were full of stories about people who claimed to have ridden in spaceships - but unless they were your own spaceships, you just wouldn't believe them."

Sam didn't say anything for a while. He trudged along the sand in silence. Finally he said, "Tell me, why do you speak English?"

"Well, I was born in London...."

"No, I meant you collectively.. The whole planet."

"Oh - well, it's in style.. It's very chic. It's fashionable. You see, traveling to Earth is terribly expensive, much more so than a trip to the moon. You had to learn the language and the customs. Only the terribly rich could afford to go. And you were away for such a very long time. You might say that it's a...a status symbol. If you can speak English, it means that you've been to Earth--which means that you're rich. After all, what's the use of having money if you can't flaunt it?"

Sam agreed.

"Of course, now it seems that just everybody is learning the language and I suspect that it's becoming a bit gauche. What a shame it's now a dead language. Pity."

INTERLOGUE

Sam lowered his copy of the book and looked at the Writer. "That's one hell of an explanation," he said. "You really had to reach for that one."

"I'm sort of proud of it," I answered.

Sam shook his head. "Nobody'll ever believe it. Never...."

"Quit your complaining," I said. "It makes the story move that much faster. It's convenient to the plot."

Sam shook his head doubtfully, "Yeah, but--"

"Would you rather spend six months learning a whole new language?" I asked warningly.

Sam shook his head no.

"Then shut up and quit complaining!"

Sam shut up and quit complaining. He hurried back to the beach.

MORE TALK ON THE BEACH OR

IT SURE IS A LONG WAY TO THAT CLUSTER OF HOUSES

"Oh there you are," said Pingerton, "I was wondering where you had gone."

"I was talking to the writer," said Sam. "I wanted to ask him something."

"Oh, yes. That's right. I remember now. I read the book. Liked it too, I recall."

"Have you ever met the writer?"

"You mean the skinny fellow without glasses? Oh yes. Nice chap, very nice chap. Liked him a lot too."

"Oh," said Sam, "then he hasn't written too much about you, has he?"

"On the contrary, he's done quite a bit for me - most of it

hasn't been read yet, but he has done quite a bit for me."

"And you still like him?" Sam asked.

SOMEWHERE THE SKY RUMBLED WARNINGLY.

"I was only kidding!" Sam said quickly. THE RUMBLE SUBSIDED. Sam turned back to Pingerton. "So, Pragmat never did try to establish contact with the Earth, did it? I mean, what was the result of all that arguing?"

"Well, while we were trying to make up our minds you chaps went ahead and had that World War thing."

"So?"

"Tell me," Pingerton paused delicately, "if you had a neighbor whom you suspected of having homicidal tendencies, would you run right over to borrow a cup of tea?"

"Sugar," said Sam.

"I beg your pardon?"

"Sugar, a cup of sugar."

"What are you talking about?"

"Sugar. I said sugar. You said...oh, forget it."

Pingerton shrugged and continued, "Anyway, then you chaps went and invented the A-bomb and that just proved it. Of course, we had no idea that you were suicidal as well or we might have done something. I must say, I'm going to miss the Earth terribly - although I haven't been there in years. I'm going to miss that planet...."

"I'll second that emotion...." Sam nodded.

AFTERTHOUGHT

"By the way," said Sam, "not to change the subject, but--ah, where are we?"

"Oh, we're on my private island," remarked Pingerton. "But don't worry, you've been such interesting conversation, I'll waive the usual rent."

"Thanks," said Sam.

PINGERTON CONTINUES

With Pingerton's help, it didn't take Sam Hero long to contact Product Development Inc. As it turned out, Sylvia's landing was extraordinarily accurate, for they had come down less than twenty miles away from the spot that Charon had indicated. Charon promised that he would be right over in a heavy-duty copter and they would move the capsule to one of the company's local facilities.

"I've never seen one of your primitive space capsules, old chap," said Pingerton. "Would it be presumptuous of me to take you back to your ship so that I might have a bit of a look-see?"

"Oh, no," said Sam, "it wouldn't be presumptuous at all. I'd be grateful for the chance to sit down."

They were standing on the dock. Behind them was Pingerton's house, a dome-shaped affair set into a rocky cliff. While Sam was

admiring the various craft that were moored there, Fingerton was readying the catamaran.

As they moved away from the dock, Sam asked Fingerton about something that had been bothering him, "Uh, how come you people are so human?"

"Perhaps I should be asking you that question."

"Well, Mr. Fingerton--"

"Fearing. Call me Fearing."

"Well, Fearing, surely your scientists must have come up with a few theories about it..."

"Uh, I don't suppose you'd accept the theory of parallel evolution?"

"No, I'm afraid not."

"Well, ah--then I'll just have to say that it's one of those things that mortal man can't explain."

"Nonsense." said Sam. "Couldn't you say that ages ago there must have been some ancient civilization which had space travel and colonized both planets and then collapsed so completely that both worlds forgot about it, and--"

Fingerton looked at him, "Do you really believe that?"

"No," said Sam, "I guess not. But there should be some sort of explanation, shouldn't there?"

"Why," said Fingerton.

"Because it just isn't right to leave unanswered questions."

"You really want an explanation?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well, then here it is: it was convenient for the writer."

"Is that all?"

"Would you rather still be stuck in outer space, exchanging profound comments with Simp and Sylvia about the condition of life on Earth?"

"No, I guess I wouldn't."

"Then shut up and enjoy yourself."

The catamaran sped briskly across the bright salty surface of the sea.

SKIP THIS CHAPTER

Leaving a gently churning trail of foam in its wake, the catamaran rounded the peninsula and Fingerton caught his first sight of the capsule. "Is that it? Under that horrid orange balloon?"

Sam nodded. He also winced a little. His back was starting to turn red and his muscles were already stiff from the strain of rowing the boat. Sam peered ahead. The sun was beginning to set in the west, silhouetting the capsule against the horizon. "It gets dark fast around here," said Sam, trying to make conversation.

"Especially at night," agreed Fingerton. "Do you have a beacon

of some sort for this Charon fellow?"

Sam nodded.

Pingerton (who had put on a toga at Sam's request) brought the catamaran up to the hatch of the capsule. Sylvia stuck her head out as they approached.

"I brought company home for dinner," quipped Sam.

"Oh? I thought we were going out to eat. You never take me anywhere!"

"Neyer mind that, woman! Just unpack an extra frozen dinner," Sam turned to Pingerton, "I assume that you are going to join us."

"Well, I usually dress for dinner..." he began.

Noting the bright purple toga, Sam cut him off, "That's all right. You already have."

SAM DOES A SLOW BURN

Once inside the capsule, Sam turned on its nose beacon, a slowly revolving light which flashed alternately red and green. However, most of the light from it was lost because it bounced off the bottom of the orange balloon bobbing only a few feet above. Meanwhile, Pingerton moored his catamaran to one of the rungs of the ladder and stuck his head into the hatch. He immediately wrinkled his nose and disappeared. He returned a moment later with a can of spray with which he proceeded to de-odorize the capsule. That done, he stepped out of the hatch and returned with a basket of native Pragmatic fruits.

"I didn't notice that in the boat," Sam said.

"Of course not," said Pingerton. "They were just written into the story." Then he presented them to Sylvia. Sylvia (who at first had been resentful of Pingerton's actions in de-odorizing the capsule) was delighted. Had there been a table to set, she would have immediately set it. She would have set it on the floor. Although the capsule was somewhat roomy (for a space capsule) there was no furniture at all. Almost all forms of furniture are devices to resist the force of gravity. And in space, where there is no gravity, there is no need for furniture.

On a planet, however, there is gravity. So they sat on the floor.

Although the capsule had not been cramped under conditions of free fall, there was now just barely enough room for the four of them to sit. But they managed. The hatch was left open and a cool breeze wafted in. The bobbing of the capsule in the waves was rather restful, and the smell of the salt air was a pleasant change. But then, of course, almost anything would have been a pleasant change.

As Sam lowered himself into a sitting position, he scraped his back against the computer console and grimaced in pain. Immediately, Sylvia pulled out the first aid kit and started rubbing salve on his sud-redoened shoulders. "I told you to be careful," she said.

"OUCH! You be careful! That's my back."

"Oh. I was wondering who it belonged to." She rubbed harder.

"Say," said Sam, "that's beginning to feel kind of...."

"Good?"

"No, dammit! Painful!! OUCH!! Watch that - PAIN HURTS!"

"It's supposed to. Else it wouldn't be pain."

Sam sneezed. "Not only that, I think I'm catching a cold. And I feel like a big greased pig - I'll bet I even look like one."

"Nonsense. You do not," Sylvia said, and shoved an apple into his mouth.

A GRACEFUL EPISODE

As they sat down to dinner, Simp bowed his head and said, "Dear Lord...." Sam stopped with a tube of paste halfway to his mouth. Had the old man suddenly gotten religion? He shrugged his sunburned shoulders and bowed his head.

"Dear Lord....," said Simp, "we have come a long way. We thank you for your guidance through our time of need, and we thank you for being with us when we walked through the valley of the shadow, and we thank you for guiding us to a safe landing on a friendly world, where there are friendly people with their hands outstretched...."

Sam snorted. Simp glared at him, then continued, "We thank you for the food which thou has seen fit to set before us, although we know it may be the last food we ever eat that came from our parent planet. We thank you that in your infinite wisdom you have seen fit to provide us with a safe passage and a safe landing on a safe world. We know that it is your will and we are grateful."

Simp looked around, wondering if there was anything he had forgotten to be thankful for. Apparently there was not. "Thank you, Lord. Amen."

"Amen," said Sam and started to squeeze a bit of hash, corned beef, from the tube.

"If I might," Pingerton interrupted, "would you object to a Pragmatic grace?"

"No, not at all," said Simp. He bowed his head and waited. Sam and Sylvia did likewise.

Pingerton looked at them, shrugged and looked upward, "Oh Lord (if you exist), I'd just like to say (if you happen to be listening) that we know that you probably don't care one way or the other what happens to us, (if you exist, that is.) You probably don't care whether we live or die. You probably don't care whether we eat or starve. After all, you're very busy. You haven't got time to be concerned with anything as insignificant as human beings. (That is, if you exist.)"

"Of course, you probably know (if you exist) that we are pretty important to ourselves, and (if you exist) we know that you probably won't mind if we make every possible effort to go on existing too. I expect you won't hold it against us."

"We're sitting down to dinner now. This food that you see before us, well you probably know we grew it ourselves, we pasteurized it, we prepared it, we packaged it, and we set it here all without any help from you. So we won't bother you by thanking you for it.

"And in conclusion, I'd like to say that we also know that you probably don't really care if we say grace or not. That is, if you exist."

Pingerton relaxed and reached for an apple. Everybody else was too stunned. "Well, go on," he urged. "We don't say Amen."

Simp, who was a ghastly shade of white, breathed, "Amen."

FEUD FOR THOUGHT

The silence was deafening. Pingerton looked from one to the other. "Uh--did I say something wrong?"

Sam said quickly, "Oh, no - it's just that we're not used to your ways here--and we were a little startled. Just forget it."

"I can't forget it," said Simp. "I regard that as a direct insult to the Lord."

Pingerton looked at him curiously, "It wasn't intended as an insult--it was intended as a realization of God's status as something more than a cosmic wetnurse to man."

Simp said, "I suppose you realize that you are in the presence of a man of God."

Pingerton looked around, "Where?"

Simp said stiffly, "I am a man of the cloth--and I do not mean that I am a tailor." He fixed Pingerton with a stern eye, "God does not appreciate being mocked."

"Pretty poor excuse for a God if he has no sense of humor," retorted the Pragmatist.

"God doesn't need a sense of humor!"

"Oh now, I wouldn't say that. Considering the state mankind is in now," Pingerton said slowly, "it might be the only thing that lets him keep his sanity."

"If humanity is in any kind of a state, it is because of those who continue to laugh at the Lord."

"Well, the way I see it, dear chap, is that if he ~~really is~~ God, he gets the last laugh on all of us anyhow...."

"Mr. Pingerton," said Simp, "it is quite obvious to me that our two concepts of God are quite, quite different."

"Obviously," agreed Pingerton. The two men eyed each other warily, muzzle to muzzle - like two loaded cannons.

Sam quickly stepped into the breach. "But they're certainly not irreconcilable." The two looked at him.

A COARSE DISCOURSE ON THIS COURSE, OF COURSE...

Sam went on quickly, "I mean, there's only one God. We all just

have our different ways of worshipping him."

"All right, Mr. Smarty-Smart. What's the right way?"

"Uh...."

"Aha!" said Simp. "You don't know either!"

"Now just a minute here--I didn't say that. First of all, I think you should both define your terms. God, for instance...."

"Define God?"

"Why not? So far, you've been arguing over an unknown quantity. You keep referring to God--yet we still haven't seen any evidence off his existence."

"The world," gasped Simp. "The world! Who do you think made the world?"

"Which world? Earth? As far as who made the Earth, that's an academic question now. We all know who unmade it."

"All right then," said Simp. "This world! Who made this world?"

Sam looked at him. "Thank you for the set-up line. Who made this world? Isn't it obvious? The writer did. He conceived and created it for his own purposes, whatever they may be."

"I'm glad he did," remarked Pingerton. "Otherwise we wouldn't be here talking now."

Sam nodded. "If there's anyone we should be thankful to, it's the writer."

"The Writer!!" gasped Simp. "You'd have us worship the writer?"

"It might make a hell of a lot more sense. After all, I can see only one difference between God and the Writer..."

"What? What's that?"

"The Writer is real." He paused to let that sink in.

"You're going to have to prove that," whispered Simp, shocked.

"What? That the Writer is real? If he weren't, we wouldn't even be here."

"No....that God is not real. You're going to have to prove that."

"All right. When was the last time anybody around here got struck by lightning for blasphemy?"

"Uh--"

"Go on, try it. Say something about God. Say anything you like."

"Like what, for instance?"

"Oh, say, like - God doesn't give a damn. Or how about, God is hostile and retrogressive?" Sam looked at Simp, "Try it."

"Uh, God eats peanut butter," said Simp nervously.

"See how easy it is," said Sam. "Now it's your turn." He looked at Pingerton.

"Um...God isn't dead. He just thinks he is."

Sam nodded. "Sylvia?"

"We're sitting down to dinner now. This food that you see before us, well you probably know we grew it ourselves, we pasteurized it, we prepared it, we packaged it, and we set it here all without any help from you. So we won't bother you by thanking you for it.

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"Um...God isn't dead. He just thinks he is."

Sam nodded. "Sylvia?"

"Um," Sylvia pursed her lips thoughtfully, "Um, God is anti-Semitic."

They looked at her. "God is anti-Semitic?"

"Well, look at all those terrible things he kept doing to the Jews."

"Oh," said Sam. "All right."

"Now what," asked Simp.

"Now, we wait," said Sam, "and see who gets hit by lightning."

A couple of years later, Sam said, "See, nothing happened. Now try saying the same things about the Writer."

"Not me," said Simp. "You say it."

"I'd rather not," said Pingerton.

"Me neither," added Sylvia.

"Aha!" said Sam, "you see."

"I see nothing," said Simp. "Go on - you say something. It's your demonstration."

"Um..." Sam looked around the interior of the space capsule nervously, then whispered, "The Writer is a fink--and he splits infinitives."

THE SKY DARKENED AND RUMBLLED WARNINGLY.

"See!" said Sam, exultantly. "The Writer is real."

THE SKY CONTINUED TO DARKEN. LIGHTNING FLASHED ACROSS THE HEAVENS.

"And he's one hell of a good guy, too!" Sam shouted quickly.

THE SKY CLEARED MIRACULOUSLY.

"See--now that's what I call proof!"

"Um, yes--it is kind of hard to ignore that."

"So, if you're going to worship something at all, why not worship something that at least is demonstrable to be true--in this case, the Writer. I mean, he certainly weilds a very direct power over all of our lives--and I for one would like to stay on his good side."

"You're on his good side now," pointed out Sylvia.

"I know--and look what's happened to me already! Can you imagine what he'd do if he got mad?!!" Sam shuddered.

WOULD YOU GRACE US WITH YOUR PRESENCE
AND PRESENT US WITH YOUR GRACE

"I suspect that both your attitudes may be right," Sam said to Pingerton and Simp. "Well, half right, anyway. The thing is that you've been addressing your prayers to the wrong deity. You should pray to the one who most obviously controls your life. Allow me to demonstrate." He looked at them all, then bowed his head, "Let us pray."

Pingerton and Simp exchanged a glance, "The sooner we get this over with, the sooner we can eat." They too bowed their heads.

Sam said reverently, "Dear Writer, we know that you probably don't care one way or the other what happens to us, but we thank you for letting us come so far relatively unscathed. We know that you are probably too busy to ever be concerned about anything as insignificant as our lives, but we do thank you for what little you have done for us already. You probably don't care whether we live or die, whether we eat or starve, but we do thank you for letting us have a safe landing on this world.

"We know also that you had very little to do with setting this food on this table before us, but we do thank you for allowing us to sit and enjoy this meal. We thank you for writing this chapter. We know that whatever happens to us in the rest of the book, it is your will, and we will be grateful for any small favors that you may throw our way--like an occasional nap. We thank you."

"You're welcome."

--The. Arthur

THE EATING SCENE

Then they ate. And it was very good, and they enjoyed every bite of it.

to be probably continued next issue.

* * * * *

RE-BIRTH REASSESSED continued

the Near East, North Africa, and South Africa; they still have twenty or thirty years in East and Central Africa, probably less in India; and besides they are not "our kind." Or when you hear that President Nixon is "embarrassed" that thirty million Americans are starving to death.

Or perhaps you don't see the connection.

Obviously, Mr. Wyndham doesn't.

* * * * *

To the ignorant, all things are pure: all knowledge is, or implies, the degradation of something. One who learns of metabolism, looks at a Venus and realizes she's partly rotten. However, she smiles at him and he renews his ignorance. All things in the sky are pure to those who have no telescopes. But spots on the sun, and lumps on the planets....

Charles Fort Lo!

* * * * *

ignoramus - a person unacquainted with certain kinds of knowledge familiar to yourself, and having certain other kinds that you know nothing about.

impunity - wealth

Ambrose Bierce, The Devil's Dictionary

Out of the Deep, John Wyndham, Ballantine, 01639, 75¢, 1953, third printing June 1969.

John Wyndham's Out of the Deep is another novel of an invasion of Earth by extraterrestrials, but with an unusual and savage twist. This time they land in the sea, usurp the sea from man, raid coasts and islands, and finally melt the polar ice.

The novel is written like an historical account of, say, World war II, because the invaders take years to wreak their havoc. The prime character and his wife are both journalists. This is a clever way to handle this type of novel.

Wyndham's description of a raid by the - things - is enough to make you feel more than a bit uneasy at night near the sea. He cleverly uses man's ancient fear of the sea to maintain the suspense throughout the whole novel. Out of the Deep is well worth reading but with one precaution: you should allow several hours for it, because you will not be able to put it down once you start reading it.

BB

Bug Jack Barron, Norman Spinrad

Despite all the talk about it, this is not really a dirty book. Sure, there is sex and four-letter words and all that, but the best it can do is read like a little boy's wet dream. The entire novel is little-boyish (not juvenile) in that it is like a dream come true. An "I want to be when I grow up" quality is the basis of the book. Jack Barron wants to be rich and famous and immortal and put down the meanest, nastiest baddie on prime TV time when he grows up. Unfortunately he gets his wish. You know, without the sex it would be a juvenile!

SC

A Voyage to Arcturus, David Lindsay, Ballantine, 1968.

Anyone who paid money for this piece of /bleep/ should have their head (and eyes) examined.

SC

The Goblin Reservation, Clifford D. Simak, Berkeley Medallion, 1968.

Simak seems to have gathered every loose idea floating around in his head and thrown them together to form The Goblin Reservation. Surprisingly, it is a well-written, exciting and fun book. It is up for a Hugo, which it does not deserve. It costs 75¢ which it highly deserves.

SC

NOVA, Samuel R. Delaney, Doubleday, 1968.

Chip Delaney has written another excellent book and one that deserves the Hugo. Nova and Rite of Passage stand out as two of the finest examples of combined hard-core sci-fi and "new wave" sci-fi. In Nova we are treated to Delaney's usually excellent style, a strong highly imaginative plot, and excellent, well drawn characters. Mouse, Katin, Von Ray, Prince Reo - these characters will long be

remember.

Nova is the story of the conflict between strong intellects, set against a galaxy-wide background of financial empires. The settings are vivid and highly imaginative. The characters move quickly and squarely through those settings, stopping only long enough to strengthen their character to the reader. Chip's concept of a "plugged-in" society is really rather frightening, although it is only a secondary point in the book.

I cannot praise Nova too highly. It should win this year's Hugo.

SC

Hawksbill Station, Robert Silverberg, Doubleday, 1968.

Before I read Hawksbill Station, Bob told me that it was different from anything he had done before. After Thorns, (deserved a Hugo!), I was hoping for another great book. Hawksbill Station comes close. Sent into the prehistoric times, convicts have shaped a society for themselves. However, as it must be, it is a society of sick minds, with only a fine distinction between sane and insane. The novel is made up of flashbacks (flash-forwards?) into what has happened in the future to Jim Barrett, leader of Hawksbill Station, interspersed with the telling of the lives of the convicts as they live them.

Thus Bob has managed to give us both a future society and a semi-primitive "after-the-bomb" type society in one book. With a little more character development, this would be a truly great book. As it is, it is excellent, and I highly recommend it.

SC

Up the Line, Robert Silverberg, Ballantine, 1969, 75¢.

This is another time-travel novel, rather different from most I have read. It's a strange blend of humorous, serious and ironic in tone. It's a vivid description of 22nd century society plus ancient Byzantium plus sex plus a love story plus....

The best way to describe the book is, I think, with a sampling of quotes:

"I've got a simultaneous attack of restless, weltschmerz, tax liens, and unfocused ambition." - "Want to try for tertiary syphilis?" Helen asked.

"Ignorance cannot be pardoned. Only cured."

"If the Time Patrol caught me sexing around with my multi-great-grandmother, they'd certainly fire me from the Time Service, might imprison me, might even try to involve the death penalty for first-degree timecrime on the grounds that I had tried to become my own ancestor. I was terrified of the possibilities."

It's a good book to read.

LKG

Stan Burns This is my report on London fandom which you can
London include in the next zine if you like.

There are basically three groupings to the fans out here. There are the younger, long-haired fans who mainly are comic and horror fans. Then there are the hippie-type fans who are associated with New Worlds. I went to where NW is published, a small room on Portobello Road on the 3rd floor. The only evidence of it is a small 3 by 4 sign by a button on the door. The third type of fan is the 4e type, and there are several. They all meet together at the Globe, a pub. I went to the July 3rd meeting.

When I walked in, John Brunner was being interviewed by a representative of the Canadian radio system for a pre-Apollo 11 show. I also met several U.S. fans, including one from S.F. who wrote that groovy story in F&SF "Deeper than the Darkness." Also there was a New Zealand fan, who asked about someone I've never met. In the corner there was someone selling used American s.f. paperbacks at way above new U.S. prices. Sound familiar?

The meeting lasted from 8:30 to 11:00, when the pub closed. All in all, it made me homesick for LASFS & the 3rd F.

I also saw a favorable review of the 3rd F in a British zine.
How's that grab ya?

Stan.

* * * * *

Darrell Schweitzer Dear Things,
113 Deepdale Road
Strafford, Pa. Thanx fo
19087 a better iss

Strafford, Pa.
19087

Thanx for Third Foundation 88. This was
a better issue than lastish. "The Way Out"
poses an interesting problem which despite my
vastly superior intelligence I cannot solve right off. Perhaps they
should try to get the robot trapped on the frictionless surface of
the trap. Maybe if they do that it will open up and gobble him up
like it did the cars. He is made of metal, isn't he?

"Also Sprach Who?": Hm....I know this guy who is very, very hairy and has very long arms and is quite fond of bananas. I had previously thought that he was a basketball player who was not prosperous enough to afford a razor, but now I have my doubts....I don't think these guys were totally efficient in fixing this error.

The review of the God Machine doesn't make me want to rush out and buy it. It makes the book seem incredibly trite like it probably is.

The Metaphysical Hyena was better than last time. As a matter of fact it was quite good. But not up to the level of the masterful rape scene in part two.

The Mother Things: What's this got to do with Heinlein? /See Heinlein's Have Spacesuit, Will Travel./

I think I can solve the mystery of the ghost in Hamlet. Next

time I see Shakespeare, I'll ask him.

Bye now...etc

Darrell Schweitzer

God

P. S. I want Tales of the 3rd Foundation back!!!

* * * * *

George Senda Well it 's now 2:30 pm July 15th and like a
515 So. 13th St. trufan (my klutzitivity emerged from its shell) I
Las Vegas, Nev. called Dwain Kaiser's home from my home in Las
89104 Vegas. I called him on July 4th and after I call-
ed his house, his parents told me "Oh, don't you
know he's at that meeting?" "What meeting?" I asked. "The one in
Santa Barbara. //Apparently the Westercon is what is being referred
to. Why Dwain's parents thought it was in Santa Barbara this year
Ghu only knows. -LK//. But it all worked out for the best as on
Sunday I called Dwain and we had a nice chat. He told me that he
is moving here on or about Aug. 18th so all is well.

You know Lee Klingstein fits, but Lee Gold? Or would you
still call yourself Lee Klingstein in fanish circles. //No!//

By the way, yesterday I got in the mail a letter and a copy of
the August Analog from John W. Campbell. He seems to be a fascina-
ting man, and he wrote that he doesn't know yet at the present time
whether or not he'll be in St. Louis in August.

Peace and Prosperity,

George

* * * * *

Dan Goodman On the 88th Foundation: The Niven story: If
Los Angeles the Puppeteers who could use ships were hereditary
neurotics, it seems likely that they came mostly from
areas of higher risk than sane Puppeteers would live in. Areas of
high volcanic activity, for example; sane humans will live there,
but wholly sane Puppeteers would not.

Also - there are probably Puppeteers whose neuroses led them to
excess caution. These would have stayed on the home world rather
than take the chance of dying during the migration - or would they
be brought along by force?

Other species would have their neurotics, of course. There
would be accident-prone Kzinti, for example. Not very longlived,
but they would exist.

Mel Gilden's story has one large flaw; surely the aliens don't
consider the monkey cage a natural object?

And more flawed logic from Mel Gilden - a planet deserted by
Mother Things would not be mysteriously empty. It would, obviously,
have been taken over by Stepmother Things. They might not resemble
the builders of the city, but they would have a story ready for the
hero from Earth, explaining any discrepancies.

What Kenneth Scher should do if he wants to have all his fanzine

C
reviews printed is to start his own zine. Or do several fanzine review columns; there are enough faneditors around who need material so he could do it. I wonder if he's in touch with any of the eight or so established clubs in NY-area fandom; or perhaps with one or two that haven't yet contacted the rest of NY fandom.

American spaceshots are timed to coincide with national holidays because Russian spaceshots are timed to coincide with Russian holidays - or did we start the practice? The purpose is propaganda. Presumably the first French lunar expedition will leave on Bastille Day.

And why in the name of the Black Sun didn't Harry Warner invite his co-worker to join fandom?

Could be that pros will stop giving work to fanzines for the most part, within a few years. Not because the pros will have become less generous; rather, they will be able to sell almost anything. Remember the last Great Prozine Boom, when there were something like thirty prozines on the stands? If something of the sort happens again, the pros will be selling everything they can write. Not that you should worry--half the members of the Third Foundation will be editing prozines, the other half writing and drawing for them.

* * *

/comments on issue 89/ One error in your latest quiz - it's not Leewit but the Leewit. That point is emphasized in the short story which is the heart and the first section of THE WITCHES OF KARKES.
/My apologies; you're right./

Like Don Simpson, I enjoy making my own versions of secondary universes. I've spent various idle moments trying to devise a revolutionary movement capable of toppling the society of 1984, for example. My researches are not yet complete; but I have an inkling of their methods. Persons who come to them indirectly because of barely-suppressed urges to rebel are given a treatment which they are told will make them feel far happier. It works, too - lobotomy does improve one's ability to be happy in the world. Unfortunately for them, it disimproves the ability to exercise the caution needed to get along without being arrested.

As cruel as anything the rulers are doing? True - but it's a different type of nastiness, one an O'Brien cannot understand. The lobotomized revolutionaries can be brought back into line - but not by the subtle terror upon which the regime relies.

It's easier to play the same game with Heinlein's books - all you have to do is assume that the viewpoint character is seeing his world from the wrong angle. Is the world of STARSHIP TROOPERS really run by the veterans who have the vote? There are strong hints that the economic power is in the hands of non-citizens; there is room for much speculation about the Associated Territories in which only 3% of the population joins the armed forces.

Agatha Christie's world, though intrinsically less interesting, can also be rewarding. It is quite easy to figure out, for example, that Hercule Poirot's native language is not French - he speaks it far too badly. There is much evidence that his native language is far more closely related to English than to French; he may speak

D
French more correctly, but his English is more fluent. (And it is deliberately bad; there are advantages in being considered an ignorant foreigner.) Since Poirot is Belgian, if his native tongue is not French, it is probably Flemish.

On your filkson, here's something similar I perpetrated some years back:

No more Lensmen over me;
No more Lensmen over me.
And before I'll be a slave,
I'll be buried in my grave,
And go home to my Lord and be free.

For subsequent verses, substitute Starship Troopers, Hobbits, Masters of the maze /!_/, and so forth.

I strongly doubt that David Gerrold drove Gail Knuth out of California. Gail is something of a gambler; I have no doubt that the poor girl lost all her money at the poker table - probably to some unscrupulous TV writer. /More likely she bribed him to act as her chauffeur with her poker winnings./

Vonda McIntyre thinks her knowledge of weddings is limited? I have been to two weddings - and arrived at both just as they were ending.

* * * * *

Kenneth Scher I just got 3F, and naturally, I liked it.
3119 Mott Avenue There are a few comments that I must make.
Far Rockaway, N.Y.
11691

1. Computer dialogue - this is the first computer that I ever heard of that watches Tom Slick. The name is not at all original.

2. Where can I get one of those telephone voodoo dolls?

3. On the off chance that the beginnings of the Tales of the 3F is in it, enclosed is 50¢ for The Average of the Third Foundation, if you have any copies left. If not, use the money to extend my sub. Are there any backish available? /we have a number of back issues available--all the Tales are available in back issue.-LKG/

4. The Cure - a disgusting story. You are right, this sort of lying is too good to be included in DV (at least #1, I have studiously ignored the others). Quite good. Disgusting anyway.

Congrats - another great issue.

* * * * *

Harry Warner, Jr. I don't know about Tom Digby's voodoo doll.
423 Summit Avenue Is voodoo compatible with the elaborate switching
Hagerstown, Md. arrangements through which any telephone call must
21740 travel to go from one end to the other? What happens if some nice old lady who likes to listen in on a party lines gets in the way of the witchcraft? I greatly prefer my own theory of how telephone advertisements could be eradicated. This would require a lot of cooperating people, who would be equipped with city directories, business directories, and chamber of commerce memberships, so they could easily determine the names,

addresses, and telephone numbers of every major official in every business firm in town. When a cooperator received a call asking him to buy something, he would listen long enough to find out who was seeking the business, then hang up. At night, preferably around bedtime, he would then telephone every official connected with that establishment and would tell them all at some length that he had decided not to patronize their firms. Just imagine how effective this would be, even if only a couple of hundred persons disturbed the domestic calm of executives' homes each day. E

Donald Simpson's explanation for Thrush overlooks an important point. The very name of the organization implies that it represents an English-speaking clique. Hardly any other language includes the th sound which starts the organization's name, and this is the sound that gives foreigners the greatest amount of trouble when they start speaking English, as well as the last sound that most English-speaking children learn how to create consistently. Yet the majority of the villains on Man from Uncle episodes have been quite foreign-looking men and women, whose adventures rarely occurred in English-speaking nations. Tentatively, I've decided that Thrush is the secret organization that has been Americanizing the entire planet, and UNC:E consists of men with foreign names like Solo and Kuriakin who are desperately striving to prevent the last fragments of open countryside in Europe and Asia from being covered with Coca-Cola signs; this activity must be changed somewhat for television purposes because the radio-television code does not permit giving a non-sponsor free advertisements.

The Cure is a very fine story. The ghost of W. C. Fields must have whispered in Barry Weissman's ear when he was thinking up names for the characters. Even though the course of events had become quite clear before the final paragraphs arrived, the last line still has a splendid impact. I'm currently chuckling my way through Sheckley's Mindswap, and I find The Cure inferior to the professionally published story, only because it doesn't last as long.

Let's see. If you and Barry get married on August 18, you're sure of three weeks of happiness together, maybe more, if the germs that the astronauts picked up on the moon have a four-week incubation period. I have a sneaking suspicion that the population explosion will cease to be a problem in three major cities, after the parades which will honor the astronauts immediately after their release from quarantine. It is not reasonable to hope that everything connected with the first space flight should have gone to perfection; a wrong estimate on the time required for guaranteeing there shall be no lunar plague is the only thing left that might go wrong. (Isn't the fact that the astronauts had to select landing site themselves an indication something went wrong?-LKG/ It certainly was considerate of the NASA people to make it possible to have the St. Louiscon even if the worst happens. If all three astronauts suddenly acquire pointed ears as a result of lunar illness, it will become the last worldcon where round ears are visible.

Meanwhile, it's nice to see fan history repeating itself. I assume that you've heard about how many people made George Senda's mistake about Lee Hoffman. Long before that, a similar but more complicated name caused the same mixup. Leslie F. Stone was a writer for the prozines in their early days and it never occurred to some of her correspondents that this was a female-type Leslie. Poor Leslie suf-

ffered an even stranger fate than either you or Lee Hoffman, however,
She was destined to live in Hagerstown for a while.

That's a nice ambiguous front cover. Is that a machine or a stocky figure wearing a derby outlined in white under the world that hands behind the spaceship? Does the structure at the right really have a resemblance to the Taj Mahal, as I somehow sense it possesses, without taking the trouble to look up a photograph? Why does vegetation flourish so blackly in the extreme foreground on an otherwise barren soil? I like the absence of the middle tones and the whole composition. For no reason at all, I'm reminded of my disappointment at all the newspaper photographs we've seen of the moon with their typical newspaperish appearance of having a coating of dirty soapsuds. This just doesn't fit the wonderful contrast between inky shadows and dazzling sunlit areas which we'd come to know from prozine illustrations and descriptions, and it's the one aspect of the whole lunar adventure that seems to ring untrue. The Third Foundation cover restores a lot of my faith in the way other worlds really can look.

If you're keeping track, the postmark on the Third Foundation's envelope is July 16, and it arrived here on August 1. Sometimes I wonder if the wide differences in how long it takes fanzines to arrive are caused by some editions being held in a post office until an inspector has time to read through a copy. I've also been wondering if fandom should attempt a Save-Star-Trek calibre campaign to try to get better service through appeals to senators and congressmen.

* * * * *

Rick Sneary I am enclosing a \$1.00 to cover back ex-
2962 Santa Ana St. penses and future issues for this year (you can
South Gate, Calif. compute how much I owe, can't you? That would
be basic to any subscription system....What is
the point of editing a magazine if you can't work out a file system
capable of handling LIFE-TIME businesses?) [They never had to cope
with adjusting subs for locs-LKG/

I just drew out of my Spring hay-fever season in time for the Westercon, only to pick up some ones germs and be sick for a week afterward. (I've had colds all my life, and I know when I've got one of my colds...this was deffently some one elses. I was even able to give it to my Mother, and she has grown emune to mine.) I recovered again in time for the Moon Walk Party...only to be struck down again, with a milder form of my own grand of sneeze-n-blowers... -- Recovered and did a small blast of work, and scratched off again.. This time I'm a little potty in the head as well (--old English slang...not New Wave reff.). Mianly I'm at a grouch with the world...and it with me. Machines will not seve me this week...I was even to ajust the arial wire connection to our TV last night. The wire came loose from the screws some how, and dimmed the picture. The more I tightened, scraped bare new wire; patched over; and generally messed around, the more encredably muddled it got.....I'm given up buying the Sterio set I was thinking about.. I'm sure it would fail on me.

Due to the colds and other wild adventures, I not only have not read the last issue of Third Foundation, but nothing else. I haven't read a book, finished a magazine or any fanzine longer than Locas. I don't read the new paper eather. Most of my classical library is on tape now, and I listen to that when radio gets impossable. -
I'm sorry no LoC.

W. G. Bliss Somehow saying "nice frontcover" (true though,
422 Wilmot it is a good one) seems so darn cliché. Maybe
Chillicothe, Ill., nice backcover--oops, there's no art there thish
61523 ish.

The Way Out is fascinating, but wot???? no ending? Lotsa endings natch. That strange exit ramp could be used for a garbage disposal. The robot needs chromium, and it would take a long time to get enough from all that used mass production product. Or the extraterrestrials could be defeated with a large blower (a borrowed Hollywood wind machine perhaps) at the top of the ramp. The smog it would waft down would gas out the robot. /There's no smog at night and that's when the robot operates--LK/ Or the robot could be tricked into trying to save humanity from itself, which no doubt would cause it to blow a fuse in a rather short time. And hmm- the way the tale is left dangling, why smote the ramp with a spiked heel? That turns out to be accidentally (and providently) the right percussion to crack the near indestructable material, or never underestimate the power of a spiked heel. That keeps the robot busy for long enough for Carol and Ed to climb like mad back up the ramp rail. The rope of shirts is left tied to the bottom of the ramp rail in case somebody needs to be pulled bfff of the super slick disk in the nick of time. It could use a grappling hook, but the best Ed can do is to tie a bent church key (they have been drinking beer from old-fashioned cans) on the end of the improvised rope.

Back up at the top of the ramp, they are standing and catching their breath from the arduous climb when a hearse comes to a screeching halt and backs up with another screech (it is a hot rod hearse) after almost going over the brink. The young man in it sits white and shaken. His hair is robin's egg blue. He explains, "It was supposed to wash out but didn't." and adds redundantly, "give you a lift?" and "What happened to the rest of the ramp?," pointing at it ending in mid air.

"It goes straight down to what you wouldn't believe," Ed explained.

"Who can we get to believe it? It has already killed - it absorbs anything that falls on it." - Carol.

"A what what does what?"

"A big metal disk on the ground."

"That I got to see." The blue-haired young man cautiously gazed down off the end of the ramp. He walked back looking seasick. "People must drive off onto it," he said tonelessly. He got in the hearse and drove it crossways in the ramp entrance, bashing a fender in the process. "At least that will keep people from taking the wrong turn," he said in wilted jest.

Just then a far out hot rod (well nigh indescribable in fact) came to a screeching halt (suffice to say it once was a standard street roadster first hot-roadied in '34 as it originally was a B

Ford, now it sported a small chrome-plated bust of Wonder wart Hog as a radiator cap ornament.) They all piled into the hot rod and having quit blocking traffic (gads just spotted a weak spot in the yarn - how about how come one of those traffic jam reporting ever-present helicopters didn't spot the ersatz turnoff - but they any high way dept has unfinished business here and there.) and mutually introduce themselves.

The hot rodder has green hair, he is Fred Fraskell, and he was to the same party the night before as the hot rod hearse owner with the blue hair, Clark (Digger) Bales. A week later the small crew of world savers is frzzled and still have not donvinced anyone that the fake turnoff is there. After all it's not on the map. Meanwhile the hearse has a good luck charm that has a curse on it under the front seat; it was left there by the former owner, a mortician of course. It sets up a psitronic field due to the space warp from the robot, and the ramp is invisible except to anyone who has been on it before.

As chance would have it, S. Silb, the only person in the world who has a psitronic detector (also good for sensing police radar) in his 1931 Nash, happens along and comes to a screeching halt and nearly sideswipes the parked hearse, but is safeky a hair's breadth away from the traffic. S. Silb waits two hours before there is a long enough break in the traffic to open the car door and dash madly out of the way. He walks to the end of the ramp and gazes over and is fascinated no end, for S. Silb is the well known and only expert on higher ordered mechanism. He emits an occasional hmm as he studies the deal with his brain fomenting madly. He takes an old worn pocketknife and drops it onto the disk far below and watches with his pocket telescope as the disk absorbs it. He makes a few notes in his notebook and after a four hour wait for a break in traffic he makes it back into the safety of the front seat of the Nash sweating a bit - that was a close one. After another hour and 1/2 wait for a hole in traffic to jackrabbit the Nash (note th the younger generation, that model Nash would move right on out) underway, he drove home, sat in his study and thought some more, and went into his basement workshop and made a stake.

Then he hired a helicopter and went back to the turnoff. Once on that freeway was enough for one lifetime for him. He planted the stake and filed a claim to everything that lay off the turnoff, including the turnoff, and that turned out to be legal in California, and the rest is h istory.

What did S. Silb see in what lay off the end of that turnoff? Only he knows; publically he has said that he would reveal that to anyone who understood the thirty-eighth order of basic mechanism, but no one understands the orders of mechanism, not even the first, except of course S. Silb. All of this is well known and has been examined in great detail, but lately it leaked out that Army observers at the turnoff entrance observed a terrific blast and everything in sight down there was total wreckage. Shortly after S. Silb came climbing up a bit the worse for wear and said, "Well, that solves that." What was solved is still S. Silb's secret. He has been dropping tons of strange equipment off the end of the ramp with a crane to whatever purpose no one knows. His three employees, who were among the first to discover the place, are also mum.

Ed clambered down the railing. He carried a small inflatable boat, as the runoff from the freeway had made a small lake below. He looked up at the Army on watch above watching. S. Silb had kicked a lot of shins around officialdom, but he had not been able to shake the army yet. They craved for one thing to use the place for practicing desert warfare.

Gads, it could go on and on.

Also Sprach Who???? I wonder how difficult it is to get out of a monkey cage. Hmm. Smart monkeys would realize they had it made - no income tax even. Probably keep their mouths shut and stay in the cage.

And, ah yes, another rib-tickling installment of the Metaphysical Hyena.

Doubtless THE MOTHER THINGS will be followed next ish by its sequel THE FATHER THINGS.

Dear Lee,

I just rushed to get on a train to Heidelberg - only we got on the wrong train, and in our rush to get off I left my bag and camera and stuff on the other train - now I have to go all the way north to Koblenz to get it back - arrrrgh!!! I guess we won't be going to Heidelberg. If you see Dick Schultz at the World Con - tell him if he doesn't know already, that the Prisoner was filmed on location at Port Meirion in Wales in Sept 66 - March 67. If I get my bag and film back, I have pictures of it.

Stanford Burns

* * * * *

The Arcturian's android is an ambitious android who acts anthropoid.
The B.E.M.'s buzzard is a brave buzzard that bites bandersnatchi.
The Capellan's cyborg is a crazy cyborg that chases after computers.
The Denebian's dragon is a dutiful dragon that does dishes.

If gushes of blood should fall from the sky upon New York City, business would go on as usual. --Charles Fort

The e.t.'s elephant is an eccentric elephant who eats eggplant.
The Formalhautian's firefly is a fierce firely that fights fontemas.
The giant's ghost is a genial ghost that greets guests.

New York Times, Dec. 6, 1931 - scientists of the University of California, experimenting upon an admixture of phosphorus in the food of swine, were developing luminous pigs. Just what they will be good for has not yet been announced.
--Charles Fort

The hypnotist's hurkle is a happy hurkle that helps humans.
The Iapetan's imp is an impetuous imp that insults ill-doers.
The Jovian's jackal is a judicious jackal that juggles jackknives.
The Klovian's kitten is a knowing kitten that knows karate.
The Lensman's lizard is a lithe lizard that likes loop-the-loops.
all contributions gratefully accepted

End of the Seers Convention

We were walking and talking on the roof of the world
In an age that seemed, at that time, an extremely modern age
Considering a merger, last on the agenda, of the Seven Great Leagues
that held the Seven True Keys to the Seven Ultimate Spheres of
all moral, financial, and occult life.

"I foresee a day," said one of the delegates, an astroanalyst from
Idaho, "when men will fly through the air, and talk across
space;

They will sail in ships that float beneath the water;
They will emanate shadows of themselves upon a screen, and the
shadows will move, and talk, and seem as though real."

"Very interesting, indeed," declared a Gypsy delegate. "But I should
like to ask, as a simple reader of tea leaves and palms:
How does this combat the widespread and growing evil of the police?"

The astrologer shrugged, and an accidental meteor fell from his robes
and smoldered on the floor.

"In addition," he said, "I foresee a war,
And a victory after that one, and after the victory, a war again."

"Trite," was the comment of a crystal-gazer from Miami Beach.
"Any damn fool, at any damn time, can visualize wars, and more wars,
and famines and plagues.
The real question is: How to seize power from entrenched and
organized men of Common Sense?"

"I foresee a day," said the Idaho astrologer, "when human beings will
live on top of flag-poles,
And dance, at some profit, for weeks and months without any rest,
And some will die very happily of eating watermelons, and nails,
and cherry pies."

"Why," said a bored numerologist, reaching for his hat, "can't these
star-gazers keep their feet on the ground?"

"Even if it's true," said a Bombay illusionist, "it is not, like the
rope-trick, altogether practical."

"And furthermore, and finally," shouted the astrologer,
"I prophesy an age of triumph for laziness and sleep, and dreams and
utter peace."

I can see couples walking through the public parks in love, and those
who do not are wanted by the sheriff.

I see men fishing beside quiet streams, and those who do not are
pursued by collectors and plastered with liens."

"This does not tell us how to fight against skepticism," muttered
a puzzled mesmerist, groping for the door.

"I think" agreed a lady who interpreted the cards, "we are all
inclined to accept too much on faith."

A sprinkling of rain, or dragon's blood,
Or a handful of cinders fell on the small, black umbrellas, they
raised against the sky.

Kenneth Fearing

