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THE TWILIGHT ZINE is published quarterly by the MIT Science Fiction Society. This will possibly be printed by May 1963. But then it may not be. It is edited, it says here, by me. For those of you who are not in the know, I am Bernard L. Morris, currently residing at 420 Memorial Drive; Cambridge 39, Mass.

But not for long. As of June 1 and continuing in a gala performance through the Discon I will abide at (NOTE-ADDRESS CHANGE-NOTE) I hope that's drawn some attention, as I was saying I will at or in the vicinity of 22 Hilliard St; Apt 1; Cambridge 38, Mass. ~~For Christmas~~ please send all mail and fmz at this address until September when I shall return to Memorial Drive-By-the-Charles. Ghastly thought.

I'd also like to mention that this fanzine is distributed free-for-nothing to MIT SFS members while others may partake of its savory aroma (it's excellent with French dressing) in return for their fanzines, letters, artwork, articles, or, if you must, for a quarter of a dollar. If any more than this amount is sent the sender should not expect any more than one (1) anyway since the Society is independently wealthy.

This was, is, and forever shall be a BeaverBarf Press effort.

# FIT THE FIRST

## YE NOBLE ED

The Leaders tell us that we must return to the spirit of the Pioneers, that we must go back to the idealism and self-sacrifice that characterize a growing people. But they are forgetting one essential fact, the pioneering spirit was (and still is) self defeating. These men fought the wilderness so that their heirs would have all the things that they didn't have; physical comforts, and freedom from Tories, Whigs, Puritans, Democrats, Republicans, Taxes, &etc (choose any you like). If they had been told that the hardships they endured were not a means toward a goal but an end in themselves they would have given up in sorrow and anger.

The irony is huge, we who have not experienced anything more uncomfortable than a tv failure are determined to recapture the spirit of men who knew that their lives were not lived as cogs in a machine, men who saw the results of their labor, men who knew that they were building a better world.

It is time to wake up. We have, indeed we are the "better" world of their hopes. It is time to think of Shaw's dreadful line, "There are two tragedies in life. One is to lose your heart's desire. The other is to gain it." We have gained the summit, and cry for the spirit we had, long ago, at the foot of the mountain, a mighty spirit that drove us up and up.

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Anyone who reads a little history will notice that, among other things, complaints run in cycles. During war men want peace, during peacetime they yearn for high adventure and danger (if this offends certain militant pacifists among you, please recall the spirit which we went into the Spanish-American "war" and also into the (first) Great War). Peasants long to go to the city and the wage-slave wants the honest life of the soil tiller. In times of anarchy order is wanted above all else, but when there is too much order someone will always cry out "oppression" or "creeping socialism" or whatever is appropriate at the time.

Renaissance Italy is one of the best examples of unchecked anarchy. City fought against city, Guelph against Ghibelline, no one knew if they would be arrested for treason in the morning. In The Inferno who is it that Dante puts in the deepest hole in Hell? First prize goes to Judas, the betrayer of Dante's God, but close behind are Brutus and Cassius. What did they do to deserve such a fate?

As a typical product of "unsettled" times, Dante loved the idea of Order next to God alone. He personified Order in the old Roman Empire, and in its founder Julius Caesar. (Whether the old Empire was as peaceful as Dante thought is not relevant. Neither

is the question of Caesar's "founding" it). The assassins of his longed for Order are to be punished in the worse possible manner.

Today we have the opposite viewpoint. On all sides we are surrounded by oppressive (and probably inspired by Evil Atheistic Communism\*) ideas and institution as; income tax, social security, the draft, police, and many other detrements to unlimited freedom (as is found in Nature, which is an unreasonable state for Man).

Life is tough and there are no easy answers. The grass is always greener.

(\* in case you are too thick to realize it, I am being Sarcastic)

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The above writings are my contribution the League to Bring Social Awareness to Fandom (which I believe was founded by John Boardman and GMCarr). It is my first attempt at a Kipple type editorial and should not be taken too seriously, for as Kurt Vonnegut says (in Cat's Cradle) "Everything in this book is a pack of lies."

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Back to a more fannish note now.. When old Fred Norwood was given his by the Benevolent Stute, the Society decided to commemorate the event with a Norwood Memorial subscription to Superman comics. The subscription is adressed to Mr. Norwood Memorial  
% MIT SFS, rm 50-020  
MIT, Cambridge, Mass.

(Note: someone is stealing them as fast as they arrive. Sarill has not been seen around here lately (he'd better not be) and we have no idea who it is. C'est triste).

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Lest we forget Dept. (otherwise known as It Hurts Me More Than It Hurts You Dept.). A little check in this space \_\_\_\_\_ indicates that this is the last TZ you will receive unless I hear from you in one way or another. Postcards of comment may or may not count. If you have a severe case of FAFIA you can send 25¢, but no more. I do not want any subs greater than this. Money received will be squandered in Loose Living. You have been Warned. Reviewers please mention this in reviews &etc.

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It seems that fandoms leading ~~the~~ "Liberal" has widened his scope. Not content with advocating that northern Conservatives be beaten up to attone for the violence of their southern brethren, with insulting Betty Kujawa by MacCarthy guilt-by-association techniques, and with generally doing the liberal cause as much good as the Birchers do the conservative, he has started commenting on science fiction. And what comments! In Xero #10 John Boardman (as if you haven't guessed by now) comments on Lord of the Rings and The Once and Future King. He expresses a distaste for "the subtle racism running through them" and somehow manages to reach the conclusion that the orcs are identified with negros. He asks "Were there ever any labor problems at Cirdan's shipyard?" "Who worked the fields that raised the food that supported Rivendell?" (cont'd on p.37)

# JUST A PERFECT FRIENDSHIP

--John Berry

"You wanted to see me, Hal?"

Hal Burnett was the president of the Great Falls Bank (Est. 1877). He was grey haired, always wore a black suit, white shirt, and grey tie. He always tried to appear the hearty type with the senior members of the staff, and encouraged the free use of his Christian name, hinting that there was no need to enforce discipline by referring to him as 'Sir', because if they could do the job better, they'd be sitting where he was. It was pure psychology, the 'Hal' was always said deferentially, anyway, it made them feel ill at ease to use it..they wanted to call him 'Sir'...

He handed over a cheque.

"As always, Larry, you handled that United Mortgage loan superbly, and your commission here shows, I think, how my partners and I appreciate the zealous way you handled the negotiations."

Larry St.Clair smiled...a sort of shrugging smile...modest, in a way...a 'hell, I did my best' sort of atmosphere. He turned to go.

"One more thing, Larry."

"Uh...yes, Hal?"

"This is embarrassing for me to put."

What the hell was the old idiot prattling about now?

"Senator Rothberg was talking to me about you last night, at the club."

St.Clair shrugged. So what?

"I guess he told you how pleased he was...those increased loans surely helped him out of a..."

Burnett nodded. He took the cigar out of his mouth.

"Oh, he was pleased about that all right. But he said there'd been talk about you."

St. Clair frowned.

"Talk about me...?"

"Yeah. This is damned awkward, Larry...he, er, he said there'd been talk...talk, I might add, by persons who have considerable dealings with us...talk about your association with a fifteen year old boy."

"Yeah. Joe Shaw. So what?"

"You admit it, then?"

Burnett leaned forward across the polished walnut desktop.

St.Clair put his fists...clenched fists, on his side of the desk, and he moved his eyes forward to within inches of Burnett's.

"I admit what...?"

Burnett sat down.

"Larry, listen...the Senator himself saw you with this boy at a drive-in movie...OK?"

"Sure...what's wrong with that?"

"Well...nothing, so far...because I've known you for twenty-five years...but it isn't what I think, it's what the Senator thinks."

St.Clair curtly told Hal what the Senator could do with his thoughts.

"But I haven't finished. Mr. Slazenzhalz told the Senator that he'd seen you go to the boy's house, when Slazenzhalz knew that the boy's widowed mother was not at home."

"Jeeze." St.Clair sat down. He reached forward and took a cigarette out of the solid silver box on the desk. He loosened his tie.

"And the Senator's wife saw you getting on the Chicago train with him, and both of you had suitcases..."

"God." St.Clair stubbed the cigarette.

"You understand, Larry, that personally I have great faith in you... but you have sometimes acted rather strangely, since your wife died last year...but even though you are a valued employee, I must point out that the honour and dignity of an institution such as ours depends a great deal not only upon the demeanour and efficiency of the staff whilst working, but generally, and especially socially, nothing must happen which, even though innocent in itself, tends to reflect adversely upon the bank. You see my point of view, Larry?"

"Too true I see it...a blasted bunch of frustrated hypocrites..."

"Larry, the Senator used the word frustrated when talking about you."

"In that case, I'll sue."

"I hardly think..."

"I don't give a damn what you think...no, sorry Hal, I didn't mean that. I can see what you mean O.K...the way you put it...rather, the way those smug old evil-minded..."

"I told you this was embarrassing for me... But talk has become so widespread amongst our clientele that there was no alternative for me but to mention it to you."

"Just a minute, sir."

Hal looked up at this... 'sir?'

He'd only taken half a dozen deep breaths of cigar smoke...he didn't even blow rings...when St.Clair came back and laid an envelope on his desk.

"Open it."

"Look, Larry, if it's your resignation, there's no possible need for..."

"Open it."

The large brown envelope wasn't sealed. His fingers trembled as he lifted the flap. He pulled the contents out.

He looked...for several long seconds. He blinked. Then he looked again. His eyes were large as he looked up at St.Clair's white face...

"No..." he panted.

"Yes," said St.Clair firmly. "You asked for it...now you've got it."

Once more the fingers trembled as he held the white pages, and read the stencilled front cover... 'The Venusian Quarterly, Number Five, presenting Lady Chatterly's Faaan.'

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"This is Mr. Burnett, Joe," said St.Clair.

Neofan Joe Shaw stopped cranking. His face was pimply, he wore a blue vest liberally covered with duplicating ink. There were even traces on his face, and his fingers were covered. He wiped them on his jeans, and offered a tentative right hand to the bank manager...who took it with as much enthusiasm as if it had been a handshake with a depositor clearing his account by withdrawing two cents and asking for interest.

"Ma's mortgage foreclosed, sir?" asked the neofan...looking worried.

"No, no," hastened St.Clair. "Mr. Burnett read a copy of our latest issue, and he expressed a desire to come to your fanac den and see what fandom's all about."

The neo's eyes glistened. This was certainly egoboo...

"Like, Mr. Burnett, sir," he explained, "as Mr. St.Clair says, this is my fanac den. We put out a fanzine, see...we call it The Venusian Quarterly, and whilst I wouldn't actually say we've set the fannish world on fire, at least we've gotten mention in CRY OF THE NAMELESS, MEANDER and SLUDGE, and Buck Coulson gave us a five rating."

Burnett lifted up a small pile of fanzines off an up-turned orange crate, and sat down. He pulled a silk handkerchief, red with white spots on it, from the breast pocket of his evening dress, and mopped his brow. He looked at St.Clair...wincing...popped a tablet in his



mouth, and looked agape at the neo...who took this performance for encouragement.

"We think this fifth issue is a wow, sir."

"How come...er...how do you mean, son?"

"Like, the lead story by Larry, er, Mr. St.Clair is the goods. Like, it's fan fiction...I might even say faaan fiction. It's a take-off on the well-known book, which I must confess I read when I was eight. Y'see, Lady Chatterly goes to the hut in the woods to meet the gamekeeper. They go in the hut, see, and when the climax of the story is reached, they've actually been duplicating all the time... I mean, they've been pubbing a fanzine, like we're doing here. Care to turn the crank, sir?"

Burnett looked furtively at St.Clair.

"Was that Mr. Slaxenhalz's car we passed when we came here?" he hissed.

"No, the Senator's." St.Clair suppressed a grin.

"Tell Mr. Burnett about the Convention, Joe," he suggested.

"We met Willis there."

"Who's Willis?"

"Willis is Ghod."

"Uh."

"Willis has impeccable taste."

"I, er, think I'd better..."

"He pubbed The Enchanted Duplicator...all about the Tower of TruFandon, and..."

"It's half eight, St.Clair..."

"And he also pubbed Willis Discovers America."

"I've got an appointment atd..."

"And I also spoke to Willy Ley, kissed Bob Bloch's shoes, and was patted on the head by Ike Asimov."

"Really, St.Clair, this has..."

"I purchased 27 prozines."

"Um..."

"And got over 300 fannish autographs."

Burnett stood up and held his right hand rampant, as if trying to stop traffic on the main street.

"Very pleased to hear all about your trip to the Convention, son, but I have to..."

"You didn't tell Mr. Burnett about the film we saw the other night." St. Clair grinned wryly.

"Yeah...yeah. Rocketship X-M. A reissue...sheer crap, I wouldn't go if I were you, sir."

"I've no intention..."

"Frankly, Mr. Burnett, this is the sort of film which has brought ridicule on us wearers of the propellor beanie."

"The propellor beanie?"

The neo nipped across the room, returned with a burnished red beanie which he placed on Burnett's grey head.

"Spin the props," he grinned.

Burnett puffed himself up like a bullfrog. His face turned purple.

"Spin the props?" he screamed. Then a transformation took place. He took the beanie off, handed it back to the neo. He shook himself, like a dog who hopes he's got rid of the last flea.

He reached in a pocket, handed the neo a \$10 bill.

"@ee thanks, sir, a sub...that'll mean you'll get the next five issues...and the special one-shot I'm running off tonight, 'bout your visit..."

The bank manager shuddered. He closed his eyes tightly, as if hoping that when he opened them again he'd be in bed. When he did



open them, he looked a mite disappointed.

"Goodnight, son." He edged to the door, grabbed St.Clair by the arm. "See ya later," shouted St.Clair as he closed the fanac den door behing him...

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"Apologies, Larry," mused Burnett.

"He's a good kid, as you can see, Hal. I picked up a science fiction magazine at a book stall recently, wrote for a, er, fanzine, and saw his name mentioned in it. I called to see him, hoped to borrow some science fiction books, didn't know he was only fifteen. But a nice kid, you'll agree?"

"For Chrissake don't tell any of our clients about my wearing that...beanie?"

"No...certainly not."

"Well, goodnight."

"Goodnight...er...Hal, do you mind if Joe and I use the electric duper in your office one night?"

"Huh. Like me to come along and help?"

Burnett slammed the car into gear when St.Clair got out.

St. Clair looked after him as he shot round the corner. Hmmm. He'd have to ask about the electric Gestetner again. Hell. Burnett had been sarcastic, when he said 'Huh. Like me to come along and help.' ...all the same, he thought there was hope...

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The 'universal nemesis of idolatry' is so universal that, like 'nature', it explains nothing. Pride in man's own creations is common to all societies, including the longest-lived, and perhaps most common in their vigorous youth and prime. It may be considered the mainspring of civilization.

Here again St. Sophia gives a clue to a basic ambiguity. Pride goeth before a fall - but first it lifts men to real heights. Without pride the tragic hero would not be a hero; without it there would be no tragedy in history because no civilization at all. And without it there would be no higher religions. It was pride that built St. Sophia. It was still pride that led thousands to pray in St. Sophia in the miserable last days of Byzantium; for in their abjectness they were still assuming that the Almighty took such a keen personal interest in the inhabitants of one small region of this planet that he would perform a miracle to lay low the inhabitants of other regions. Even the loftiest manifestations of the religious spirit may be described as over-weening pride. Nothing is prouder than the humility of the ascetic or other-worldly spirit that proclaims itself superior to the whole natural world, or than the mysticism that renounces to self only to commune with God himself.

.....History itself is the deadliest enemy of the Eternal and Absolute. The whole history of thought is a refutation of the finality to which thinkers have endlessly aspired. I conclude, accordingly, that in first and last matters we cannot conclude with absolute certainty.

But I should add at once that the admission of ultimate uncertainty does not mean complete uncertainty. The absolutist tradition of Christendom leads men to assume that if we can't have absolute standards we can't have any standards, and that if we are not standing on the Rock of Ages we are standing on nothing.

from The Uses of the Past, by Herbert Muller

# CREATION LAB

--Doug Hoylman

"Really, Mr. God, how do you expect to pass Creation Lab if you keep turning out shoddy projects like this? A matter-energy, star-planet system with millions upon millions of stars, and you concentrate all your attention on this one planet!"

"But, sir, the job I did on that planet is so--"

"I'll decide that. Let me see your report. Hmm...initial creation in seven days? No wonder you did such a poor job."

"Sir, I wanted to get things set up so I could take all lab period to do a careful job."

"Well, maybe. Let's see. Made woman from man's rib, I don't quite see that, but let it pass. Now this tree of knowledge, Mr. God. Why did you tell them not to eat the fruit when you knew darn well they would? And for that matter, why did you want to keep them from getting knowledge? How do you expect them to build a civilization?"

"Just an experiment, sir."

"Sounds more to me like you were trying to impress them, as if your own creations needed impressing. And then you punished them for disobeying you! Not only do you not know the psychology of your creations, you have a ridiculous sense of proportion. One would think they had done something to injure you personally, Mr. God."

"Well, sir, I--"

"Just your pride, eh, Mr. God? Yes, I see later on here where you attempted to destroy all of humanity. That of course is the only thing to do with an experiment that has gone bad, although the flood was rather an unimaginative way to do it. But why, Mr. God, did you let some of them, in fact help some of them, save themselves?"

"Well, sir, to be frank, I was a bit fond of man, and I couldn't--"

"That's a very unscientific attitude, Mr. God. You'll notice they didn't come out any better the second time. Incidentally, how did Noah get all those animals into that little boat?"

"I helped, sir."

"I see. Tell me, if you were so emotionally attached to these creatures, why did you so consistently let them slaughter, and at times order them to slaughter, each other? Terrible waste and inefficiency, Mr. God."

"I--ah--"

"I realize you're still immature, Mr. God, but you should have outgrown that childish sadism by now. Tell me, why did you so consistently concentrate on and pamper the Jews? All the races look identical to me."

"Just to simplify things, sir."

"In which case why did you eventually abandon them and make them unpopular in all nations? Don't bother to explain, Mr. God. The second half of your lab report seems to tell this. More vengefulness."

"Yes, sir, the second half is more accurate."

"Then why does it start off with four different versions of the same biography, disagreeing on almost everything? It does seem to tie in a bit with the first part, I'll grant you that, but the connection could have been better. Tell me, why all the miracles?"

"Sir?"

"You have a rather nice setup here; beautifully simple and logical laws of physics and biology. A very neat arrangement. But every time you decide that one of them deserves a special favor or punishment you drop all those magnificent laws and perform a miracle. In the first part, you stopped the sun, you wrecked a city, you helped the Jews to defeat enemies that outnumbered them; then you start off the second part with this virgin birth. The only rationale I can see for this sort of silliness is that you want to impress the humans with your power and knowledge. Why, if they know that you created them?"

"Well, they don't all know it, sir."

"That's your fault, not theirs. Where are heaven and hell?"

"Heaven and--uh--right over there, sir."

"You couldn't use a couple of these stars you have cluttering up the place, could you? You have to put them way over there. Now tell me, what could possibly be the point of letting the souls live after the bodies die? You can't bear to part with them, is that it, Mr. God? You want to reward your favorites and punish the rest? This petty vengefulness disturbs me. It's a good thing the humans can't get back at you for what you've done to them, or you'd be in no shape for Creation Lab."

"But, sir, they love and worship me."

"Nonsense. A race that could build a civilization like that--and it's a nice one, Mr. God, considering this is your first project, congratulations--couldn't be so illogical. Besides, why should you want them to worship you? Just how conceited are you, Mr. God? What good would this love, worship, and grovelling obedience, even if it were justified, be to you, Mr. God? The purpose of this course is not to let the students build up their egos by creating something to tell them how great they are, Mr. God. Although in your case I must admit that you could use a little ego-boosting."

"Yes, sir."

"Can't you say anything but 'Yes, sir'?"

"No, sir."

"Well, you've still got plenty of time left. Why don't you start on another project. You may be able to learn from your mistakes on this one and build an acceptable project. I'm sorry if I lost my temper, Mr. God. I know you're capable of doing a good job."

"Yes, sir. Shall I save this project?"

"No, Mr. God. Get rid of it."

"All right, sir."

THIS CERTIFIES THAT

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THE CONSPIRACY OF

ORTHODOX AMERICAN SCIENTISTS

AGAINST PSIONICS

(also dowsing, astrology, etc.)

ISAAC NEWTON, founder

ISAAC ASIMOV, spiritual  
leader

Expires automatically  
whenever a Dean device  
works.

# Strange Fish,

TED STURGEON'S MORE THAN HUMAN

--Mike Padlipsky

As if printing term papers isn't enough to bring learning (a joke) into fandom, y<sup>r</sup> humble editor has gone out and dug up a 67 page thesis. On science fiction. (You can get away with anything in the Hum dept.) The first thirty pages are an apology for the stuff as literature. This I print not. They are designed to placate any reactionaries in the Literature Dept. The middle, which is published here, is an analysis of More Than Human which belongs in Warhoon with Virginia Blish's La Dolce Vita review, about as high a recommendation as can be given. The remainder briefly discusses Bester's Disappearing Act, Aldiss' Poor Little Warrior, and RAH's Puppet Masters. MITSFSers interested in the complete paper can ask for the volume "Hum Thesis, 1960" at the reference desk. Since TZ is not Habakkuk the article is split between this and the next. BLM

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If I had to choose but one work on which to base my claim that science fiction does indeed contain works which possess literary merit, that work would be Theodore Sturgeon's More Than Human. As a matter of fact, my original intention was to do a thesis dealing only with close readings of science fiction works, of which the Sturgeon novel was to have furnished roughly half my material. When the issue of the "intellectual respectability" of science fiction arose, my plans were changed, but in view of the necessity of giving examples of literary merit in science fiction in order to complete the argument for the respectability of the field I have been able to keep the novel in the discussion, if only as a test case.

To illustrate the fairness of my choice of More Than Human as representative of good science fiction--that is, to show that it belongs in the discussion for reasons other than the pun it furnishes for my title--I should like to mention what Damon Knight said about it in one of his essays, after quoting the first paragraph: "My God, it's all like that, violins and stained glass and velvet and little needles in your throat"--this from a man whose difficultness to please is legendary among science fiction fans. The novel won a Hugo--awarded by science fiction fans at their annual conventions after the fashion of Hollywood's Oscars (the name Hugo is in honor of Hugo Gernsback, who introduced science fiction to the American magazines on a regular basis early in the century); it was also picked as the all-time favorite of English and American fans polled in 1956--on the basis of our Astounding poll and England's Nebula poll, taken on a weighted average. So it's a pretty good work, according to people who are more serious "addicts" than Mr. Amis; and besides, I like it.

Although this chapter is supposed to be dealing merely with the demonstration of the literary merit to be found in science fiction, I must admit that I shall "sneak in" some considerations not directly germane to the criteria implicitly based on Professor Beardsley's Affective and Objective Reasons. I crave the reader's indulgence in considering the digressions as further corroboration of the claims I

made in Chapter I as to the content of science fiction.

There are three parts to More Than Human: "The Fabulous Idiot," "Baby is Three," and "Morality." In the first part we meet the Idiot, Lone, who is leading an aimless, drifting, idiot's existence, but who has "something" within him which is not yet functioning. An intangible "call" leads him to the home of Mr. Kew, a madman who has retreated from the world and is bringing up his two daughters in ignorance of it. The Idiot breaks through the wall surrounding the Kew place and meets Evelyn, the younger daughter; though he cannot talk and neither of them know the meaning of kissing, they sit together and are happy, until discovered by her father. The father whips the Idiot and beats his daughter to death; he then commits a suicide, leaving his other daughter, Alicia, alone and terrified. A farmer, Prodd, takes the unconscious hulk of the Idiot in, and he and his wife nurse him back to health. They lavish much affection on him because the son they had expected "was never born." While Lone is recuperating, several characters are introduced in tangential episodes: Gerry, who runs away from an orphanage because all he finds is hate; Hip Barrows, a brilliant boy whose disciplinarian father forces him to go to medical school although he is a talented engineer even without schooling; Janie, who is able to move objects telekinetically (by mental power) and hates her mother, Wima, who is committing numerous adulteries while her husband is in World War II; and a pair of Negro twins who live in Janie's apartment house, and who are teleports (able to move from place to place by mental energy). Some time after Lone is cured and has developed limited telepathic powers so that he learns to speak with the Prodds, the Prodds are expecting a child and so Lone leaves them and builds a hut in the woods. To the hut eventually come Janie and the twins, and Lone takes them in. He also takes in the Prodd's child, a mongoloid in appearance, but able to communicate telepathically with Janie. Baby, as they call him, is akin to a computer which gathers and correlates information. In the course of questioning Baby, Lone discovers that he, Baby, Janie, and the twins comprise a gestalt organism which has far greater powers than the normal human individual.

In the second part, we encounter Gerry again. He is in the office of Dr. Stern, a psychiatrist. After a long interview, Gerry discloses the history of the gestalt organism during the intervening time: Lone had taken him in, and had eventually died. The gestalt, with Gerry as its new "head" went to live with Alicia Kew, who owed them a favor according to Lone. Gerry subsequently kills her because she was ruining the rapport of the gestalt by giving it too easy an environment and trying to mother it. Because of the killing he has gone to Stern, and through Stern's questioning recalls Alicia's memories of her meeting with Lone, at which time he had ordered her to read many books, the contents of which he extracted from her telepathically; in return for her help, Lone had had intercourse with her, which was her unconscious wish to compensate for the horror in which her father had taught her to hold men. When Gerry had told her that "Baby is three" she began thinking wildly that her baby would have been three if she had conceived, and as Stern explained to him, so overloaded Gerry's latent telepathic faculties with her psychic blast that he suffered an "occlusion" and did not develop the faculties further, until he had overcome the occlusion through recounting it. He goes off to rejoin the kids, and to develop as best he can, though Stern warns him that without a sense of morality the gestalt will be as lonely as Lone was as an idiot. Gerry leaves, uncomprehending.



In the third part, Hip is found in jail by Janie. She bails him out, and ministers to him during his apparent insanity, characterized by a compulsion to get sick and die. Through a working backward process, he eventually recalls that Gerry (whom he remembers as "Thompson," the Air Force psychiatrist who had treated him) had induced the compulsion in him seven years before, when he had come across Prodd's old truck which was buried in an antiaircraft range, and which he discovered because an antigravity device with which Lone had fitted it was causing the proximity fuses of the shells to go haywire. Janie tells Hip that Gerry has become deranged, and takes him to Gerry in the hope of making Gerry ashamed. Hip, thinking it an intellectual exercise for himself, devises a code of ethics for the "superman" which Gerry extracts from his mind and accepts. Hip is incorporated into the gestalt as its conscience, and then the gestalt is accepted by the community of already existing gestalts for it has finally grown up.

### 1. "Objective Reasons"

The most striking characteristic of More Than Human is the series of "incompletenesses" which run through it, not only of characters, but of philosophies, organisms, revelations, and other factors. The most obvious overt references to incompleteness are found in the descriptions of the Idiot, Lone, although we shall see that there are so many other instances that Incompleteness must be looked upon as a theme of the book.

Lone is introduced as being something less than human, an idiot--a man manque, an incomplete person and personality. Further, "Like a stone in a peach, a yolk in an egg, he carried another thing" (pp4-5), a thing which was useless to him though an "inner ear" receptive of "murmuring, sending, speaking, sharing, from hundreds, from thousands of voices"--Lone has a potentiality, but it is bottled up inside his idiot self and useless--his functioning is incomplete. Aside from the numerous instances of Lone's lacks and shortcomings (he enters the Prodds' diningroom nude for he has none of the social graces; he can neither read nor drive a truck), perhaps the most effective means of suggesting his incompleteness is that of not attaching to him a name until he has been the prominent figure of the novel for some twenty-seven pages; then, through the Prodds' ministrations and his own ability to sense what they want of him in a crude fashion at least, he overcomes his lack of speech to the extent of giving himself a name.

Nor are the other characters presented in the first part complete. Mr. Kew has no sense of good; Alicia has no knowledge of the outside world, nor of what outsiders would call Truth; Evelyn "knows no evil at all"; neither Maughter has what might be called a complete education for life. The Prodds are parents without a child. Gerry is a child without parents, a child with only hate and no love. Hip has talents but no goals, no aspirations. Janie has power but no control; her mother has no husband, in essence and later in fact. The twins cannot speak, And so on.

The second and third parts follow the pattern. Gerry goes to the psychiatrist because his memories are incomplete, and because his knowledge is incomplete in that he wants to know why he killed Alicia. In Alicia's memories as related by Gerry, Lone says that he is waiting in the woods because he (as gestalt organism) isn't finished,

but "I don't mean 'finished' like you're thinking. I mean I ain't-- completed yet." (p. 134) Stern tells Gerry he still lacks something-- morality. In the third part, it is Hip's memory which is incomplete, and he himself is initially no longer functioning as a human being. Finally it is revealed that the Gerry-gestalt has been incomplete throughout, and only after it had incorporated Hip (as the "small still voice") could it become individually complete and join the community of other gestalts (perhaps a good phrase would be "über-gestalt"), and achieve "spiritual" completeness. There runs throughout the note sounded most overtly at the end of the first part: "Ask Baby what kind of people are all the time trying to find out what they are and what they belong to." He says, every kind. So it was that Lone came to know himself, and like the handful of people who have done so before him he found, at this pinnacle, the rugged foot of a mountain." (p. 76)

The theme of incompleteness exists quite clearly in the work on the foregoing "overt" level, then. The first open test of Sturgeon's artistry is contained in the answer to a question which is a logical consequence of the theory of Chapter II: Does the "form" (the technique, the structure) of the work unify in the same way as the "content" (the plot, the action)? Or alternatively, is there unity of content and form? I believe the answer is yes. There are several different complexes of images and incidents quite directly related to the theme of incompleteness. Probably the most important of them is the complex of barriers.

Two kinds of barriers occur in the book: physical and mental. The first is the barrier around Mr. Kew's retreat; it is with this that Lone struggles to penetrate, and through the struggle he achieves what amounts to his first "rational" thought: "The fact that the barrier would not yield came to him slowly... His mouth opened and a scratching sound emerged. He had never tried to speak before and could not now; the gesture was an end, not a means, like the starting of tears at a crescendo of music." (p. 10) Note that through the struggle with the physical barrier he encounters, and partially overcomes, a mental barrier. Later, Lone is perplexed by the lack of a barrier between himself and Evelyn:

His bench-mark, his goal-point, had for years been that thing which happened to him on the bank of the pool. He had to understand that. If he could understand that, he was sure he could understand everything. Because for a second there was this other, and himself, and a flow between them without guards or screens or barriers--no language to stumble over, no ideas to misunderstand, nothing at all but a merging. (pp. 74-5)

The final synthesis with the über-gestalt and the lesser triumph of "blushing" (the blending and meshing process which is what the individuals in the gestalt do) are anticipated in the rather poetic merging of the idiot and the innocent--which is achieved by the dissolving of their interpersonal (and co-incidentally, intra-personal) barriers.

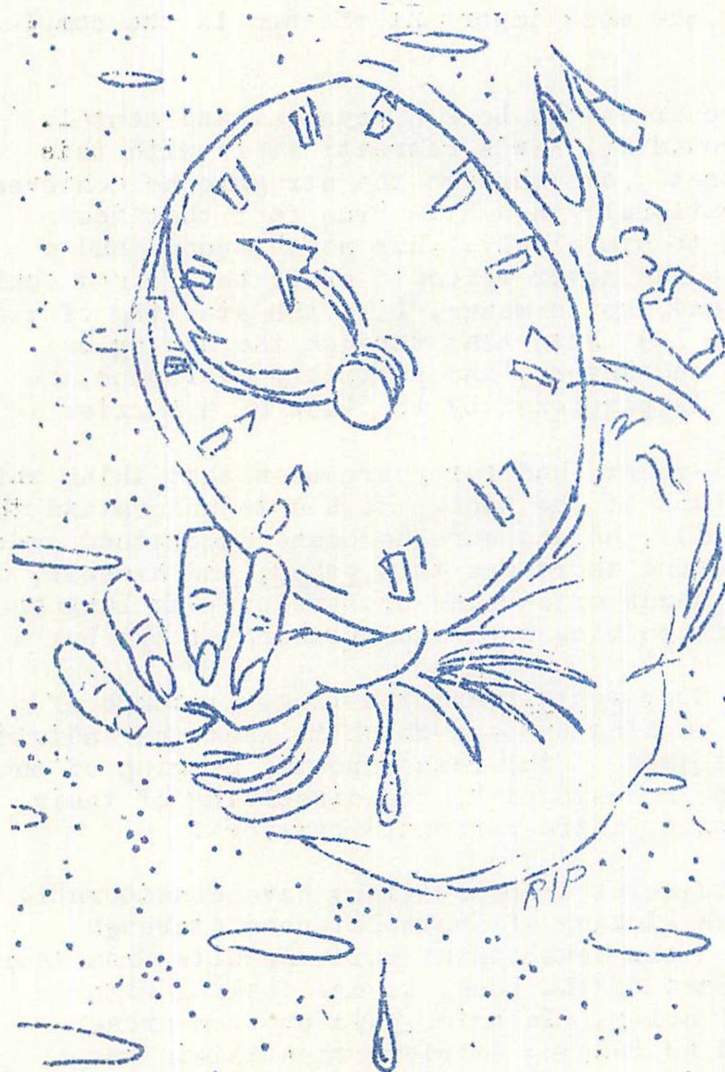
The first barrier and its related obstructions have considerable importance, and illustrate the linking of incompleteness (through their shutting-out power) with the development which results from their dissolution. In the second part of the book, we are dealing with Gerry's personal barriers primarily. In brief, his problem arose because he was unguarded (had no helping barrier) when Alicia was triggered by the phrase "Baby is three" into mentally reliving her

experience with Lone three years before, at which time her own physical barrier (literally her hymen) had been broken; the resulting shock caused Gerry to develop his occlusion-barrier. (Indeed, there is a specific reference to "that 'Baby is three' barrier," [p. 143] by Gerry to Stern.) Lone's breaking of Alicia's barrier was a reward to her for reading books and furnishing him with information he wanted. Gerry's consequent occlusion prevented him from using his telepathic powers until the barrier was broken down with Stern's aid. (Miss Kew herself represents a barrier; not only was she the cause of Gerry's occlusion, but she prevents the gestalt from blushing--even tries to break it up by sending Baby away.) However, his incompleteness in the sense of lacking "morality" leads to the erection of a mental barrier in terms of his loneliness and difference from mankind. Finally, after Hip overcomes his Gerry-induced occlusion barrier, Stern is able to break down Gerry's barrier to "morality" and, in a different sense, the barrier between the Gerry-gestalt and the über-gestalt (which had been one of incompleteness).

A distinct, but related complex of incidents are those relating to what we may call faulty assumptions, which may be looked upon as barriers between the maker of the assumption and reality. These, too, must be overcome before the final obviation of incompleteness can occur. Note Mr. Kew's mistaken notions of the good and evil of the world,

for one. Further, the Prodds think Lone has suffered amnesia like Cousin Grace, that he is not (emphatically stated by Mrs. Prodd after looking at his eyes) an idiot, and that (for a time) he is their child. Gerry initially thinks that all there is to the world is hate; Hip expects to find his goal in the army; Wima thinks happiness comes in trousers. Or consider Lone himself. When he starts thinking at all, he first believes himself utterly alone...and meets Janie, the twins, and eventually Baby. Then there is his first notion of reality:

He had believed that Prodd was his only contact with anything outside himself and that the children were merely fellow occupants of a slag dump at the edge of mankind. The loss of Prodd--and he knew with unshakable certainty that he would



never see the old man again--was the loss of life itself. At the very least, it was the loss of everything conscious, directed, cooperative; everything above and beyond what a vegetable could do by way of living. (p. 74)

Two pages later he is exclaiming, "And we'll grow, Baby. We just got born!", which is a correction to the one, and in itself another, mistake. For as Baby says, through Janie, they won't grow because the thing they are is an idiot. Later, Stern commences therapy (after thinking Gerry was a kid who had wandered in off the street) by refuting various "thumbnail sketches" of psychiatry. He ends with the mistaken notion that all Gerry needs is morality--mistaken because at the very end of the book the Über-gestalt explains that the thing which caused completion was something more than ethics, which in turn are something more than morality. Even Gerry's assumption that he has no morality is false, for Lone had rebuked him for taking a bright yellow pen, and he had himself refrained from killing Stern--thinking (or rationalizing) that it was more "amusing" to let him live. Finally, Hip--for all his own mistaken assumptions about "Thompson" (the "Air Force psychiatrist" who was really Gerry), Janie's intentions, and his father's worth--manages to correct Janie's (and the Gerry-gestalt's) mistaken assumption that they're not human, and that humanity's rules don't apply to them.

Linked in turn to the faulty assumptions are those factors of the work which involve confusion or muddling of identity. They may be further considered as barriers between the individual and the world. Already noted in a different context is the fact that the Idiot is nameless for some time. Who "Jack" (the son they had lost) is to the Prodds is not revealed immediately, nor are the roles of Gerry and Hip. Janie has no last name when she is introduced. Later she is to call herself Janie Gerard--Gerard, Gerry's name because she is part of the Gerry-gestalt; this identity is slammed into the reader's attention when the sherriff who is keeping Hip mistakes the name twice. And it is just such a muddling, merging, and confusing of identities which is the mechanism of the formation of the gestalt organism, which in some undefinable but natural way is "I". Getting back to Gerry as "individual," he starts his interview with Stern by refusing to reveal his identity (for which, in another sense, he is actually looking). Stern reminds him of Lone. When he returns to consciousness after breaking through the occlusion it is on "two distinct levels" (as 11 years old and in shock from the ego transference, and as 15 and on Stern's couch), and in the unconscious state he had been Alicia Kew. He killed her because of another identity confusion, which is also linked here to the occlusion barrier:

You talk about occlusions! I couldn't get past the 'Baby is three' thing because in it lay the clues to what I really am. I couldn't find that out because I was afraid to remember that I was two things--Miss Kew's little boy and something a hell of a lot bigger. I couldn't be both, and I wouldn't release wither one. (p. 143)

Notice also the typical incomplete, stepwise revelation of facts. In the third part, the entire story revolves around the clarification of identity: Hip doesn't know who he is, who Janie is, who "Thompson" is; and meanwhile Gerry has regressed to a childish state, having lost his sense of identity. Also, on an overall basis there is a certain confusion of identity resulting from the shifts in the "identity" of the narrator: Part One is in the third person, with Lone as major

character in terms of quantity of description at least; Part Two is in the first person, with Gerry as narrator; Part Three is back to the third person, and Hip is the "major" character. The finishing touch is the confusion as to whether the Gerry-gestalt is an individual unit or a segment of the larger "unit," and of course the resolution of the misconceptions as to what humanity (or mankind) is.

Thus far we have seen three interrelated groups of incidents and images all of which are also related to the theme of incompleteness. Another group can be discovered by noting a peculiar common pattern to the family relationships and the natures of the parents in the book. The families are incomplete; for the most part, and the parents are bad. Mrs. Kew had died, Mr. Kew is insane; the Prodds don't have Jack, but they drive Lone out preparing for him--thus betraying their position as surrogate parents to Lone; Wima has no husband, she is adulterous and stupid and soon drives Janie out; Hip's mother is never mentioned, his father disowns him after trying to crush his technical talents in favor of medicine; Gerry has no parents, his surrogate family of the orphanage drives him out with its cruelty and viciousness. The reactions are Alicia's rather pathological desire for a family (she sent Baby away because she couldn't pretend he was her child), Gerry's submission to Lone and need to consult Stern (both men being surrogate parents, and even being confused for one another by Gerry), and Hip's great desire to impress his Colonel and his repeated thinking of himself as "ROTC boy" (the Colonel obviously having been taken as "father" to replace the hated doctor). Familial incompleteness is a causal agent, then; it stimulates change; and change leads to progress. At the end of it all is the realization that mankind is the parent of the gestalt, and the resulting "good" progress for the race as a whole which is fostered by a "complete" family.

Incompleteness is usually a passive thing: an idiot remains an idiot in the real world, and a body lacking a part cannot grow it or absorb it from its environment. In More Than Human, though, there are active drives and "natural" urges which combat incompletenesses and promote development. The greatest number of them act on Lone, for he is an idiot and needs the most prodding. He goes to Evelyn in response to a call he feels:

Without analysis, he was aware of the bursting within him of an encysted need...And bursting so, it flung a thread across his internal gulf, linking his alive and independent core to the half-dead animal around it. It was a sending straight to what was human in him, received by an instrument which, up to now, had accepted only the incomprehensible radiations of the new-born, and so had been ignored. (pp. 9-10)

To become more than human, one must first become human. Lone's drive brings him up against the barrier around the Kew place, and forces him to find a way through it. He feels a similar call from Janie and the twins, but is disappointed when he discovers it is only the sending of some hungry children. Their hunger, another natural drive, brings them to him, though. And he feeds them and takes them in because he recalls Mrs. Prodd's hospitality ("Now you set right down and have some breakfast!") and wishes to mimic it. By so doing, he becomes not only more "human," but more nearly complete, for he accepts the kids. It is, finally, his urge to know what he is and what he belongs to (which urge is shared by every kind of people, according to Baby) that leads him to the discovery of "his" gestalt nature.



Hip was driven from his father because of his curiosity; Gerry was driven from the orphanage by the hate which he had come to think of as natural. Gerry's reason for killing Alicia Kew is to ensure the survival of the gestalt. When Gerry remembers Lone through Alicia's thoughts, Lone mentions another natural drive, "All I know is I got to do what I'm doing like a bird's got to nest when it's time." (p. 134) That is Lone's description of why he stays in the woods, waiting to complete himself. Later, when Miss Kew asks him, "What made you start doing this?" after Lone tells her about the gestalt, he answers; "What made you start growing hair in your armpits?...You don't figure a thing like that. It just happens." (p. 138)



Stern asks Gerry, after he had explained the gestalt organism, "What now?" Gerry replies, "We'll just do what comes naturally." (p. 144) When Gerry implants a drive in Hip (the sickness compulsion, and attendant occlusion of memory), he is himself nearly destroyed as a result. Unnatural drives are not good. On the other hand, Hip's compulsion to prove himself right about the anti-gravity device, though motivated by pride perhaps, is a natural drive, which finally leads to the completion of the Gerry-gestalt. Natural drives are both good and functional.

The drives lead to development, or progress. Structurally, they may be looked on as the link between the theme of incompleteness and a theme of development, of progress toward the final completion. Also, in the context built up in the book, natural drives combat incompleteness on the level of content or incidents. Barriers must be overcome, by penetration or circumvention. Identity must be found. Faulty assumptions must be corrected; the incomplete ones must be expanded, just as Hip's "world" expands ("It's as if my whole world, everywhere I lived, was once a little place inside my head, so deep I couldn't see out. And then you made it as big as a room and then as big as a town..." p. 172 to Janie). The formal parallel is the final completion of "factual" revelations which takes place in Part Three.

There are many incidents which depict development. For instance, the development of Lone--his "humanization." He develops volition at the wall around the Kew place. He develops the power of communication with Prodd, both telepathically and verbally. After leaving the Prodds, he becomes aware of time for the first time. Because the Prodds wanted him to leave, he develops the human trait of self-pity; he berates

himself for his loneliness. He parallels the development of man by becoming a tool-using animal when he borrows an ax from Prodd to build himself a shelter. He begins the contemplative thought which caused Gerry to remember him later as "like always, walking along, thinking, thinking." In short, as he realizes, "The Prodds were one thing, and when they took him in they became something else; he knew it now. And then when he was by himself he was one thing; but taking in those kids he was something else." (p. 67) In Lone as a person we see the process of development, the process of becoming, the process of life.

However, the final development of Lone as an individual is not the final development of his gestalt organism. When he says to Baby "We'll grow!" Baby replies, through Janie, "He says not on your life. He says not with a head like that. We can do practically anything but we most likely won't. He says we're a thing, all right, but the thing is an idiot." (p. 76) When Lone dies, a new head takes over; and the acquisition of Gerry as head is the second step in the development of the gestalt. Gerry's "personal" development requires the catalyst of Hip, though, for the third stage of the gestalt's development to proceed to completion. Gerry must kill Miss Kew in the meantime to remove the threat to his potential development; he has also become aware of himself as a biological development, employing metaphors involving Neanderthal and Peking man in the course of his personal "development" (actually a cure, a return to normal from abnormal) with Stern.

{ To be concluded nextish }

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"America," he said, "will lose the war. And Italy will win it."

"America is the strongest and most prosperous nation on earth," Natelly informed him with lofty fervor and dignity. "And the American fighting man is second to none."

"Exactly" agreed the old man pleasantly, with a hint of taunting amusement. "Italy, on the other hand, is one of the least prosperous nations on earth. And the Italian fighting man is probably second to all. And that's why my country is doing so well in this war while your country is doing so poorly."

Natelly guffawed with surprise, then blushed apologetically for his impoliteness. "I'm sorry I laughed at you," he said sincerely. "But Italy was occupied by the Germans and now it's being occupied by us. You don't call that doing very well, do you?"

"But of course I do," exclaimed the old man cheerily. "The Germans are being driven out and we are still here. In a few years you will be gone too, and we will still be here. You see, Italy is really a very poor and weak country, and that's what makes us so strong. Italian soldiers are not dying any more. But American and German soldiers are. I call that doing extremely well. Yes, I am quite certain that Italy will survive this war and still be in existence long after your own country is destroyed."

Natelly could scarcely believe his ears. He had never heard such shocking blasphemies before, and he wondered with instinctive logic why G-men did not appear to lock the traitorous old man up. "America is not going to be destroyed!" he shouted passionately.

"Never?" prodded the old man softly.

"Well..." Natelly faltered.

from Catch-22



# REACTION



--ARLewis

Well, here I am back again in spite of all that Bernie could do. I'll start this column off with a fragment of a poem by our Skinner (official name for MITSFS President), L. Andrew Campbell, entitled "Homology":

A function is a simple thing!  
 A set of sets; in number three;  
 Let's call them: A, B, C.  
 Where ordered pairs from A and B  
 Are only elements of C.  
 And for each a in a, a b  
 Exists, the pair (a,b) in C.  
 If a's in A and b's in B,  
 (a,b), an element of C.  
 Then b is called by f(a).  
 When these things hold, we often say  
 That the domain of f is A.  
 If B is also f(A)  
 (The set of elements of B  
 For which a pair exists in C)  
 Then B the range of f is called...

Here Andy stopped, probably being interrupted by a person from Porlock. Strange are the ways of Mathematicians.

(Doug- make sure the -'s turn out as -'s this time and not as \*'s \*ARL)

(One more song and then I shall go on to other topics. This is the adjournment song of the MITSFS. It is sung by the officers when the membership refuses to adjourn the meeting. After a few minutes the membership is usually quite happy to vote for adjournment. The song should be sung on one note in a monotone.

Rabbits have no tails at all, tails at all, tails at all,  
 Rabbits have no tails at all, just a powder puff.  
 Same song, next verse, never gets better, never gets worse.  
 (Repeat until stopped)

We now leave the songs for a brief glance at ERBurroughs. On page 12 of A Fighting Man of Mars (Ace Edition) he says: The fact that their ("good" Barsoomians) skins are a light reddish copper and that they are oviparous constitute the two most marked divergences from Anglo-Saxon standards.

Burroughs, in all probability, believed that their skin colour was more of a divergence than the fact that they were oviparous. I never

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<sup>1</sup> - Now he tells me. I've been singing it to "London Bridge", or one of those. -DJH, Noble Sec'y

did understand how JCarter and Dejah Thoris could produce offspring but I suppose anything is possible to an author who thought that raw meat and nudity would cure any disease (including civilisation). I don't wish to imply that I don't like the Barsoom books (I think Tarzan is better) but that there are things I like much better. Conan could finish off Carter (and Carthoris) and then say: "By Crom, this slaying dries out a man--have you no wine." Conan had a sense of humour and Carter didn't.

As long as I seem to be discussing heroes I'd like to say a few words in favour of Dr. Fu Man-chu. ~~7/7/77~~ (oops) Dr. Fu Man-chu has always seemed to me to be a much maligned individual. He was certainly no worse than other patriots and his world seemed a saner (shouldn't have used that word) and kinder one than Nayland Smith's. At any rate he kept his word, believed in beating disobedient women (memo to Fuzzy Pink: More apple pie), and had no blatant racial stereotype opinions as did Smith (actually Sir Denis's viewpoint was so narrow he had monotypes--Petrie was a better man). The Doctor used and/or hated men as individuals. (I hate everyone equally but some more equally than others.)

#### DEEP THOUGHT

The saint or lover regards people as ends. The politician or businessman regards them as means. The scholar regards them as objects. Perhaps a wiser race than ours simply regards them as a good protein source.

I don't claim this as original; in fact, I got it from a friend who didn't mention his source (or sauce, as the case may be; I have such interesting friends). At this time I'm going to discuss a few books, some old and some new. This is by no means a set of book reviews and/or reports but merely more rambling as usual.

CAT'S CRADLE by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. I haven't read this as I gave it to Doug Hoylman who is a Vonnegut enthusiast and who may at this very moment be writing a decent review of it. ((You guessed it -DJH))

THE ADVENTURES OF TOM BOMBADIL by JRR Tolkien. WOW. I like this type of poetry even though I am an Evil Scientist with no appreciation of the finer things in life. The poem about the cat is unquestionably the best. I have to admit that the artwork leaves something to be desired. The animals are drawn wonderfully, especially the otters, but the Hobbits are all wrong. Hobbits are not people (they are better) and should not be drawn as people. Tom Bombadil and Goldberry are not right either. One bright ray: Tolkien says the book is offered as an interim report so there may yet be hope for more.

THE ANNOTATED SNARK by Lewis Carroll, annotated by Martin Gardner. Everyone is required by law to own and read ALICE and THE HUNTING OF THE SNARK so you might as well get this edition. The appendix with a pholisosophical (sic) commentary on the poem is worth the price of the book alone. I won't spoil it by revealing what any of the symbol-ogy is.

If you are interested in obtaining excellent (well, the best there are until the on-site surveys) topographical maps of the moon, send \$7.50 to

Superintendent of Documents  
Government Printing Office  
Washington 25, D.C.

Ask for a subscription to the USAF Lunar Charts (mapmakers call maps charts). As long as you are writing you may as well ask to be put on the mailing list for Selected Government Publications. The GPO really puts out a fascinating collection of books, pamphlets, reports, and whathaveyous. (Whathaveyous are somewhat scarce this year due to the international situation.)

ALLIGATOR by I\*n Fl\*m\*ng. This is the Harvard Lampoon's parody of Ian Fleming's James Bond (or old 007) stories. It is as good as if not better than the originals.

#### STATEHOOD FOR NEWFOUNDLAND

This is being written before the Canadian general elections so some of my statements may seem prophetic (but we all know about JWC and the FBI men) and some may seem ridiculous. I think that the Socreds are going to pick up quite a few seats in Quebec; certainly no party is going to have an absolute majority in Parliament (gone out on a limb there). This will lead to an acceleration in the drive for Quebec independence. If Quebec pulls out of the Confederation there is a good chance that the Maritimes and Newfoundland may do likewise. (Query to Canadians: Is Newfoundland considered to be one of the Maritimes? I have heard both ways from people who didn't know.) Anyway, it would seem to be a good opportunity to pick up a few new states. I feel in a very aggrandising mood (or mode, for you programmers) tonight. I assume that I have offended and angered some people by this, but I generally am angering and offending people so it is not a new experience. One of the fellows who lives in my apartment house (it's a small purple house and is haunted) is a Canadaphile and it angers and offends him but we are still friends.

SING ALONG WITH JACK SONGBOOK: Lotsa antikennedy songs. Very good and very well done. It went over quite well in my lab. I don't have the publisher's address. Bobby would get them for blasphemy if he knew.

Bernie didn't show me any letters so I assume that no one is reading this. But we don't care, it fills in pages that would otherwise be blank.

ARL

30,000 BC to 1 CC

--Jeff Speiser

His saber rips in upward thrust  
And armor parts like cheese.  
He laughs aloud in battle's heat  
Then stops to scratch his fleas.

He's lived in a dungeon  
He's plundered and stole  
He's killed gods and demons  
Yet his skin is still whole.

Though his strength is not the greatest  
And his mind's sure not the best  
He's met monsters and magicians  
And in Hell they surely rest.

( There are N more verses to this thing. I think  
Lewis has them, or maybe I do.)



# the magic watermelon

--Doug Hoylman

(Since everybody else seems to be writing term papers on fantasy epics, I may as well get into the act. The following is a term paper on K.K.K. Blatherton's immortal nondecalogy, The Vorpall Sword, which I wrote for 28.999F, "Statistical Methods in Metaphysics". Since the assignment was to do a comparison of Frederic Chopin and Huey Long, I flunked the course, but at least I got some TZ material. -DJH)

K.K.K. Blatherton's The Vorpall Sword is one of the least read of the great fantasy epics. This may be because it comes in nineteen large volumes which have always been out of print, or it may be due to Blatherton's impeccably prosaic and mundane style. In any case, The Vorpall Sword is known primarily as a masterpiece of plagiarism, being based on the poem "Jabberwocky" and incorporating bits and pieces from nearly every mythology in the public domain.

It may be interesting at this point to note that The Vorpall Sword has served as the subject of an opera by Wagner (Llewellyn T. Wagner of Northwest Nowhere, Idaho). This work, titled Der Magicker Wassermelon although the libretto is in pig Latin, is seldom performed today, mainly because it takes slightly under twelve days and is written for ninety-four separate singing parts (including one for a horse\*) and an orchestra consisting entirely of one hundred and twenty-five saxophones and a harp. Rehearsals for the first performance started in 1928, and the show may be ready any day now.

The transformation of the short verse "Jabberwocky" into a large, powerful nondecalogy is an impressive illustration of the triumph of perseverance in the face of adversity and common sense. Blatherton, at the time he completed the work, had less than five hundred dollars, most of which went for postage to mail the manuscript to the publisher. The book was so successful that the royalties almost made up this cost, but Blatherton never benefited from it, as he died trying to carry his manuscript to the mailbox.

In the first volume we are introduced to the hero, Sievied, whose strength is as the strength of nine and a half because his heart is pure and his head is empty. His quest is to capture the Magic Watermelon, a sort of combination of the Holy Grail, the Ring of the Niebelungen, and the Great Pumpkin. It is being guarded by the monster Jabberwock, creature of the evil magician Arluis. The Watermelon has a magic property, which no one Sievied has talked to seems to know, so in the name of pure research the youth sets off on a quest, protected by his vorpall sword, given him by the gods, all but two or three of whom are on his side (so you know right there he can't lose).

Sievied sets off from his home, saying farewell to his father, Siegramm, and his mother, Sieschell (who, although they don't know it, are really bastard children of each other), and mounting his shining

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\* - Baritone, if you really want to know.

white horse Sam, whiffling off into the Purple Forest in search of the manxome foe (who was actually in the Indigo Forest, as anyone could have told him, but remember Sievied was pretty dumb).

As Sievied and Sam proceed through the tulgey wood, who should they meet, standing in uffish thought beneath a tumtum tree, but a rescuable maiden in distress. Her name is Knimpfo, and she's trying to thumb a ride. She tells Sievied how she was shut up in a castle by Arluis (her story at this point leads one to believe that Blatherton has made one of his colossal goofs in calling her a "maiden", but never mind) and put to sleep until a prince should come along and kiss her. Today, one finally showed up. However, he was so ugly that she turned him into a frog and headed for the nearest road. Now she would like Sievied's help in getting back at Arluis. So off they set in the direction of the Magenta Forest (Sievied having taken the wrong turn back at the Wabe).

Soon they encounter Arluis, in the guise of an old woman. Sievied is saved from the wizard's treachery by his own stupidity. When the old woman asks Sievied if he'd like to buy some of her sweetmeats, he replies, "Thanks, but it's Friday," and rides off, again in the wrong direction.

Sievied soon acquires a horde of fellow-travelers, including a white magician named Mervin, a sorceress named Mervin le Fay, seven dwarfs named Happy, Grumpy, Dopey, Manny, Moe, Jack, and Toulouse-Lautrec, and a few reporters. Eventually it becomes necessary for Mervin to transform Sam into a double-decker bus.

The travelers continue on their quest, meeting and defeating the Jubjub bird, the Bandersnatch, the borogoves, and other evil creations of Arluis. I will not go into the seventeen central volumes in detail, since I haven't read them. However, I have read several contemporary reviews of the work (there are some two dozen of these, one by Blatherton's mother, and the best unfavorable), and it seems that all of the episodes in these volumes are stolen from Beowulf, the Aeneid, The Faerie Queene, Morte d'Arthur, and Tom Swift and his Electric Yo-yo. In volume nineteen, after slaying an army of mome raths, Sievied finally finds the Jabberwock and kills it, galumphing beamishly back with its head to the chortling Siegramm and Sieschell; he also lives happily ever after with Knimpfo, and eventually marries her. Unfortunately, it seems that the Jabberwock had betrayed its master, Arluis, and eaten the Magic Watermelon, so that Sievied never did find out just what the heck its magical property was. Whatever it was, it didn't do the Jabberwock any good.

(My instructor wrote on this paper: "Your pnmnr smmy ooeem yarrrennnnn klmmunn mmmmmmm lousy rmmmn. F-.")

"Do you think," said Candide, "that men have always massacred each other as they do today? Have they always been liars, cheats, traitors, brigands, weak, flighty, cowardly, envious, gluttonous, vicious, backbiting, debauched, fanatical, hypocritical and silly?" "Do you think," said Martin, "that sparrow-hawks have always eaten the pigeons they came across?" "Yes, of course," said Candide. "Well," said Martin, "if sparrow-hawks have always possessed the same nature, why should you expect men to change theirs?" "Oh!" said Candide, "there is a great difference; free will..."

--Voltaire of course

# OFFICIAL MARTIAN REPORT

## A.D. 2222

--Hugo Gernsback

I have noted for some time, particularly among the younger element, a certain impatience with the present genre of science fiction.

If I read the signs correctly, the rebellion seems to be concerned with the old fashioned verbose type of story, a la Dickens et al, that goes on and on, in circles and hyperboles to the bitter end.

Modern readers want their stories fast and short. They have no time for elaborate build-ups or spelling things out in slow-motion detail. Most newspapers and magazines are geared for the man who reads while he jet flies at 600 m.p.h.

If proof is wanted, note the numerous book and story condensations in many magazines and elsewhere.

On the other side of the coin, condensation is only one important feature. Avant-garde impressionistic painters today leave something to the imagination. They suppress and eliminate many details--they outline but do not spell out the main theme. That makes them truly modern and occasionally great.

Literature today should and often does embrace this technique. Why cannot science fiction turn modern, too?

Do I hear protests: "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose!" Not necessarily. S.F. can be different, if only we try. Yes, I admit that it does take a lot of work too.

Following is a sample. This avant-garde science fiction story runs to some 650 words. It could easily be padded to 50,000 words, but it would not improve it.

I do admit, though, that few authors will like the innovation if they expect to be paid by the word. The point, of course, is that an author should be paid for his story--his work--not for a quantity of repetitious words.

\* \* \*

The meteor-controlled blue sky blazed over Florida's vast suspended gravito-Interplanet space-port. Underneath was the colossal super-laser-power plant, generating the tele-laser dynamic energy beam that now propels doughnut-shaped space ships to Mars via the Moon.

The power-beam shines through the doughnut's opening, which the spaceship clutches electronically. Laser beams travel at lightspeed--186,000 miles a second; but between earth and moon's short distance, spaceships loaf at only 20,000 average mph. Hence earth-moon transit takes about 12 hours.

Moon now duplicates gravi-neutralizer spaceport and tele-laser energy beam, the latter 25 times more powerful, because beam goes 35 million miles to Mars.

Spaceship riding power beam on electronic clutch cannot accelerate to 186,000 mps, but averages 80,000 mps. Top speed is 110,000 mps. Transit moon to Mars (during planets' opposition) 7.3 minutes (not counting long periods of acceleration and deceleration).

(Original flights had to terminate above Mars' surface to prevent damage to terrain by power beam.)

Opinions on the feasibility of the abovementioned space drive are not necessarily those of the editor, MIT, or the Conspiracy of Orthodox American Scientists.

First Earth-Moon-Mars trip in 2149 was uneventful, though leader Dr. Roy C. Fletcher, and son Harris, died on return from Martian "asthma," whose cause is now isolated as infectious and virulent Martian desert spores. Many years passed before we conquered extra-terrestrial disease of far older Mars civilization.

Explorers even now still baffled by Martians' aloofness towards humans. Communication totally impossible, although their high intelligence, craftsmanship, science and artistry are unquestionable.

Thousands of millennia ahead of us, they studiously ignore man, as we ignore worms. Explorers walk among them as if we didn't exist. Their piercing, fluorescent eyes stare right through you.

Try blocking their walk, try speaking to them over your electro-speaker--or try touching them and you find yourself on the floor or ground. Their teleparalyzing organ puts you hors de combat instantly for hours.

Guns, firearms? We wisely have never used them on Martians.

We freely walk into their public buildings, museums, "libraries," are never stopped or molested. Wearing clumsy space suits and oxygen tanks because of tenuous Martian air, we cannot stay too long without returning to spaceship. Nor do excursions help much. We look at all their marvels stupidly with no comprehension. Just like dogs in a transistor factory or an infant near a cyclotron!

Watching working Martians waste of time. They work with such rapidity one cannot follow their motions or understand what they do. Only while eating their multi-colored pellets can we glimpse a habit or two.

Our scientists have watched and photographed Martians mating, which bothers them not at all. Why should it? It is public at all times and we do not even exist for them.

Dr. Fred Martins is certain Martians knew of our coming in advance, but did not bother to stop us. With their far advanced millions of years civilization and billions of inhabitants on Mars, they are completely self-sufficient. What could we offer them? What could worms offer man? Bait? With electro-bait, worms today are obsolete.

Knowing nothing of Martian evolution, our scientists can't describe them adequately. We cannot even dissect a dead Martian, because we cannot get close to one. No one ever saw a dead one--Dr. Fred Martins postulates they have eternal life.

Nor can we photograph them, because they fog all negatives. We discovered this when we tried to develop our first mating photos--all blank. Probably national non-publicity, security, or what not!

Best description of a Martian to date: About 2 feet tall, insect-like, but not like any existing Earth insect. Weight unknown--we guess 15 (Mars) lbs.

Walks rapidly upright on hind legs. Has thick carapace-like yellow armor, back and front. Chest part much larger than back, evidently to breathe more oxygen in thin Mars air. No wings, can't fly. Does fly in curious dumbbell-shaped machines. No human ever flew one.

Un-insect-like, Martians have only two legs and arms, not six. Each "hand" has ten "fingers," hence extraordinary dexterity.

Head is most prominent anatomical part. Makes Martians top-heavy. Measures at least 6 inches diameter. Eyes are larger than ours, beady, piercing and jet black. No nose, no ears. On top of head are two large bushy antennae, probably replacing other organs----

Because of impossibility to approach or communicate with Martian race, Earth governments as of 2222 have stopped all Earth-Mars intercourse, fearing perhaps possible Martian invasion.

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It's very simple, as one of our members remarked. The Martians are ghosts.

# book review

--Doug Hoylman again

Yes, as Lewis hypothesized, I am reviewing Cat's Cradle. (Note how these casual cross-references give a certain unity to the zine.) In fact, before I read his article, I also was planning to review The Annotated Snark and Alligator, but we don't need that much unity. Anyway, if you read my long-winded analysis of Vonnegut's first four books a few issues back, you know how I feel about this guy's writing. And this book is just as good. Although it is science fiction, it's more like Mother Night than his two sf novels, so if you liked that, you'll like this. (Keeping track of my pronouns?)

Cat's Cradle is told in the first person, by a freelance writer who is doing a book on the day They dropped The Bomb on Hiroshima. He tracks down the children of Dr. Felix Hoenikker, one of the physicists who developed The Bomb. The trail leads through Ilium, New York (also the site of Player Piano--I don't know if it exists, but Ilium is a synonym for Troy) to the Caribbean dictatorship of San Lorenzo, where he learns of Bokononism and ice-nine. Bokononism is a religion outspokenly founded on lies and set to a calypso beat. It teaches darn little but has plenty of cute words like "karass" and "duffle". My feeling is that it'll never replace the Church of God the Utterly Indifferent (from the author's Sirens of Titan), but it beats Christianity all to hell. Ice-nine is, believe it or not, a brand-new original way for ending the world. (Don't give any to Morris or Lewis.) It's a crystalline form of water which freezes at 130° F, so that a small chunk will solidify all contiguous water. One chip in the ocean, and thwoom. It was developed by Dr. Hoenniker, who thus becomes an Evil Atomic Scientist.

The symbolism of the title is explained by Newt, one of Hoenikker's children. For ages people have been waving tangles of string in their children's faces and calling the thing a "cat's cradle". But, says Newt, there's no damn cat and no damn cradle. So it is with religion, government, itd. (Russian for etc.)

If you don't have time to read the book before the clerk sees you, just read the contents page. There are 127 chapters (short) with titles like "Vice-President in Charge of Volcanoes", "Protein", "A Karass Built for Two", "Dr. Schlichter von Koenigswald Approaches the Break-even Point", etc.

I recommend this book, of course. I only hope that in his next novel Vonnegut doesn't have the heroine and the narrator each commit suicide. Twice is enough.

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"Whale vomit is pretty hard to trace."

--J\*mes B\*nd in I\*n Fl\*M\*ng's Alligator

"Reason is the Devil's harlot, who can do nought but slander and harm whatever God says and does." --Martin Luther

# 21.13 STRIKES BACK

--Chez Dorr

We have been considering the Lord of the Rings as a possible candidate for an epic with reference mainly to certain mythological symbols which appear in this work. In this counter-proposal we shall consider the work as literature in the epical tradition. The problem at hand will be what the Lord of the Rings is about and, when we get to symbols, what is meant by the various parts in relation to the whole.

A first problem comes up immediately as we finish the work and try to analyze our feelings about it. In general, I think, we are happy and content--the book has a happy ending. This is strange, however, when we recall that in Tolkien's cyclic scheme the happy ending is no more than a brief respite from evil and, as Tolkien strongly suggests in his introduction, this evil is once more upon us. My suggestion here would be that we have identified strongly enough with Frodo to feel his absolute safety and contentment in the Grey Havens (where evil can no longer touch him). A bit later, we shall try to discover what the Grey Havens are.

Identifying with Frodo, we will come to terms again with the problem of the protagonist who is yet not hero. An epic hero, we will agree, has at least two distinguishing characteristics--he is in some way larger than life, and he sleeps with a goddess or some substitution thereof (in some particular epics the goddess is displaced from bed-mate to mother). By this definition Aragorn is hero--he is larger than life and he sleeps with Arwen. Frodo, however, is smaller than life (when compared with the "big people") and he apparently does not sleep with anyone. Leaving his sexual habits alone for a moment we will try to come to terms with his size.

To state it flatly, Frodo is a child. The entire feeling he evokes in us suggests this fact: his attitudes, his outlooks, his desires, his size, even his opposition as a Hobbit to the "big people", all reinforce this feeling--it is no accident that the Lord of the Rings is on the children's shelf at the Harvard Coop in spite of the fact that this is not a children's book we are dealing with.\* His involvement with the Ring is, in a sense, a growing up process as it forces him to leave his cozy Hobbit-hole and involve himself in the affairs of the big people. In this respect he is a Hobbit-hero and to us, as Hobbits by empathy, he is a hero indeed.

With the second criterion, sex rears its ugly head. Whom does a Hobbit-hero--a child--sleep with. As stated above, the goddess as bed-mate can be displaced to goddess as mother and this should suggest the possibility of an Oedipal fantasy--indeed any work of literature involved with any sort of inter-personal relations contains this possibility. Since an Oedipal fantasy will unfortunately contain a multitude of repressions and splittings, the task of finding Frodo's

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\*- This also tells you something about Harvard. -BLM  
What do you expect from a store that files pb's by publisher, then alphabetically by title? -DJH



goddess-mother(s) (who by no means has to be his real mother) is difficult and the result can be surprising.

Luckily we have, in the classic Edipal fantasy, a feared and hated father figure. Here, one aspect at least of the father is easy to find: Sauron. Sauron is the Dark Lord, the Evil One, whose fearful shadow darkens even the Shire. In short, he is the antithesis of God (a benevolent father figure)--he is Pater-terribilis, the feared (and evil) father. As such he is the enemy of the mother and a first mother figure is suggested: the Shire itself or, through expansion, Middle-Earth itself--in short, Mother Earth. It is Sauron the Dark who, through extensions of his evil, threatens the fertility of the Shire itself; since Mother Earth is mythically connected with fertility, it is no surprise that Sauron is in this respect an anti-fertility figure--the destroyer of the green-wood.\*

The father's sin is sexual. He wishes to improperly (from the child's point of view) possess the mother. Here, as in most myths, we would then expect the predominating symbols to be sexual in nature. We have, then, the Ring as a symbol of feminine genital sex which Sauron lusts for. The problem is to prevent him from drawing the ring to his tower (phallus) in Mor-dor. The symbolism is strengthened by the fact that it doesn't matter which tower the Ring should be impaled upon--if it is captured by Isengard (built as a copy of Sauron's tower) or even Minas Tirith, the evil will ultimately be the same. The cause of evil is, in fact, furthered by the simple thrusting of a finger into the Ring. In short, the Ring must be kept as pure as possible until it can be taken to the depths of Orodruin

\*- There is an interesting displacement on Tolkien's part where the father becomes equated with industry as a destroyer of the green-wood. This can possibly be connected with greed (the dwarves' failing) and be brought down into the story along those lines. This, however, is beyond the scope of this article.



and, magically transformed into a seed, a symbol of non-genital fertility, be cast into the womb of the earth from which it came. The result of that action, to say the least, is orgasmic:

...The earth rocked beneath their feet. ...a vast sozzring darkness sprang into the sky, flickering with fire. The earth groan&d and quaked. The Towers of the Teeth swayed, tottered, and fell down; the mighty rampart crumbled; the Black Gate was hurled in ruin; and from far away, now dim, now growing, now mounting to the clouds, there came a drumming rumble, a roar, a long echoing roll of ruinous noise.

The father's power over Mother Earth is ended (if only temporarily--after all we cannot really expect fertility without genital sex so it must, with all its attendant evil, eventually come back) through her proper magical fertilization. The principle of sex is once more locked within her where it belongs.

Architecturally the tower is a phallus. Similarly the dwellings which Saruman's flunkies erect in the Shire are characterized by high, narrow windows as a reminder of the evil which a tower can represent (just as, by displacement, the tower represents warfare--an activity which is symbolically not too different from genital sex). The Hobbits, however, live in low dwellings, preferably carved out of Mother Earth herself. As a symbol, this would suggest the womb. It is reinforced strongly by the Hobbits's insistence upon round doors and windows (the female symbol again--even where it would be architecturally unsound) and the naming of one of the finest and most desirable of all Hobbit holes as "Bag End".

Frodo, then, is an infant. His sexual capacity is at the passive oral stage where he longs to remain in the womb and his only real interest is food (he eats six meals a day when he can get them). Suddenly he becomes involved with a Ring, as his uncle before him and the Gollum before that, and is forced to grow up--the Gollum and eventually leave the Shire for good and Frodo even has to sell Bag End. The problem is, having grown to an extent, to find a way to magically return to the womb.

The Gollum has never really left the womb--he still carries on his activities in a dark cave. For this reason, he can never attain to the wickedness of a Sauron. He is the terrible infant whose growth has been arrested in the sadistic oral stage. His activity is characterized by biting and snatching--his interest is still in food, but now it must be actively sought, to the unhappiness of any victim that gets in his way. The orcs are at this stage, too, more or less, as well as the most terrible infant of all, Shelob.

Even after the Gollum is symbolically castrated through the loss of the Ring (his "precious") he still seeks it. Bilbo, on the other hand, is saved through his acceptance of the loss. With Frodo, though, the symbolic castration almost becomes a reality--he has been corrupted sufficiently by the Ring that he cannot accept its loss without some stronger symbol to reinforce it. Thus he loses his finger (the member which he has thrust through the Ring) and, ironically enough, he loses it through the Gollum's comparatively advanced sadistic oral habit of biting (the attempt to swallow the mother--or the female Ring--and make it a part of him). As hero, then, Frodo's possession of the goddess must be a non-genital one.





The goddess, as suggested through the Oedipal aspects of the myth, is probably Mother Earth, but the problem remains to find her human counterpart. Luckily a sophisticated fertility goddess tends to be represented in the form of a trinity composed of a virginal and a nymphal aspect as well as the now familiar Mother Earth (these categories can be mixed around somewhat in any particular myth). The nymph is easy to spot; the only female in the story who really resembles a goddess (and is experienced enough to recognize the power of the Ring and be tempted) is Galadriel, the White Lady. The virgin, too, is easily enough identified as Arwen, Aragorn's prize. The mother aspect now remains.

The two goddesses we have identified have one thing in common: they both possess one of the three elven rings (although Arwen loses hers when she is no longer virgin) which, as we remember, are proper symbols for non-genital fertility as they were not forged by Sauron as the others had been.\* The holder of the third ring, as we see at the end, is Gandalf

who, in terms of the story, has been repressed into a male figure. Now that his true identity is known, his maternal aspects fall into place; he is guide and counselor for the child-like Hobbits, he is involved with protecting his "children", and he is for some reason prevented from taking an active (masculine) part in the fighting itself.

His alter-ego, Saruman, is the Mater-terribilis. Far from being pure and unattainable, as Gandalf is, he is the slut, available to all, notably the father--and corrupt. Here the father is Sauron and Saruman, as mother, is corrupted by the same sexual lust for the Ring. Gandalf, it is true, can be corrupted too; until his death at the hands of the Balrog and his return in a purified form as Gandalf the White Rider. Here, then, is another symbolic castration (or spaying) through which all the evil aspects of the mother are centered in the fallen Saruman and only the good remain in Gandalf.

After their own ritual castrations, then, Frodo and Bilbo can be guided by Gandalf (mother) to the Grey Havens. Here, as mentioned earlier, they will be safe and content for all time (and, I suppose, will get their six meals a day in addition). The Grey Havens are essentially everything that Bag End was, with the additional promise of security; in short, they represent the super-womb.

We can see, then, why the Lord of the Rings would be a pleasant book to read. Its great virtue is that it tells us, if only for an instant, that we do not have to grow up--we do not have to worry about the hard realities of adult life (like next week's quiz). We can flee, for a moment, back to the womb with Frodo. Alas, the moment is gone

goo quickly, and we must return again to the world of reality. This paper, then, is such a return and, if it only skims the surface, it will hopefully offer a glance at some of the real structure beneath the Lord of the Rings.

Tune in next week, then, when we tackle Tom Swift and his Flying Machine and prove that the Twilight Zine is really an anal fantasy. (This is a joke.)

\*- (Footnote left over from previous page) Although their power is still dependent on the One Ring just as fertility can never be wholly divorced from sex.

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COOLIE'S PREROGATIVE DEPT.

Seriously, Jim, when are you going to Freudialize Tom Swift? Seems to me there's an undiscovered world of psychoanalysis in those innocuous books. Why does Tom have this drive to invent, compete, create? During all these scenes glossed over in a few words, what are Tom and Mary Nestor really doing? Doesn't flying have some sexual significance? What is the real relationship between Tom and old Mr. Damon? Really, there's much more to these books than wooden dialogue and idiotic plots.

--DJH

#### NEWS FLASH!

Just in--the MITSFS election results for 1963-64:

Doug Hoylman, Skinner\*  
Ed Olsen, Vice-President  
Lore Ann Long, Secretary  
Truman Brown, Treasurer

\*- This post was once known as President, but that was too mundane.

#- His real name is Tom Ed Phil George, there is a reason for this name but everyone seems to have forgotten it-BLM.®

@- even my footnotes have footnotes. If Doug can comment on my comments then I can comment on his comments on my comments. Gaaa. -BLM

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#### Plain Song

(Pseudo-Gregorian chant)

Coats, hats, books, or notebooks, if brought into the examination room, must not be left upon the desks.

Students arriving at an examination later than forty-five minutes after the examination begins, will not be admitted without written authorization from the office of the Dean of Students. Students will not be permitted to leave the room until forty-five minutes after the examination has begun. A student leaving the room must turn in his answer book and question paper to the head proctor and on his return apply to the same proctor for instructions.

Students are forbidden to borrow sliderules or other materials during the examination. At the close of the examination, students must hand their books to the proctor stationed at the door, and leave the room quietly. Amen. { And may God have mercy on your souls}.

from Psongs of Pscience

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CLASSIFIED AD:

Congratulations Joe Dyro

# LAEVROTATION

## LETTERS AND THINGS

As usual, Ye Ed's comments appear ((like this)). Chief Coolie Hoylman may also interrupt a few times, (like this). Okay?

Ron Ellik                      The latest issue of TWILIGHT ZINE was much more interesting than the average has been--  
1825 Greenfield Ave.      those courses in "Epic" and "Cosmology" are  
Los Angeles 25, Cal.      doing you guys some good. And Hoylman's book  
reviews are pretty entertaining. Keep it up.

Do you people know about my collection of names of weapons? You just added Arondight, Almace, Ascalon and Balmuns to the list (thankee kindly) and the entire list will appear in the last issue of GAUL, whenever Steve Tolliver gets around to publishing it. I have the list cross-indexed by weapon and by bearer, with reference cards for variant spellings (Excalibur, Caliborne, Caliburn, etc.), and would be interested in any other weapons you know of which carry personal names.

I am excluding the Ring trilogy, by the way, and things like that; the listing is meant to include genuine folklore only...and, as ARLewis would probably understand, this includes what I call genuine folklore. Of more interest to me than swords (altho those are faunched for) are non-sword weapons with names. Firearms, for instance, are only lightly represented (Bang-All, owned by Mike Fink, and Old Betsy, owned by Davy Crockett).

How come Harry Warner is so sure of what's in Silverlock? (Oh boy, a feud!) I have the advantage of him--I've read both Silverlock and Orlando. My opinion is that there is no relation in plot or puzzle between the two.

Orlando deals with an Elizabethan courtier who becomes a woman, lives two and a half centuries with nobody particularly noticing the change of sex or longevity, and then the story sort of ends. It's a great book--it's fun to read, even for a mathematician. But there's no similarity between this and Silverlock, which Harry says he has not read, because he doesn't want to read another Orlando.

Silverlock is about a common, ordinary American with (seemingly) a complete lack of literary background, who spends an undefined period of time on a large island called the Commonwealth, which island is inhabited by dozens of literary, folklorish, poetical and fabulous references. He goes to the Mad Tea Party, Dante's Inferno, Circe's island, and Sherwood Forest; he goes at least part-way along the pilgrimage to Canterbury, participates in many a drinking and singing fest, and meets everybody from le roi pecheur to Prometheus Bound.

((Whereas Silverlock was only mildly silly, Orlando was, and still is I guess, bad. Very bad. Virginia Wolfe is enough to prejudice anyone against the tribe known as female novelists. She somehow manages to take what could be a heroic, or at least mildly adventurous, story and make it into a cute one. Yech.))

Bob Coulson                      You mention, in the letter column, a dearth of folk-  
Route 3                      singers on "Big Name" labels. Well, as long as you  
Wabash, Ind.                      stick to your own collection, I can't dispute you,  
   but there are other folksingers on big name labels,  
or have been (some of the ones I own may be out of print by now).



Lessee: the Clancy Brothers and the Oranim Zabar troupe are both out on Columbia now; Odetta has recorded one for Victor; John Jacob Niles put out 3 lp's and a couple of 45 ep's for Camden (well, he put them out on 78's for Victor, but my copies are Camden reissues); Sam Hinton, Terry Gilkyson, The Weavers, Josh White and Richard Dyer-Bennett have all recorded for Decca, White has done two lp's for ABC-Paramount; Edric Connor did three for Westminster (I dunno if Westminster is a Big Name Company or not, but it certainly isn't a folk label); Marias and Miranda have been on Decca and Harmony (the Columbia reissue label); The Easy Riders have recorded for Columbia and Kapp; and an outfit called the Skiffers recorded one for Epic and reissued it on Perfect (which is the version I have). In case you haven't encountered it, this group is the rather improbable combination of Leon Bibb, Milt Okun, Hally Wood and somebody called Libby Knight (who may be somebody else under a pseudonym; Bibb uses his pseudo of "Lee Charles"). Oh yes, and Columbia put out a series called "The Columbia World Library of Folk Music" or something equally pretentious, which was so ethnic it hurt. And there's Miriam Makeba on Kapp and Victor, and then there are the oddities, like the 45 single I have of "Sinner Man" done by Les Baxter with vocal by Will Holt and a fascinating version of "Rye Whiskey" by the Ames Brothers. Not to mention Jimmy Driftwood on Victor (so he has a horrible voice; I like his songs).

When are you going to put some folk songs back into TZ? ((When I get/write some that are not: 1. too fannish for MIT SFS, 2. too scientific for fans. This is rough.))

I guess I'll have to fight charges of being a fannish fan now; here you have two good fantasy articles and I spend my entire letter talking about folk music and various eccentricities.

Larry McCombs

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I have the strong impression that the Ring Epic is meant to be set in northern Europe or its antecedents, in an age several thousands of years before the beginning of history. "A location removed from our planet...in time" but not in space, I think. And I believe that the similarity in legends was definitely intentional, the implication being that the real legends are hangovers in the racial memory from the age of the Rings. I trust that you've seen Lin Carter's studies of the sources of the Ring legends in XERO?

Seems to me (in re Hoylman's review of Catch-22) that one of the themes of the book was the deja vu, the moment when you feel that you've lived this moment before, and Heller writes in a spiral fashion to evoke that feeling in the reader. Thus the repetition of incidents is quite deliberate, and in my opinion, very effective. Snowden dies several times, but each time we learn more about that death, until we finally see why it was a major formative factor in Yossarian's outlook. (By golly, you're right. Thanks for the idea. However, I still say it's confusing. Real Soon Now I'm going to make a chronological chart of the book, so I at least know whether an incident happens in Pianosa or California.)

Harry Warner, Jr.

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Hagerstown, Md.

The crossword puzzle in this issue is the first in my memory in a fanzine that follows the rules of crossword puzzle making. It contains no closed areas, it is completely free from letters that can be approached only from one direction, and its design is symmetrical. Well, almost symmetrical, anyway. I don't imagine it would be possible to follow these ideals and make the words derive solely from stf and fandom, but I think I prefer to have mundane words and the proper



design in place of the usual practice of totally fannish contents and no sense of architecture. (I've been a crossword puzzle addict for longer than I've been a fan, so this type of puzzle comes more easily than the others you mention. I'll try to get some more of these ground out over the summer. And dammit, it was perfectly symmetrical!)

Your treatment of Tolkien and of the lesser gods about whom he wove his stories also concerns matters of which I know less than everything. I love Wagner and I'm deeply impressed by the fact that you have described with absolute accuracy the things that go on in his Ring operas. Well, almost absolute accuracy. Unfortunately, I read too much too often about Tolkien before I had an opportunity to read Tolkien himself. As a result I have been as unwilling to read the Tolkien books as Khrushchev would be to use the Kennedy family as a guide for how to get along with his own relatives. You must admit that Tolkien sounds very badly in excerptation. Brief quotations from

his writing remind me very much of the kind of language W. S. Gilbert gave his tenors such as Ralph Rakestraw and young Frederic. "But for them it holds an even deadlier peril." "There are not many in Middle-earth that I should say were safe, if they were left to talk with him." I imagine that the Tolkien books are as fine as almost everyone says when you sit down and read right through them but I suspect that they will remain for me in the same category as *Finnegans Wake* and *The Faery Queen*, creations that are undoubtedly splendid, much too praised to live up to their reputation and too long for me to want to tackle until an improbable set of circumstances should give me all the spare time imaginable. ((This happened to me also. Before I started reading *LoTR* I had heard so much about it that I felt it couldn't possibly be that good. But it is. I'll read *The Faery Queen* Real Soon Now. Like maybe this summer. Maybe.))

On the other hand, this is the first time I've read about *Catch-22* in a fanzine and possibly a first time anywhere, and it sounds like a book that I want very badly to read. It's so hard to find stories about the war that are not based on the premise that at least one side is grand, noble and glorious. Apparently this one has little or nothing to say about the Axis fighting men (not a thing) and nothing maudlin to say about the Allies. If we aren't going to get books about World War Two that show war as it really is, at least we can be thankful for those that do not show war as it really isn't. (How's that again?)

Somehow, this issue of *The Twilight Zine* seems to have taken shape as almost



an introduction to important phases of fantasy. The Nemesis of H. P. Lovecraft impresses me as about the best brief explanation of the topic that I've seen. Maybe someone did a better job in a Lovecraft hardcover book, but it wouldn't be easy to top this one. It's such a relief to find an article about Lovecraft that hints at relationships between his fiction and his own way of thinking without attempting to prove by such a relationship that he was ready for the nuthouse of an unbearably eccentric individual. ((Well, as Uncle Avram said...))

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What strange mystery does E.C. comics hold for the addict? Being an addict myself I have turned this problem around in my mind, contemplating the strange magic that a comic line dealing largely with reality should hold. I still find myself hard pressed to advance any answers, and also reluctant to do so. I've tried to stay away from doing any articles on E.C. because I find it damned hard avoiding the starried-eyed scend, which could be remarkably unsophisticated, particularly when comics are the objects of my starry-eyedness. I am somewhat of a Snob, maybe.

Anyway, I was glad that Deckinger wrote the article. It was extremely sketchy, and not as comprehensive as an article on the subject that Larry Ivie or/and Ted White might do (and I hope they will some day). But anyway, I am Glad.

It is extremely hard, and wrong, to try and point out just who were the leading artists in the E.C. line. Mike mentions Wood, Williamson, Ingels, and Elder. I can name Krigstein, Severin, Davis, Crandell, Evans, and any number of the large and highly competent stable that E.C. managed to assemble. They were all individual, they were all talented, and their styles were no mere embroidery; they knew what they were doing. To this day, after more than five years of art studies, I still can't point a finger at any one or two E.C. artists and proclaim who was top dog. They all were.

It was striking that the writers at E.C. seemed to be Idealists of a kind. Mike mentions "Judgement Day"; they were writing stories of that kind even in their crime comics, striking out against bigotry and the various lunacies that inspire hate. Their war comics, being exceedingly documentary, were definitely anti-war. Again and again Kurtzman would point out that war was not a glorious thing invented for Americans to prove their heroism (as present day war comics would have it) but a tragedy to be avoided in the future.

It is sad to note that E.C.'s horror line, the line which they were least enthusiastic with, was the breadwinner, and also ultimately responsible for their downfall.

It is even sadder to note that the sole E.C. output, MAD, had degenerated, and ironic that it has made E.C. its biggest fortune, perhaps indicating that Quality does not pay after all.

I don't know what the hell ARLewis was saying, but I sure enjoyed listening. He and John Boardman (unless Lewis is a Conservative) seem to be like soups in writing "science" articles for fanzines. ((Looking through my EC collection, all one of them, I recall the carefree simple-minded days of the friendly Keeper of the Crypt &c. They certainly were wonderful ~~the~~ comics. ARLewis is not a Conservative. He is a Reactionary.))

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comment on TZ number 9. Some stuff I read and other stuff I did not read. I got a great laugh out of your letter from Mr. Charles "DeGaulle." Or perhaps "Mr."

Charles DeGaulle. This was good reading, although I do not read French. Mike Deckinger's article was terrible.

I could not help but note Mr. ARLewis's put down of Tom Swfit (rather, Swift). As the Sec. General of the Thomas Swift Inventor's League of America, I must protest his snide words about Mr. Swift. Everybody cannot be a boy genius, and evidently those who cannot be must take pot-shots at those who are. Shame on Mr. "Lewis."

I did not like Doug Hoylman's crossword puzzle (but merely because I am not a fan or "devotee" of crossword puzzles). However, he redeemed himself with his letter in TIME magazine.

Joe Pilati                      The crossword puzzle was probably the most  
111 South Highland Ave.      imaginative I've seen in a fanzine, but that  
Pearl River, N.Y.              isn't saying very much. I still think my  
four-letter word for what you need besides  
paper to publish a fanzine is more appropriate than Hoylman's.

Deckinger's article on EC comics, while it did dredge up the remnants of my old EC fanaticism and drench same in soggy nostalgia, contained a few inaccuracies. PANIC was by no means short-lived by EC standards; it ran from March 1954 to December 1955 with twelve issues between. Mike is wrong in stating that any of the six "New Direction" titles had a 15¢ pricetag; all were 10¢. EC's only venture into the 15¢ field came in mid-1954 when publisher Bill Gaines instituted the nickel hike on two issues of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY. The experiment was a flop (just as Dell Publications' similar misstep last year) and EC never published a 15¢ mag again. Mike's listing of the "New Direction" titles is both incomplete and misleading as it stands. PIRACY first appeared in November, 1954, five full months before any of the "N.D." titles were introduced. That mag, as well as INCREDIBLE SCIENCE-FICTION (which was nothing more than a cleaned-up continuation of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY), were not New Directions despite the fact that EC lumped them all into New Direction house ads. Mike completely forgot ACES HIGH, perhaps the best N.D. of all--an outstanding achievement, especially the eight-page opener in ACES HIGH #1 entitled "The Way It Was".

Oh ~~what~~ Cthulhu--please, no more Lovecraft. ((What's wrong with Lovecraft? Except for a very irregular Mirage no fanzine devotes much space to the ~~Twit~~ man. In fact Fritz Leiber's Bit in Shaggy was the only thing I've seen in any fmz in the recent past.))

Dick Schultz                      As Coulson has pointed out, TZ may not be a fanzine  
19159 Helen                      but it certainly acts and reads like one of the  
Detroit 34, Mich.                  better ones. For example...

The artwork has suddenly become fabulous. And I'm wondering who decided that MIT could afford electro-stencilling... By the way, I presume that the illo... Pardon me, it deserves better. That the bold drawing on page 17 was cribbed from an unnamed source. For the artist signed his work BA and you have it credited to DA. Or maybe DA was working under the clever pseudonym of BA.

Anyways, the art has improved tremendously. And the material has brightened considerably also. Now, without any more parodies or songs, the thing even reads better.

For a point of two... Who else could write on Pyramidology and get away with it? As calm scientific dissertations on learned points of literature, society and science fiction seem to be in these days, the essays on Lovecraft and Tolkien were especially timely... And well-written. However, after wading through hundreds of pages of ancient crumbling fanzines, I tend to think that anything more on Lovecraft is much more than I would care to hear.



In olden days, you know, Lovecraft and Merritt were It. Every mother's son and his mother's son's fanzine loved HPLovecraft and every third article could be counted on to have something about Lovecraft in it. FTlandy got his reputation originally from just making a listing of the Gods mentioned in the Cthluthu stories, all his stories in fact.

Personally I think Bob Leman in his satire in TWIG #15 put the touch to the Lovecraft style of writing. At one point the "Master of the House" comes across a weird stone in the garden. He describes how unspeakable it is, that it fairly roarde of obscenities beyond the stars, etc., etc., etc. "The sheer unspeakable vileness of that carven image on that eons ancient slab of slimy granite was literally beyond expression in the tongues that man now speaks.

"As a matter of fact it was rather ugly."

Doug Hoylman managed to make the review of Catch-22 almost as hilarious as the book itself seems to be. Will have to get it and read it. And no higher praise can a book reviewer receive than that his review made the reader go out and buy the book.

WAHF: Dick Lupoff who gave us a very nice review in Axe, or so I've heard. It would be nice if faneds and Shaws sent their products (sic; fanzines) to the people they review in the aforementioned. Ed Meskys who agrees with me on Silverlock (of course, he's also an Evil Scientist). Hugo Gernsback who voluntarily submitted the article in this superb volume (with a diagram, yet!), and Isaac Asimov who is coming to our picnic.

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FIT THE FIRST, cont'd from page 3.

His complete monomania is remenscient of the Committee of Public Saffety who "had such a passionate love for democratic virtue that they felt compelled to kill all those who disagreed with them." (Van Loon's The Story of Mankind).

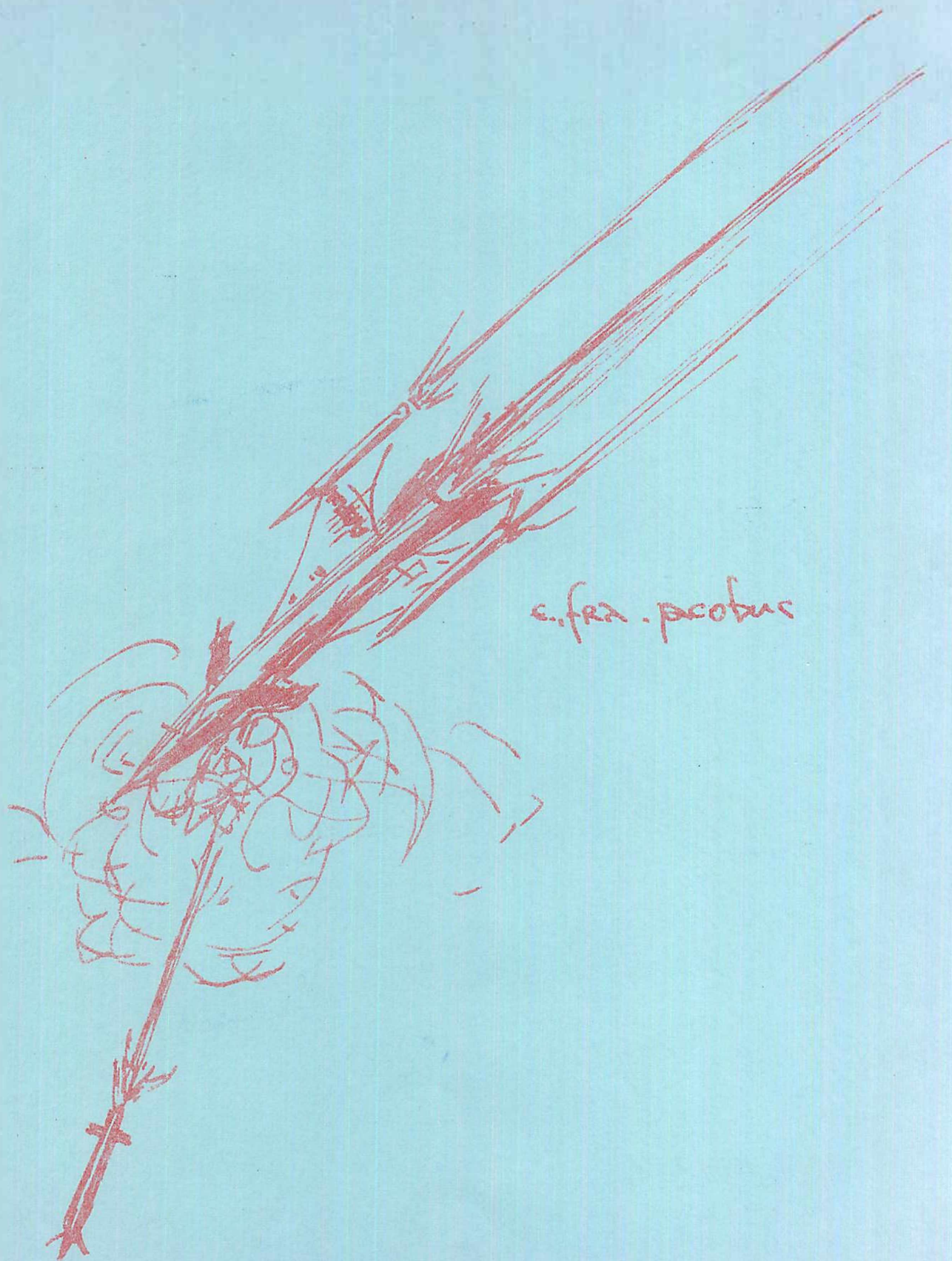
Epics are supposed to be aristocratic. Any 103% "Liberal" who cannot swallow this had better not read them. If being a liberal though, means having an open mind on any subject, John does not qualify under this definition. But back to the Epic.

"Who grew the food that the Heros ate?" No one did. Epic heros don't have to eat (by which I mean what they eat is unimportant). They don't do most of the things that mere men do, but compared to the Odyssey or Volsungasaga these (Aragorn et al) heros are very human. In fact one of the reasons I hesitate to call LoTR a real epic is that, given the framework where magic, Rings of Power, etc. actually exist, the story is too believable.

Since John puts such a large emphasis on prejudice, I advise him not to read Shakespeare or Voltaire, who are obviously Anti-Semetic, or Kipling or Burroughs who are White Supremecists.

On second thought there is an Epic he would like. It's John Brown's Body by Steven Vincent Benet. Old John Brown "knew" he was Right and Had God On His Side, which allowed him to justify any deed no matter how awful (the massacre at Ossawatimie).





*c. fra. probus*