

Twilight
37 Zine



JAB
BRENNER © 85

Lawyer Stuff

Twilight Zine (yes, *Zine*, as in *magazine* — please get it right) is published quarterly (sort of) by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Science Fiction Society (MITSFS), which is a member of the MIT Association of Student Activities and is recognized by the MIT Graduate Student Council.

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Twilight Zine 37

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First (Nearly) All-Macintosh Issue

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Editorial

As you may have noticed, once again *Twilight Zine* has played musical editors. Unlike Bill, I did not take on the job to get out of doing shelf-maintenance (I'm compulsive about things like that, having been known to start re-alphabetizing the books in bookstores), but because I really wanted to give it a try. (Bill is still not required to do shelf-maintenance because he is now Mobcomm — see the first article for an explanation.)

It would be very easy for TZ to turn into a MITSFS-subsidized perzine, because nobody has ever really figured out what *Twilight Zine* should be. I think this is only one facet of a larger problem — nobody really knows what MITSFS should be, either. The part of MITSFS perceived by the outside world is not at all representative of the Society, most of whose members really do "just read the stuff."

This situation has arisen in the past, and at least once led to a schism, and the founding of NESFA. The division between the active fans and the rest of the MITSFS was so complete that several reference works have stated that MITSFS dissolved and was replaced by NESFA, because as far as fandom was concerned that was the case.

I don't think that's likely to happen again, for the simple reason that most MITSFS members couldn't care less about the activities of those who run the Society, as long as the books keep appearing and the Library is open fairly frequently. Out of about 400 members, less than 30 participate regularly in any activities other than reading. Meanwhile, the core group has been getting more and more (pardon the expression) fannish, going so far as to host parties, huckster, and run the scavenger hunt at Boskone.

I'm not sure how desirable this state of affairs is. On one hand, we rarely get complaints from the "passive" members (except for the usual "why don't you have this book?" and "why weren't you open?"), so one would assume that MITSFS runs pretty much to their satisfaction. On the other, I think it's unfortunate that such a large organization is run as an oligarchy, and I have to wonder whether the Society is really doing enough to encourage more members to become involved. We have no way of knowing how many are put off by the in-jokes or other habits of the ruling clique.

On a third hand, though, MITSFS would lose its identity if it dropped all those habits — the in-jokes, the Meetings, the Friday dinner clubs, TZ. In the past few years, we have made efforts to include more people in the active part of the Society, and we have been successful at that. Some thought should be given to ways of further expanding the active circle without jeopardizing the organization itself.

* * *

I've learned to have a lot more sympathy for professional editors in the last few months. TZ must have gotten into some sort of reference as a potential market, because we've received a number of submissions from people who don't seem to have confused us with *Rod Serling's The Twilight Zone Magazine*TM. What has most struck me about these submissions is not their (for the most part) abysmal quality, but the absence of common sense on the part of the authors.

Of the five or six submissions I've received since taking this job, *not one* included a self-addressed stamped envelope for a reply. Also, the authors obviously have never seen the magazine, because the material they submit is often nothing like what we publish. (That's not to mention addressing it to Mr. Al Shawn Gramates — the editor before Bill was Ms. L. Shawn Gramates.)

How about a cover letter that starts, "Although but a youth of twenty [I'm a youth of 23 myself] I have been writing since age eleven ..." and goes on to commit several grammatical errors? I've been thinking of having a form letter made up with only one sentence (which a friend brought back from Clarion): "The greatest contribution you could make to art would be to cut off your hands and bury your typewriter."

Don't misunderstand me; I would love to print more submitted material. I really don't get a great amount of ego-boo out of the fact that I've written such a large proportion of the material in this issue. Please, please, if anyone reading this has written something short and funny (or even long and funny), submit it! But no straight sf; if it's good, you should sell it to someone, and if it isn't, why waste the energy (not to mention paper and ink)?

* * *

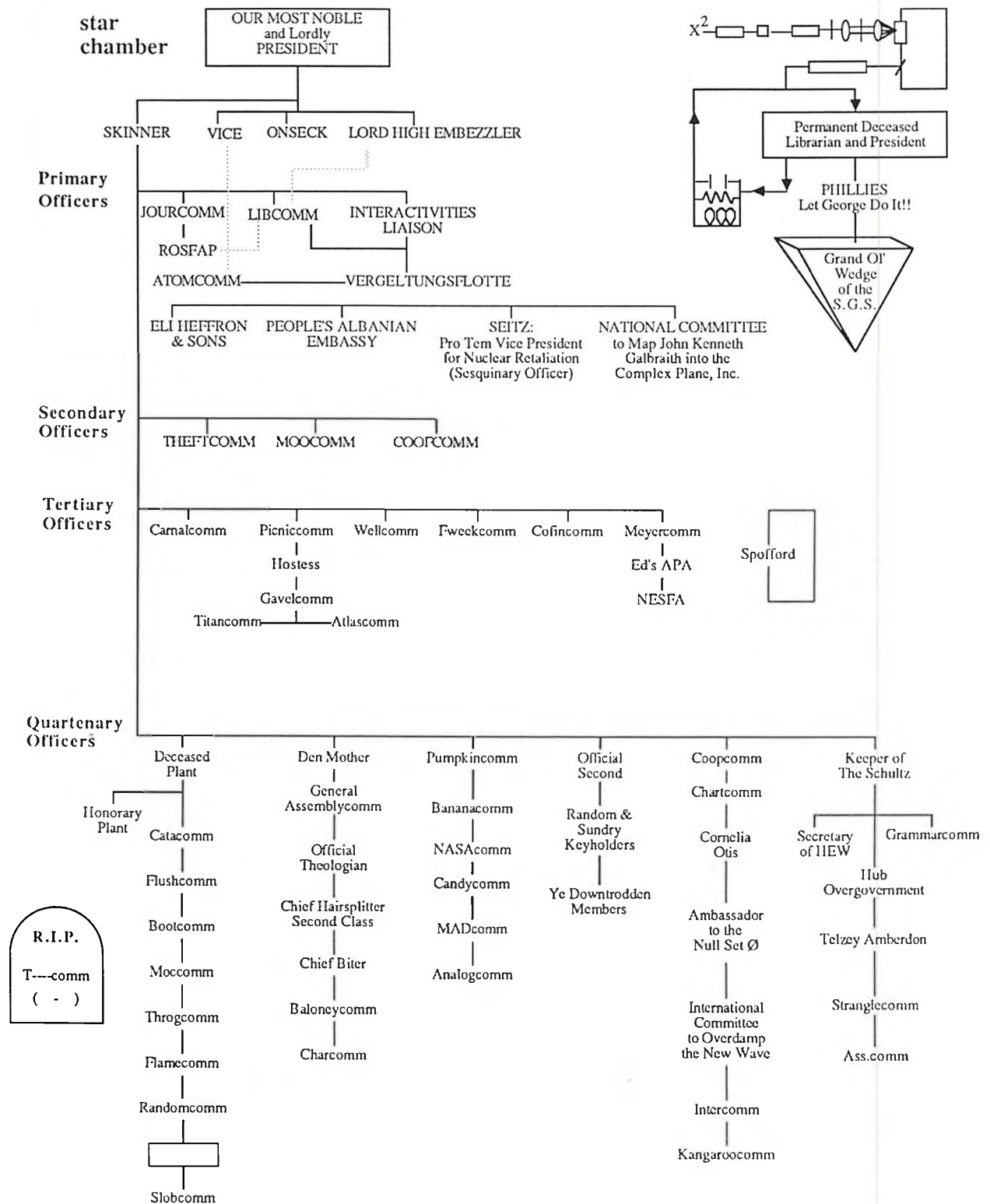
Hello, this is Janice's husband, Ken. I'd like you to realize how she's been struggling to put together this issue of TZ, tearing out her hair as she typed away at the Macintosh. I've struggled, too, as I've G&C'd ("graft and corruption," i. e. misappropriated) laser printer time from my lab. And for what? You're all a bunch of ingrates, as far as I can tell. Submissions printed on wadded-up computer paper, cartoons done with those big pencils from first grade, book reviews about SF romance novels ("I thought the part about his surging manliness was overdone") — she doesn't need it. And if she doesn't need it, neither do I.

So, faithful reader, this is an ultimatum. I'm six foot two and 170 pounds of ferocious, hardened metallurgist (and programmer), and my manliness is going to surge if she doesn't get something good for the next ish. Clean out those Rapidograph pens, and draw a spiffy space ship. Take the "Flight Simulator" disk out of the PC at work and type up that book review. And do it now, because you can be the master of your own fate. If you don't? Well, let that threat remain unwritten.

Oh, by the way, I hope you enjoy this ish. It would be a lot better for you if you did.



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART of ye Glorious and Ineffable MITSFS



Lore of the MITSFS

1: *The Officers*

By Janice M. Eisen

(with some help from Guy Consolmagno and Tim Huckelbery)

Newcomers to the MITSFS often stop to puzzle over a large organizational chart that hangs by the door to the circulating room. (See the reproduction accompanying this article; the original, created by Greg Ruffa, is much more impressive.) They are generally advised not to try to make sense of it. This is sound advice, because even by MITSFS standards the chart has little relationship to reality. Only a small number of the offices are filled in any official fashion, and many are mere relics of the past.

However, the chart does provide some insight into the history and traditions of the MITSFS, although, as in most oral traditions, conflicting versions of the past abound. In the interest of collecting some of this history (as well as filling some pages in TZ), I have put together all known or guessed-at information about the origins and functions of the various Officers of the MITSFS. Any old-timers who cherish different versions are welcome to let us know.

The Star Chamber:

President: Has but one power, to appoint the **Skinner**, who runs everything. This division of offices was made in the days when Institute rules required that the President and Treasurer of student organizations be undergraduates, in case a time should come when there were no undergrads qualified to run the MITSFS. Except in unusual circumstances, the President usually appoints him or herself Skinner.

Skinner: Ruler of the MITSFS, Definer of Natural Constants, Keeper of the Gavel, etc., etc. L. Court Skinner was a popular two-term President of the Society, circa 1960-63. Prior to his tenure, each MITSFS committee had its own province and made its own decisions; Skinner consolidated them under the authority of the President. When he graduated, the office was named after him.

Vice: *Not* Miami. A fairly obvious choice of names.

Lord High Embezzler: The LHE keeps track of the money and is traditionally supposed to abscond to Brazil with it. The use of this title in a listing for *Technique* prompted the yearbook types to call the Onseck into their office because they felt the wording was libelous. They did not accept the offer to come see the MITSFS's organizational chart, but did print the listing.

Onseck: Named during a period when Cordwainer Smith was in vogue around the MITSFS. It comes from his novel *Norstrilia*, in which the title had evolved from "Honorable Secretary." The Onseck keeps the minutes, deals with correspondence, and does other such Onsecknal things.

Other Offices on the Chart:

Permanent Deceased Librarian and President: This office is held by George Phillies, who is still among the living, or at least looks like he is. As Skinner, he bought the collection of paperbacks that formed the nucleus of the book portion of the Library. He also helped found the Strategic Games Society (S.G.S.).

Jourcomm: Journal Committee. Responsible for editing and publishing *Twilight Zine*. The post was inspired by Hugo Gernsback's urging that the Society publish an

educational journal. This probably isn't what he had in mind. The traditional Jourcomm report at meetings is "TZ Real Soon Now," sometimes supplemented with plaintive requests that people write something.

Libcomm: Library Committee. Originally responsible for nearly all the work involved in running the Library. Its functions were eventually split into other committees. Nowadays it is identified with Ken Johnson, who is responsible for the magazine collection and some of the rarer books.

Interactivities Liaison: The greasiest person around, and originally a joke. MITSFS has become substantially greasier in recent years, with the apex probably a two-year period when a UA Vice President (Ken Meltsner) was a former Onseck, one Skinner (Judy Passman) was ASA President, and the following Skinner (Tim Huckelbery) was LSC Chairman.

ROSFAP: Registrar Of Science Fictional Amateur Publications. In other words, keeps track of the fanzines.

Atomcomm: See Seitz, below.

Vergeltungsflotte: German for Vengeance Fleet, usually abbreviated VGG. Seeks to recover books and money due the Library, and imposes fines on naughty Keyholders.

Eli Heffron & Sons: A Cambridge electronics surplus store.

People's Albanian Embassy: When someone is flaming (or, more often these days, makes a bad pun) at a MITSFS Meeting, and people don't want to listen to him, his speech is defined to be in Albanian. The People's Albanian Embassy exists so the Society can communicate with him if need be. The Embassy is also responsible for collecting science fiction written in Albanian.

Seitz: J. Russel Seitz, once Vice, was reputed to have a Titan II missile (or three Atlas missiles — the stories vary) which he had constructed out of government surplus parts. He may also have claimed to be capable of acquiring an atomic warhead; however, other versions of the story say **Atomcomm** was responsible for obtaining one. Atomcomm was also in charge of acquiring money for the Society by atomic, biological, or chemical blackmail. The Spofford Painting (see Spofford) was at one time named Lord High Blackmailer. (Seitz is now at Hahvahd and is occasionally quoted in the press as an expert on nuclear weapons.)

National Committee to Map John Kenneth Galbraith into the Complex Plane, Inc.: Just what it says.

Theftcomm: In charge of stealing the Bonestell murals from the Boston Museum of Science. Failing that, in charge of putting up posters advertising the MITSFS. It took over the functions of the previously existing Compost (Poster Committee), Feecomm (Feeler Committee), and Publicity Committee.

Moocomm: Movie Committee. In the distant past, MITSFS's major source of income was the science fiction movies it showed once per term. Circa 1965, LSC became the only organization allowed to show movies regularly and charge admission, thus making Moocomm obsolete. Moocomm now reports on science fiction movies being shown by LSC or elsewhere in the area.

Coofcomm: Colonial Office Committee. In charge of helping fledgling sf clubs at other schools (e.g. ChUSFA at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana). Also

responsible for maintaining a strict policy of mercantilism with regard to fledgling sf clubs.

Carnalcomm: Carnival Committee. Up until the late '60s, APO ran a carnival every spring at which student activities had booths; Carnalcomm ran the MITSFS booth. Carnalcomm is now in charge of the MITSFS booth at the Activities Midway, held for the incoming freshlings each fall.

Picniccomm: Buys food and mails invitations for the annual MITSFS Picnic.

Hostess: Looks pretty at the picnic. (Well, the office was established in the mid-60s.)

Gavelcomm: Keeps track of the Gavel.

Titancomm: Keeps track of the titanium Gavel Block.

Atlascomm: Finds a rock suitable for substituting for the Gavel Block, or lugs the Block itself to Elections, Boskone, etc.

Wellcomm: Wellesley Committee. Set up in 1967 to absorb Wellesley into the Library. Later responsible for publicizing MITSFS at Wellesley. It has fallen into disuse these days, I suppose because of the increased number of women at MIT.

Fweekcomm: Freshman Week Committee. Coordinates MITSFS membership recruitment during R/O Week.

Cofincomm: Committee for Foreign Correspondence. Established to maintain communication with Dick Harter when he went to South Dakota.

Meyercomm: Keeps track of Ed Meyer, a super-fan of the '60s, who started an APA called Ed's APA, the members of which formed the nucleus of what became NESFA (the North East Shanghai Food Association).

Spofford: MITSFS meetings used to be held in the Spofford Room, which belongs to the Civil Engineering department and contains a large portrait of Spofford. Regular meetings are now held in the Library itself, but Election Meetings are still held under Spofford's gaze.

Deceased Plant: A dead potted plant in the Spofford Room was made a Quarternary Officer for failing to defeat the Evil ARLewis for the office of Onseck. After it left, various other objects (equally dead) were named **Honorary Plant**.

Catacomm: Catalogs the magazines. Like Libcomm, the post is identified with Ken Johnson.

Flushcomm: In charge of arranging to have all the Institute toilets flushed at once, to test the theory that doing so would destroy the Institute's plumbing.

Bootcomm: The Alpert, who was Skinner from 1970-72 (his first name is Marc; I don't know when the Society stopped referring to Skinners with the definite article) used to wear big boots.

Moccomm: The Davidson (Scott), who was Skinner after The Alpert, wore moccasins. Skinnerial footwear seems to have become rather dull afterward, since there are no more offices named after it.

Throgcomm: Wears hideous yellow polka-dot ties to meetings.

Flamecomm: Flames at meetings. (For whatever non-MIT types may have gotten this far, I should explain that flaming is an all-purpose MITism referring to any speech that is too loud, too obnoxious, too long-winded, too argumentative, too political, or otherwise annoying.)

Randomcomm: Detects and gloats over scientific errors in SF.

Untitledcomm: (Represented by an empty box on the Chart.) Writes weird replies to weird letters the MITSFS gets. Originally set up in 1972 to respond to a letter from UCLA asking for advice on how to form an SF society, saying they only had a comic book club. The Skinner directed Mark Swanson to flame back to them and Untitledcomm to write for advice on creating a comic book club. The committee consisted of Irwin T. Lapeer (aka Guy Consolmagno).

Slobcomm: Set up to investigate the question of what evil Mr. Lobdell could have done to cause a dining hall to be named after him. It was also in charge of writing words with calculators (e.g., 77308075 is Slobdell upside down). This was considered highly amusing back in 1973 when calculators first came out.

Tablecomm (R.I.P.): Created in 1961 to arrange informal discussions of SF by MITSFS members and others. (May also have been in charge of caring for the MITSFS's microfilm and tape collections, such as they are.) Its exact fate is shrouded in mystery, though it is rumored that it eventually deteriorated into a comic book discussion group and died out. Others hold that it was abolished and even its name effaced because its members were obnoxious.

Den Mother : (There are six blank spaces after "mother.") This office is awarded to the person in the MIT administration who screws over the MITSFS most. There are always more than enough candidates.

GAcomm: General Assembly Committee. Attended meetings of the GA, which used to be the "governing" body of the Undergraduate Association. It was recently replaced by the UA Council, which is smaller but functions just as well. The office was a joke, too.

Official Theologian: The person who pontificates the most. The Alpert was appointed to both this office and that of **Chief Hairsplitter**, **2nd Class** for hairsplitting, etc.

Chief Biter: Like the above, mostly self-explanatory. A person who is stupidly obnoxious in a destructive manner.

Baloneycomm: Brings baloney to the Picnic.

Charcomm: Burns the roast beef for the Picnic.

Pumpkincomm: Reaffirms the Society's faith in the Great Pumpkin each Halloween. For a time, also had the duty of making sure that the Foreign Students bulletin board had posted on it the Sunday comics, particularly Peanuts, the Wizard of Id, and Pogo (later, Doonesbury).

Bananacomm: Brings banana-related stuff to meetings.

NASAcmm: Oddly enough, responsible for NASA. Went to space shots. Its functions have been taken over by **Whooshcomm**, a revival of the ancient Rocket Committee. (Well, rockets sort of go *whoosh*.)

Candycomm: Responsible for sending a one-man, one-way expedition to Mars, George Phillies to be that man. (*Mars*, get it, huh?)

MADcomm: Keeps track of the Society's collection of *MAD* magazines.

Analogcomm: In the archives it is said that the Society used to own some *Playboy* magazines with SF-related stories. They were sold, with the notation: "Received \$N for *Playboys* and so forth." A committee was established to find out what the and-so-forth was. And-So-Forth becomes A.S.F. = *Astounding Science Fiction*, which became *Analog*, hence the name. Since the person appointed, Paul Mailman, also happened to be responsible for the Keyholder schedule sign-up sheets, the committee absorbed that function.

Official Second: Honorary title given to the member of the Loyal Opposition who runs against the official slate. Generally assigned to whichever hack nomination was most beaten into the ground at the election. Past title-holders include Cheryl's studded leather belt, the blue string macramé bikini, and Klyd (a boa constrictor), among others.

Coopcomm: Tells the Coop what SF to buy. I have no idea if it was ever functional.

Chartcomm: Designed the organizational chart.

Cornelia Otis: A person who is not the same as *our* Skinner. (Cornelia Otis Skinner was a somewhat famous actress and author.) Collects and reports on all entropies at meetings. At its creation in 1968, Joe Ross was appointed to it and ordered to generate random noise.

Ambassador to the Null Set: May have been created in 1970. May have a rationale for existence, or maybe just seemed like a good idea.

International Committee to Overdamp the New Wave: Also probably seemed like a good idea.

Intercomm: Responsible for international SF, that is, trades magazines with non-MIT fans. Also collects Perry Rhodans, etc.

Kangaroocomm: The Society's contact in Australia.

Keeper of The Schultz: Paula Schultz was a member in the '60s whose current boyfriend was given this post.

Secretary of HEW and Grammarcomm: I have absolutely no idea. If anyone does, please let me know.

Hub Overgovernment: A reference to the *Telzey Amberdon* stories — the organization in charge of the "official" psis, as opposed to the unofficial ones like *Telzey*.

Telzey Amberdon: The Skinner's "significant other." It used to be the Skinner's girlfriend, but has become a unisex post now that the MITSFS is an equal opportunity organization. Traditionally vacant, but this has not been true for the past few years. Named for a character in stories by James H. Schmitz who was supposed to be the most perfect woman in the universe. (Every so often, somebody looking through old magazines runs across a story called "The *Telzey Toy*," and this provides hilarity for a few days.)

Stranglecomm: There are three different versions of what this office is: 1) Mark Swanson threatened to call The Alpert at 3 a.m. until he got an article for TZ out of him. (I

sympathize!) The Alpert said he would strangle him. The committee was set up to call The Alpert at 3 a.m. and identify itself as Swanson. 2) Calls up the Skinner at 3 a.m. and says, "My name is Marc Alpert, and I'm cool," then hangs up. 3) Calls up Jourcomm at 3 a.m. and asks, "When is TZ coming out?"

Ass.comm: Committee to assassinate the Skinner.

Active Offices Not Appearing on the Chart:

Panthercomm: Responsible for Pinkdex, the index to the MITSFS Library. Pinkdex was named after its first compiler, Fuzzy Pink (Marilyn) Wisowaty, known these days as Fuzzy Pink Niven (yes, that Niven). Assisted by Mancinicom (Henry Mancini wrote the Pink Panther theme music).

Treasurer: Repairs books. This office may have been named to provide an out if there were no qualified undergrads to be LHE. Then again, maybe not.

Boredcomm: Puts stuff on the MITSFS bulletin board, which is found just off the Infinite Corridor.

Mobcomm: Purchases books at the New England Mobile Book Fair, which has everything in print at a discount. We use it to fill gaps in the collection.

Acidcomm: Assistant Idiot in charge of book covering. Puts plastic covers on the hardcover books. (Also known as Bluebellcomm, since the plastic came from Bluebell Plastics.)

Sitcomm: Reports on television programs of interest to the Society.

MITSFS Mistress: Sacrifices the Virgin Watermelon at the Picnic. There may have once been other job requirements; Sylvia Johnson, the first one, resigned the post because of "back trouble."

Pianocomm: Responsible for the display of Keyholder pictures in the Library, as well as revisions of the Keyholder Notes.

Boscomm: Reports on Boskone.

Famecomm: Reports on mentions of the Society or its members in non-MITSFS publications.

Dead, Defunct, or Dormant Offices:

War Council: Set up to contend with the Fountainhead of Evil on Campus Here (FECH), i.e. Inscomm. (The Institute Committee was the governing body on campus prior to the creation of the UA General Assembly. It consisted of a bunch of greasy student types.) It later expanded to "fight the good fight" against *The Tech*. Also got bookcases for the Library.

Banquomm: Originally Bankcomm, in charge of food for the annual MITSFS Banquet (which is also defunct).

Pilecomm: Compilation Committee. In charge of making lists of the best SF or keeping records of the books in the Library.

Knockcomm: Assigned to get a Gavel. It did, and also got a sounding board. Flushed November 18, 1960.

Psico: Set up September 23, 1960 to investigate (seriously) psychic phenomena. Its members were referred to as psicoceramics (crackpots). It was flushed less than a year later.

Provisional Committee to Look Into Dean Drive: What it says. Set up October 7, 1960.

Special Committee to Write to L. Sprague de Camp Asking Him to Come If It Won't Cost Us Too Much: What more can I say? Established September 23, 1960.

Ughcomm: Set up on March 5, 1976 for Uri Gutman. (UG-Comm, h=hyphen)

Dismil: Dishonorable Millercomm. Set up in order to adjourn Meetings February 6, 1976 because Miller wasn't there.

Malcomm: Formed February 9, 1979 to find out what Malcolm (Skerry, aka Malcolm Y) was dropping before he claimed there were *people* in the Library.

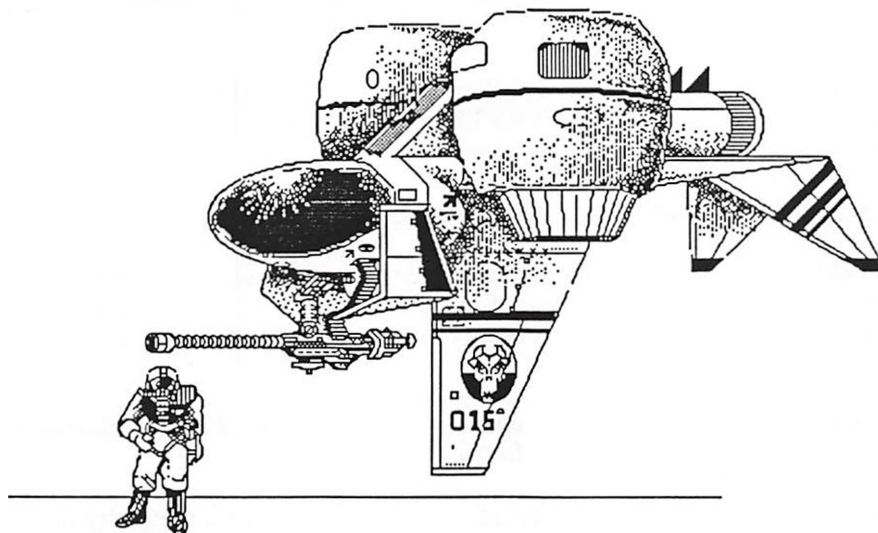
Omnicommm: Set up briefly to reply to a letter from *Omni* concerning the Society and how it could get the membership list for the Sales Department. Later reported on random *Omni* articles.

Smokcomm: Formed October 13, 1961 to promote a MITSFS smoker. (An event, not a nicotine addict.)

Cardcomm: Got membership cards from Cambridge Press. Established February 9, 1962.

Ambassador to Boston University, So Called, Administration Thereof: Set up right after the B.U., So Called, Administration was recognized by the Society on October 12, 1962. There is no evidence that it ever did anything — the Ambassador, not the Administration.

Comité d'Affaires Étrangères pour les Pays de Langue Française (Roughly translated, Foreign Affairs Committee for French-Language Countries): Wrote a letter to Charles DeGaulle, and actually got a reply (from a flunky). I hope the letter was written in better French than the committee name was.



A (Pseudo) Interview with Glen Cook

conducted by Larry Lennhoff

Larry wrote a letter to Glen Cook, containing a lot of questions. Surprisingly enough, Cook responded, and gave us permission to publish the answers. Glen Cook fans will also be interested in the bibliography that follows this article.

Q: How did you start writing?

A: Always wanted to write. I recall starting several projects as early as grammar school, and getting a couple of the traditional beginner pieces out of my system during high school. Never very determined or dedicated about it back then, though. Just something to do. In college and in the service there was no time for such stuff. Other distractions, mostly of the female variety.

Then when I went to work for a living, I slipped into a job where I had very little to do other than to be there. I did a lot of reading, two or more books a day, and chanced to read a book so bad I told myself I could do better and started trying. That was late 1967. I found out it was not as easy as I thought. I wrote a huge thing entitled *The Sword Called Precious Pearl*, rather like a bastard child of Tolkien and E.R.R. Eddison, that was pretty awful, and parts of a couple of other monsters in the same setting, before deciding to abandon that setting altogether. Of all those several thousand pages, the only thing that survived was a place called Fangdred and a character called The Old Man of the Mountain, and the notion of a group of people called the Storm Kings.

Q: What made you decide to write fantasy and science fiction?

A: It was what I had been reading since I was in about the fifth grade, when I gave up Westerns after finding a copy of *The Naked Sun* that belonged to my father. It is what I knew and liked.

Q: Do you prefer writing short stories or novels? Why?

A: Novels. As anyone familiar with my work at all will realize, I tend to create BIG stories. Even ideas that start out intended to be shorts usually grow up into something much larger because my mind finds ramifications and wants to explore them.

Q: Many of your books feature Army life or at least a military background. What is your own military experience?

A: Eight years Navy and Navy Reserve with four years high school ROTC beforehand. For a while I thought it was what I wanted to do with my life. Served aboard destroyers and with a Marine Force Recon outfit as Forward Fire Control Observer.

Q: Why do you like writing "military" sf and fantasy?

A: I am not entirely certain, except that [that] is where the ideas come. I envy writers who are able to build strong stories in worlds where none of that exists. Maybe it is because I am fascinated with the historical process, and histories always seem to revolve around the wars that shape cultures and civilizations.

Q: I think your strongest point as a writer is the wealth of good characters you've created. Which of them is your favorite?

A: I don't know. There are quite a number that I like. Several of them are pretty much me: Bragi Ragnarson, Croaker, Moyshe benRabi, even Norman Cash in a way. I enjoy the clowns, Mocker, and One-Eye and Goblin, though they are very hard to do. I liked Marron Shed, in *Shadows Linger*, because he is un-stereotypical. I liked the wizard Bomanz, in *The White Rose*, for some of the same reasons.

Q: What characters created by others have you liked?

A: My first reaction was ??? because nothing hit me. Then a host crawled through my head, but almost all of them outside the F & SF fields. Sauron of Mordor?? Paul Atreides? (But it took me ten minutes to recall his name.) Retief, on the light side.

Q: What do you think is your strongest point as a writer?

A: Plotting. My stories do have plots — sometimes too complex for most people. You have to pay attention. Curiously, while people often say nice things about my characters, I think characterization is my weakest point. And I can point to the reviews that support that.

Q: How do you start to write a book? Do you start with a plot, a character you want to write about, a theme, or a need to pay some bills?

A: The last notion can be discarded. I do not need the money I get from writing, though it comes in handy at times. I am not sure, otherwise, how the question can be answered. Fliply, I could say I start at the beginning, which has an element of truth in it. Situations often leap into my conscious mind and if I elect to go ahead and write them everything becomes very deterministic afterward. I always know where I'm at to begin, and usually know where I want to get to, and that pretty much shapes everything in between.

Q: What advice do you have for the starting writer?

A: Again, something that sounds flip. Write. Whatever it is, write. Don't talk about it, do it. The most common complaint I hear from would-be writers is, "I don't have the time." This is a non-factual excuse. *I don't have the time.* A very large proportion of my work gets created at work, on my breaks and at lunchtime. Then catch-as-catch-can at other times. The majority of my time available here at home gets devoted to typing final MS. copy, answering the mail, and keeping track of the drudgy business end of being a writer. Hell, Piers Anthony carries notepads and writes while he's standing in line at the supermarket or whatnot. If there [are] enough odds and ends [of] time in one day to scribble down one handwritten page you can write a novel a year.

Q: Who do you read for enjoyment in SF? Fantasy? Outside the field?

A: I am a pretty eclectic reader these days, reading more outside the field than in. There are a few authors with whom I keep up, among them Heinlein and Vance, but mostly just spot around in the field, sampling. Outside the field, this year, I have read a lot of Rex Stout. History and detective fiction and so-called suspense/thrillers. I usually read in four or five books concurrently. At present I am reading *The Fourth Protocol* by Frederick Forsyth, *Double for Death* by Rex Stout, a non-fiction book about Stout and [Stout's detective character] Nero Wolfe [called] *Nero Wolfe of West 35th Street* by W.S. Baring-Gould, *Gold Coast* by Elmore Leonard, and *The Fall of the Roman Empire*. The to-read stack includes Heinlein's *Job*, three Robert B. Parker novels, a book about Joan of Arc, Delaney's *Stars in My Pocket*, Martin's *Armageddon Rag*, and a novel about convoy duty in the North Atlantic during WWII. Some of this stuff I will enjoy and some not. All will become grist for the writer's mill.

Q: Are you involved in fandom?

A: I guess I am. I attend about 10 conventions a year, some as a guest writer, some as a book dealer, all to have a good time with fans, whose company for the most part I enjoy.

Q: Do you have in mind ...

a) a sequel to *The Swordbearer*?

A: No and yes. I did not intend to do one when I wrote the book, though the ending obviously leaves room for one. I got a lot of urgings from people to do one, so checked with my then editor, who said he would definitely be interested. So I went ahead and wrote two-thirds of one called *The Swordbreaker*. Then the editor got fired and the whole Timescape line folded and I quit working on it. Looking at it later, I didn't think what I had done was very good, so I ditched the whole project.

b) further Black Company books?

A: Yes. Tor says they are very much interested in doing more. I have two-thirds of a fourth, currently entitled *Glittering Stone*, but probably to be changed to *Shadows Dancing* (actually the original working title for *The White Rose*), with GS going for a fifth. I have scrapped the material for this book once and am strongly considering doing so again.

c) more Dread Empire books?

A: Yes. In fact, Tor has already purchased *Reap the East Wind* and *An Ill Fate Marshalling*, both of which are sequels to *All Darkness Met*, set in different parts of that world. I would like to do several more beyond these, but the fate of the series depends on the sales of the two forthcoming. The five so far published have not done very well commercially.

d) more Starfishers books?

A: No, though my editors at Warner have made the suggestion several times, and the "no" could change if I suddenly found myself through the dozen or so new projects I would like to do.

e) more Black Ship stories?

A: I am not sure what is meant by this, unless [it is] the two stories that appeared in *F&SF*, "Ghost Stalk" and "Call for the Dead." I did write a third in that setting, "Hell's Forge," but Ed Ferman returned it, saying he did not understand it; [I] had a fourth partially planned, but quit because I had to concentrate on other projects.

Q: What else do you have forthcoming?

A: The final volume of the *Darkwar* trilogy, *Ceremony*, Feb. 1986. *Darkwar* is actually one novel that has been broken into three volumes and is not a true trilogy at all. And the above-mentioned *Reap the East Wind* and *An Ill Fate Marshalling*, but I do not know when they are scheduled.

Items completed and looking for a home are *Sung in Blood*, a fun thing I did which is a sort of Doc Savage goes against Fu Manchu fantasy pastiche, and *Sweet Silver Blues*, a Sword & Sorcery/Private Eye novel which, while having a deadly serious PI plot, is set in a zany world filled with weird characters.

There are a host of in-progress works also not sold yet, including a second PI novel, *Bitter Gold Heart* (almost finished), the aforementioned Black Company novel as well as another entitled *The Silver Spike*, a far-future space epic of the magnitude of *Darkwar* entitled *The Dragon Never Sleeps*, Dread Empire novels entitled *A Path to Coldness of Heart* and *The Wrath of Kings*, an independent fantasy entitled *Nor Even Death Destroy*, and a historical horror novel without a title. There are also a dozen partially-completed works around here for which I could develop a sudden passion, and still more ideas slithering around in my head.

A Glen Cook Bibliography

Main compilation by Roger C. Schlobin, Purdue University
July 1986 update by Bill P. Starr, M.I.T.

Independent Novels

The Swap Academy

Publisher's Export Corp. (San Diego, CA), 1970 [pb].
Published under the pseudonym "Greg Stevens".

The Heirs of Babylon

Signet/New American Library, 1972 [pb].
(Also published in Germany; no details available.)

The Swordbearer

Pocket/Timescape, 1982 [pb].
(see note 1)

A Matter of Time

Ace, 1985 [pb].

Novels related to "The Dread Empire"

The Fire in His Hands

Pocket/Timescape, 1984 [pb].

With Mercy Towards None

Baen, 1985 [pb].

A Shadow of All Night Falling

Berkley, 1979 [pb] (2nd printing 1983).

October's Baby

Berkley, 1980 [pb] (2nd printing 1984).

All Darkness Met

Berkley, 1980 [pb] (2nd printing 1984).

Novels related to "Starfishers"

Passage At Arms

Warner/Popular Library, 1985 [pb].

Shadowline

Warner, 1982 [pb] (2nd printing 1982, 3rd 1986).

Starfishers

Warner, 1982 [pb] (2nd printing 1984, 3rd 1986).

Stars' End

Warner, 1982 [pb] (2nd printing 1986).

Novels related to "Darkwar"

Doomstalker

Warner/Popular Library, 1985 [pb].

Warlock

Warner/Popular Library, 1985 [pb].

Ceremony

Warner/Popular Library, 1986 [pb].

Novels related to "The Black Company"

The Black Company

Tor, 1984 [pb] (2nd printing 1984, 3rd 1985).

Shadows Linger

Tor, 1984 [pb] (2nd printing 1985).

The White Rose

Tor, 1985 [pb].

Annals of the Black Company

Science Fiction Book Club, 1986 [hc].

Omnibus edition containing The Black Company, Shadows Linger
and The White Rose.

Independent Short Fiction

"Appointment in Samarkand"

Witchcraft & Sorcery #7, Nov. 1972, page 30. (see note 2)

"Ponce"

Amazing, Nov. 1977, page 116.

Illustrated by Richard Olson.

"The Seventh Fool"

Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction, Mar. 1978, page 78.

"Silverheels"

Witchcraft & Sorcery #6, May 1971, page 26. (see note 2)

Illustrated by Tim Kirk.

"Song From A Forgotten Hill"

Clarion, Robin Scott Wilson, ed., Signet/New American Library, 1971 [pb], page 214.

Reprinted in Futur Anee Zero (French), Alain Doremieux, ed., Casterman of Tourai (Belgium), 1975 (translated by Bruno Martin), page 167.

Originally appeared in *Worlds of Tomorrow* in an edition never released for sale.

"The Waiting Sea"

Program Book, Archon 7, The Archon Committee (St. Louis, MO), July 1983, page ??.

Short Fiction related to "The Dread Empire"

"Call for the Dead"

Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction, July 1980, page 95.
Cover story, with painting by David Mattingly.

"Castle of Tears"

Whispers, vol. 4, no. 1-2 (double volume), Oct. 1979, page 56.
(see note 3)

"Filed Teeth"

Dragons of Darkness, Orson Scott Card, ed., Ace 1981
[trade pb], Ace 1983 [pb], page 1.
Illustrated by Michael Whelan.

"Ghost Stalk"

Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction, May 1978, page 129.

"The Nights of Dreadful Silence"

Fantastic, Sept. 1973, page 44.
Illustrated by Mike Kaluta.

"Severed Heads"

Sword and Sorceress, Marion Zimmer Bradley, ed., DAW, 1984
[pb], page 34.
(Sword and Sorceress also published in Germany; no details available.)

"Soldier of an Empire Unacquainted With Defeat"

The Berkley Showcase, vol. 2, Victoria Schochet and John Silbersack, ed., Berkley, 1982 [pb], page 1.

Short Fiction related to "Starfishers"

"And Dragons in the Sky"

Clarion II, Robin Scott Wilson, ed., Signet/New American Library, 1972 [pb], page 186.
Seed story for Starfishers.

"Crystal in the Flesh"

Sold to Gerald Page for a science fiction anthology in 1973;
probably will never appear.

"Enemy Territory"

Night Voyages #9, Spring 1983, page 4. (see note 4)
Illustrated by Nick Petrosino.

"In the Wind"

Tomorrow Today, George Zebrowski, ed., Unity Press (Santa Cruz, CA), 1971 [simultaneous trade pb and hc], page 92.

"The Recruiter"

Amazing, Mar. 1977, page 47.

"Quiet Sea"

Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction, Dec. 1978, page 7.
Cover story, with painting by David Hardy.

"Sunrise"

Eternity SF, vol. 1, no. 2 (1973), page 23. (see note 5)
Illustrated by Vincent DiFate.

"Sunrise" (revised version)

Best of Eternity, a possibly forthcoming anthology.
Also in a forthcoming issue of the revived *Eternity SF*,
if the revivication is successful.

Short Fiction related to "The Black Company"

"Raker"

Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction, Aug. 1982, page 94.
Excerpt from the novel The Black Company.

Short Fiction related to "Darkwar"

"Darkwar"

Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine, mid-Dec. 1982, page 142.
(see note 6)

Cover story, with painting by Wayne D. Barlow and interior art
by Val Lakey/Artifact.

Short Fiction related to "Endgame"

"City of Bones"

Sold to Gerald Page for a fantasy anthology in 1973; not known to have appeared.

"The Dark Woman"

Amra, forthcoming. (see note 7)

"The Devil's Tooth"

Literary Magazine of Fantasy & Terror, vol. 1, no. 5 (1974), page 4. (see note 8)

Illustrated by Cameron F. Broze.

Reprinted in *Gandalf*, Norway, 1977.

Reprinted in *Ill Met By Moonlight*, Darrell K. Schweitzer, ed., Starblaze/Donning, forthcoming.

"The Sorcerer's Daughter"

Amra, forthcoming. (see note 7)

Non-Fiction

"First Contact"

Tsunami, vol. 1, no. 1, July 1982, page 6. (see note 9)

(untitled)

Tsunami, vol. 1, no. 2, forthcoming. (see note 9)

Shaw Neighborhood Sixth Annual House Tour

Shaw Neighborhood Association (St. Louis, MO), 1980.

Illustrated by Ann Day and Jay Doty.

Secondary Studies & Interviews

Burnett, Betty: "Archon V"

Riverfront Times, July 22-28, 1981, page 11.

Carrington, Grant: "Cook's Broth"

Night Voyages #9, Spring 1983, page 12. (see note 4)

Lennhoff, Larry: "A (Pseudo) Interview With Glen Cook"

Twilight Zine #37, Fall 1986. (see note 10)

Marshall, Karen K.: "Profile: A Local Author"

St. Louis Globe-Democrat (Books section), Mar. 27-28, 1982, page 7B.

Mattingly, Matt: "Spare Time Writing Has Become a Profession for Southsider"

Neighborhood News, (St. Louis, MO), Aug. 4, 1982, page 12.
Reprinted in *West County Journal* and *South County Journal*,
both of July 27, 1982.

Reginald, R.: Contemporary Science Fiction Authors II

Gale Research (Detroit, MI), 1979, II, page 861.

This is the second volume to Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature.

Novels In Progress (see note 11)

Reap the East Wind (Dread Empire)

Tor, forthcoming.

An Ill Fate Marshalling (Dread Empire)

Tor, forthcoming.

A Path to Coldness of Heart (Dread Empire)

The Wrath of Kings (Dread Empire)

Fail Point (science fiction)

The Dragon Never Sleeps (science fiction)

Warner/Popular Library, forthcoming.

Sweet Silver Blues (fantasy)

Signet/New American Library, forthcoming.

Bitter Gold Heart (fantasy)

Sung in Blood (fantasy)

Shadow Games (Black Company)

Glittering Stone (Black Company)

Nor Even Death Destroy (fantasy)

Notes

1. "Swordbearer may be re-issued by Tor. Haven't heard for sure yet" -- G.C., June 1986.

2. *Witchcraft & Sorcery* -- prozine (issues 1-6), then semi-prozine (issues 7-10), published by Fantasy Publishing Co., Inc. (William L. Crawford, pub., Gerald W. Page, ed.) from vol. 1, no. 1 (Sept. 1969) to no. 10 (undated, published in 1974). The magazine was originally titled *Coven 13*; it was renamed *Witchcraft & Sorcery* starting with vol. 1, no. 5.
3. *Whispers* -- semi-prozine, still in publication, edited by Stuart David Schiff from vol. 1, no. 1 (July 1973).
4. *Night Voyages* -- semi-prozine published by Gerald A. Brown from vol. 1, no. 1 (Fall 1977) to vol. 1, no. 10 (undated, published in 1984).
5. *Eternity SF* -- semi-prozine published by Stephen Gregg from vol. 1, no. 1 (1972) to vol. 1, no. 4 (1975). Gregg also published a second "volume 1" of *Eternity SF* from vol. 1, no. 1 (1979) to vol. 1, no. 2 (1980). "Sunrise" appears in the 1973 version of vol. 1, no. 2.
6. *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine* published thirteen issues in 1982; the mid-December issue was the second in December and the thirteenth of the year.
7. "Amra is/was George Scithers' and Darrell Schweitzer's Robert E. Howard fan/semi-prozine that ran some 65 issues in the 50's, 60's and 70's and went into suspended animation when George became editor of *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine*. When he left *Asimov's*, he planned to resume publication, but then became editor at *Amazing*. The stories may appear if he resumes publication now that he has left *Amazing*. I don't know." -- G.C., June 1986.
8. *The Literary Magazine of Fantasy & Terror* -- semi-prozine published by Amos Salmonson (today known as "Jessica Amanda Salmonson") from vol. 1, no. 1 (undated, published in 1973) to vol. 1, no. 6 (undated, published in 1975).
9. "Tsunami was a high quality fanzine produced locally [St. Louis, MO] by Betsy Gardner and Jim Elmore in a print run of about 250." -- G.C.
10. *Twilight Zine* (not "Twilight Zone") -- fanzine published by the M.I.T. Science Fiction Society, room W20-473, 84 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, MA 02139.
11. "There is no guarantee that half these titles will ever see the light of day" -- G.C., June 1986.

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Book Reviews

Dragonsbane

Barbara Hambly, 341 pp., 1985, Del Rey Books, \$3.50 pb.

Reviewed by Lisa A. Kroh

After reading *Ladies of Mandrigyn*, I was so interested in Barbara Hambly's other books that I immediately started reading the newest, *Dragonsbane*. However, this was a bit of a mistake, for I expected another book like *Mandrigyn*, which this isn't. But as I read further, I soon discovered that, while not as exciting nor as full of heroes, *Dragonsbane* does have its own appeal.

That this book is not packed with characters who go rushing into dangerous situations just because they are heroes is both refreshing and amusing. The "hero" of the book, John Aversin, is the only living man ever to have slain a dragon. As the book begins, a young fop named Gareth, claiming to be a messenger of the King's court in the south, comes to the Winterlands seeking the dragonsbane, a figure he knows only from ballads. However, as is often true, the actual acts of heroism are never as glorious as in the ballads. For instance, anyone who believes the events as described in "The Song of Roland" ... Well, can you say *sucker*?

Much to his disappointment, Gareth finds Aversin — a bespeckled man standing in the mud in a sty intently discussing pig lore. He is even more disillusioned when he discovers that, no indeed, Aversin did not ride into battle in shining armor on a white horse, brandishing only a single sword in the name of all-that-is-good-and-pure. An amused Aversin quietly informs Gareth that he cravenly snuck in on the dragon, stuck him with a barbed spear poisoned by the local witch, his mistress Jenny Waynest, and then hacked at it with an axe until it had died. And, to make things worse, he insists that he only did it because it was his job to protect the people whom the dragon was devouring.

Still, persistent Gareth asks Aversin to return with him to the south, where a great dragon is terrorizing the people. As incentive, he promises a reward of Aversin's asking and reveals the King's own signet ring as a token of good faith. When he agrees to go, Jenny insists that she go too, since both have suspicions that Gareth isn't telling them everything. The rest of the book follows their adventures through the travel south and the problems they encounter there, but since I don't want to spoil anything, I'll stop here.

I very much enjoyed *Dragonsbane* mostly because of the unlikely hero type that John Aversin turns out to be. There are also a few twists in the plot to make it more interesting than your ordinary (!) quest to kill a dragon. Because they are not all flamboyant heroes, the characters become real people just trying to deal with the problems that make their lives difficult. The book had enough suspense to keep me going, but enough plain-old fairy-tale quality to keep me happy. It also had an ending that made me cry. (This is a high recommendation on my part.) If you have read *Ladies of Mandrigyn*, you will find this book very different, but equally excellent in quality of writing and character development.



"No Sheep is Safe Tonight"

Books by David Macaulay

BAAA, 63 pp., 1985, Houghton Mifflin, \$12.95 hc, \$4.95 pb.
Cathedral, 80 pp., 1973, Houghton Mifflin, \$14.95 hc, \$6.95 pb.
Castle, 80 pp., 1977, Houghton Mifflin, \$13.95 hc, \$6.95 pb.
City, 112 pp., 1974, Houghton Mifflin, \$14.95 hc, \$5.95 pb.
Underground, 112 pp., 1976, Houghton Mifflin, \$10.95 hc, \$5.95 pb.
Motel of the Mysteries, 96 pp., 1979, Houghton Mifflin, \$6.95 pb.

Reviewed by Connie Hirsch

I didn't know what to make of *BAAA* the first time I read it. On the fifth go-round I'm still puzzled.

It isn't as though it were stupid, or ill-written. With some things you get a sense that there's something deeper going on. I am reminded of a record by Brian Eno, an experimental British musician who is best known for producing the Talking Heads: "Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy." I have listened to — and enjoyed — that record numerous times, but I still don't have a firm grip on what's going on. So it is with this book.

BAAA is a picture book for adults. It is in a tiny format, not unlike those used for the literary exercises of Charles Addams. It seems to be about the adventures of a number of sheep who find themselves in the possession of the world because the human race has mysteriously disappeared.

Macaulay is best known for his illustrated "children's" books: *Cathedral*, *Castle*, *City*. The adjective has to be in quotes because these books can be looked at in a very sophisticated way. Macaulay has a degree in architecture from the Rhode Island School of Design, and it shows in the way his pictures of men building a castle or cathedral can be looked at for instruction or merely for the enjoyment of seeing how something is done.

By far my favorite book of his is *Underground*, which shows in fascinating detail and imaginative angle just what is beneath our feet. Unless you are a civil engineer, you have probably never given much thought to what lies under a street or a building, unless, of course, your sewer line is stuck or your house's foundation begins to sink.

I showed this book to a civil engineer friend of mine, and his reaction was to go out and buy it immediately, because, he said, "I've been trying to explain to people just what it is I do for a living, and this book just about sums it up." Sly touches of humor enliven *Underground*. In one picture of the sewers, alligator eyes are sticking out of the water.

Macaulay's drawing style is nonpareil. He gives careful attention to light and perspective. What makes it all worthwhile is that there is so much more life behind the drawings than most architectural renditions ever have. Details make all the difference. My favorite definition of a good picture is "something you can look at long and hard without getting bored." (This doesn't mean you have to *like* it.) You always see new things in Macaulay's pictures, like the Walkman earphones on a human skull that a sheep philosopher is gazing at, or a shepherd's crook held up amongst the signs at a sheep-style political rally. These well-thought-out details are there as lagniappe, a gift for those who peruse Macaulay's creations with the care he put into making them.

Macaulay has also published at least one humor book that is widely known: *Motel of the Mysteries*. In a poker-faced style, it purports to be the record of some future archaeologists' reconstruction of how the people of the 20th century ran their lives, with illustrations that plainly show what we know to be everyday artifacts.

The theme of the collapse of human civilization present in *Motel* (junk mail precipitates out of the atmosphere, burying civilization as we know it 50 feet deep) is more fully explored in *BAAA*.

The human race disappears in the opening pages of this little book, with no explanation given. Left by themselves, the sheep take over, wandering into our houses, watching our TV's (at first they are fascinated by the glow, and later they learn how to operate the VCR's), and taking on the appurtenances of civilization:

"Schools were established. Thoughts were had."

Soon the sheep get themselves in trouble: there are serious food shortages. To combat this problem the sheep government promotes a food substance called "Baaa." The sheep begin to disappear mysteriously .

The captions in the book go well with the pictures: on the surface they are very plain and straight-forward, but on closer examination they have a similar something extra behind them:

"Once more troops restored the peace, and shortly thereafter Baaa Shops reopened with fresh supplies. For months the process repeated itself."

In a picture of a political rally (the same one with the shepherd's crook) there is a poster that says: "Have a friend over for dinner." However, the word "over" has obviously been squeezed in as an afterthought. In another picture, some innocent lambs (dressed in children's clothes, of course) watch a Baaa truck go past. A sticker on its door says "Free Rides."

This is not a book to read to children, unless you don't like your children all that much. It is dark and threatening. What could be cuter than sheep? On the other hand, let us remember my definition of a good picture: as long as it keeps your interest, it's worthwhile. This review has more words than *BAAA* does, but it probably says a lot less.

* * *

The Architect of Sleep, Stephen Boyett, 290 pp., 1986, Ace Books, \$2.95 pb.
The Coming of the Quantum Cats, Frederik Pohl, 296 pp., 1986, Bantam Spectra, \$3.50 pb.
Black Star Rising, Frederik Pohl, 293 pp., 1985, Del Rey, \$3.50 pb.
With Fate Conspire, Mike Shupp, 306 pp., 1985, Del Rey, \$2.95 pb.
Morning of Creation, Mike Shupp, 304 pp., 1986, Del Rey, \$3.50 pb.
The Planet on the Table, Kim Stanley Robinson, 241 pp., Tor, \$14.95 hc.
Interzone: The First Anthology, ed. John Clute, Colin Greenland and David Pringle, 202 pp., St. Martin's Press, \$14.95 hc.

Reviewed by Ken Meltsner

First on the list this time is the excellent novel *The Architect of Sleep* by Stephen Boyett. Or fragment of novel, since it is obviously part of a longer series. The cliffhanger aspect might sell more copies, but I find it frustrating when a book simply stops without even a "to-be-continued." This is both a recommendation and a warning: if the lack of an ending won't annoy you, you will want this book.

We follow Jim Bentley as he passes from our land of 7-11's and Coppola films through a peculiar cave into a totally different Earth. The cave may be a transparent device, designed to get a stranger into a strange land, but authors have to be able to get away with little things, especially when they only waste five pages in doing so.

Like *Howard the Duck* before him, Bentley is caught in a world not of his making. Giant, sentient raccoons with opposable thumbs live on this Earth, and he is relegated to the status of bald ape, a novel animal act from what we would call Africa, to all but a few who know of his intelligence.

Early on, he meets up with a mixed batch of friends, and this story goes the way of most picaresque novels detailing the efforts of a noble band dedicated to righting a terrible wrong. What saves it is the detailed and caring description of the alternate Earth and the raccoons' culture, from the different patterns of fighting to truly unique customs and ways of thinking.

Boyett has a good sense for different worlds. In his first book (*Ariel*, 325 pp., Ace Books, 1983, \$2.95 pb), he described a version of our world in which technology stopped working, without ever needing to tell us why it stopped. Some people may complain about bicycles no longer working while hang gliders continue to function, but magic is allowed to be arbitrary. We enjoy watching the protagonist grow into a man, and feel his loss as he loses his innocence, both symbolically and literally.

Architect of Sleep has the same style, and utilizes intense detail and consistent extrapolation to build the raccoons' world. Names, for example, are well-handled, as Bentley simply assigns appropriate names from our world to denote the hand gestures of the racoon language.

The opportunity to watch Bentley deal with an alien culture grabbed my attention. Boyett's writing kept it. I would be happy if he dropped the incredibly detailed martial arts sequences (killer fascist raccoons bore me to tears!). My biggest regret is that the next book is not already out.

Next up is *The Coming of the Quantum Cats*, by Frederick Pohl, another book with a variety of worlds, all different from our own. The Cats of the title are paratime soldiers, sent from one Earth to dominate yet another Earth. Pohl enjoys the opportunity to play jokes on the reader, and one should read carefully to avoid being confused. After all, given an infinity of worlds, bizarre things can happen, from a Nancy Reagan talk show to an Arab-owned America. What's worse, these different worlds are being forced to mount a military attack on an alternative Russia, with or without their consent.

The fate of the worlds depends on the actions of a few pivotal individuals common to all, and Pohl delights in showing us the power of nurture over nature. One world's diplomat is another's sleazy criminal, a violinist in one becomes a thumbless FBI agent in another. Circumstance changes a struggling mortgage broker into a successful senator.

There is a *deus ex machina* of sorts at the end, but love triumphs as well. *Cats* is an exciting trip into a set of alternate realities, and the warmth of the finish allows me to forgive its abruptness.

Pohl also has a paperback edition of *Black Star Rising* out. *Black Star* is a good-natured farce, full of sex, violence, and Pohl's own brand of humor. Characters include Castor Pettyman, lowly serf, Delilah Tsoong, security agent, and Fung Bohsien, man of many brains. Mix in an America owned by China and annoyingly clever aliens, and you've got a romp with a message.

You see, long before the Chinese took over America, an American spaceship was intercepted by the erks, a helpful race determined to help the Americans subjugate the Chinese. Of course, the Chinese are not in favor of this, but to describe any more of the book would simply let too many of the secrets go before their times. The book is fun and light reading, but there is a message as well. It may never be a classic, but I enjoyed it.

From Pohl's sideways space/time maneuvers, we move on to Mike Shupp's (MIT Aero/Astro, Class of '71) first novel *Morning of Creation*, the first of a four-book series. Only respect for a fellow alumnus got me through the first 70 or 80 pages. He needed a good editor to clean up his prose and remove the constant references to the protagonist's ex-girlfriend's body. We do get to watch the MIT campus and Boston disappear, and in a truly memorable moment, Timothy Harper, the main character, walks out of his Baker House room, watches Boston decay and disappear, and yells, "If this is a hack, tell me now... I'm not getting stuck for anything I do because of a stupid joke." Only at MIT would the destruction of the entire Boston area be considered a possible practical joke.

After the first 80 or so pages, the weakness and awkwardness diminishes. Shupp would have been better off getting rid of the Boston scene entirely (as well as some other gratuitous MIT in-jokes) so we would not have had to wade through material used only as a bridge to get a modern American into an alien world (sound familiar?). Once there, things pick up and Shupp takes care to design a consistent future.

Sometimes, Shupp sounds like a textbook. He describes a sword as martensitic stainless steel, and even gives the American Iron & Steel Institute alloy number. At other points he gives exact engineering details of devices which do not need to be explained. The nerdiness is characterization, but it's a bit distracting. I guess it's a danger of an MIT education. The plot is thrilling with lots of action and desperate fighting, the future is fun to observe, and the women, although beautiful, aren't bimbos. My biggest complaint, aside from the patches of clumsy prose, is that the first book should have been two thinner books (the seam shows badly). Despite the book's flaws, it is still enjoyable in an old-fashioned way. Take out the sex, and this book could have been published 30 years ago.

The next book, *Morning of Creation*, drifts a bit from the world of engineering, and appears to be only a linking book designed to set up characters and situations for the real action in the next two books. It is weak and uninteresting in plot, but Shupp's writing has improved. Timothy Harper is a much more interesting character, with additional flaws and strengths, and the young girl he befriends in the first book has a major role. The next two books in the series may be worth waiting for, but I wouldn't rush out to buy the second one until they are available. Everything points to a bang-up finish for the four novels, with history and space-time collapsing under the pressure of battling telepaths and futurians. Should be fun.

In a more modern tone, Kim Stanley Robinson's collection, *The Planet on the Table*, is a mixed bag of good stories and great ones. He's a relatively recent success (Clarion about twelve years ago, an Ace special two years ago, and a tremendous novell, *The Memory of Whiteness*, about art and the Universe this last year). The collected stories include both gems like "Terminator" (not what you think!), "Black Air," and "The Lucky Strike," as well as lesser stories involving dead writers and other assorted novelties. Still, if you haven't read them in their magazine appearances, you should pick up this book. Several of the stories have been nominated for Hugos and Nebulas, and if you like modern short SF, this is not a collection to miss.

Interzone's first anthology may be their last. The stories are stark and depressing for no other purpose than to be stark and depressing. They are all carefully crafted, but most make little sense and do not serve to tell us anything about life or ourselves. Do we need stories about the dissection of Ronald Reagan, or about a child warped by a momentary contact with an alien object? These stories shock and revolt me, which would be acceptable if there was a purpose. K. W. Jeter does this sort of freak-show writing much better because there is a reason for the grotesque detail and situation in his works.

There are some high points. J. G. Ballard and Keith Roberts are both in this collection with excellent stories, and they are not alone, but this is not the anthology to buy. The inheritors of the New Wave appear to have formed an evolutionary dead end, especially when one considers Kim Stanley Robinson's work. In his collection, there is life and excitement, not just pain. Robinson's characters fight their fates and force the world to notice them. Most of the characters in the *Interzone* stories accept the pain and suffering far too graciously for my tastes.

Don't Keep a Pet Unless You Can Stand to Lose It

by Bill P. Starr

I just got my new car, a new red Jeep Cherokee with four doors and four-wheel drive. It cost me \$11,950, plus \$698 for a paint sealant, rustproofing and half-Chapman package, plus \$825 for the optional five-year, 50,000-mile warranty, plus other random and sundry expenses that kept getting added on at the last minute.

Plus the trade-in of my old car.

My first car had been a 1969 Plymouth Barracuda, bought used for \$1,800 sometime in the summer of 1978. It lasted about five months before, with a sound like a gunshot, one of the torsion bars snapped and the front right quarter of the car sank to within two inches of the pavement. About five minutes later, just as I was pulling into my company's parking lot, another shot rang out and the front left quarter sank to match. I brought the car (slowly) back to the used-car place where I'd bought it. They hemmed and hawed and finally agreed to weld replacement bars into place, though they warned me that the car would never be very good after that.

(A few years later, I was very happy to note that that used-car lot had become a hot dog stand.)

I finally wound up selling that car to a used-car dealer for \$200. At about that time, I'd attended an MIT Strategic Wargamers Society mini-con, at which they issued adhesive "*Hello, My Name Is ...*" stickers instead of badges. To this day, I still have the cheap AM clock-alarm radio I was using as an alarm clock in those days, and still stuck on top of it is a sticker which says, "*Hello, My Name Is ...* BILL STARR (wanna buy a used '69 Plymouth Barracuda?)"

The reason I was able to sell the Barracuda was that on September 1, 1978 I purchased, for the noble sum of about \$5,500, a brand new (no more used-car nightmares for me!) Toyota Corolla, the Deluxe model with four doors, automatic transmission (I was a lazy driver back then; the Barracuda, while it lived, had spoiled me) and an AM/FM radio. She was a small, lightweight (better gas mileage, still important back then when my salary was low and the great oil shortage was still recent history) model, painted brown because I didn't have the sense to realize that a car without air conditioning should be a light color.

She was always (pardon the John Norman-ism here, please) obedient, responding swiftly to the touch and always eager to please, supplying a touch more acceleration and maneuverability than I really had any right to expect. Over the years she aged well (partly due to my averaging only 6,000 miles per year), accepting the indignities of two minor collisions (both my fault), two theft attempts (one successful: the nits abandoned her — stripped of her spare tire and my best jacket — when they ran out of gas and couldn't break the locked gas cap), and many dents and scrapes, which I periodically covered up with beauty trips to Maaco.

As my salary and standard of living improved over the years, I occasionally thought about buying a new, better car, and I even went so far as to look in showrooms, lusting after Ford Broncos, Chevy Blazers, and of course Jeep Cherokees. And gasping in amazement at the price tags. And I always wound up sticking with my loyal little Toyota.

A few months ago, I think, was the beginning of the end for us. Backing away from the compressed air pump at a gas station, with the steering wheel pointed to the right and my eyes looking out the rear window, I bashed her front left fender into the corner of a parked car, denting and scraping it badly. If you've ever dealt with insurance companies and auto body shops, you might understand, if not forgive, me for saying to myself, "Oh, the hell with it. I'll just live with the damage," and doing nothing about it.

In early April, a month or so ago, I noticed some rust on that fender, though not in the vicinity of the damaged area. I scraped at it with my foot, and the toe of my sneaker went right through the metal. Rust-through. I didn't, and still don't, know whether it was caused by the damage to the fender, or, if it wasn't, whether it was a symptom of a body-wide problem. I decided to hope that it was local and just get the fender replaced. To do this, I resorted to Insurance Fraud (gasp!), filing a false report that she'd been hit while sitting in a parking lot. I then realized that the damage I'd caused had aged, so I had to deliberately hit the fender again to cause new injuries. After some almost comical failures to swing the fender into a pillar in an underground garage (the tire kept hitting before the fender, causing the car to gently bounce off, unscathed), I finally managed to bash her into a concrete-filled steel pipe that guards the brickwork of my office building. The results were impressive — the plastic cover on the parking light virtually exploded, sending orange shards flying in all directions. The fender was nicely crushed, and all was right with the world.

Rather half-heartedly (for I felt silly talking to a car, even with no witnesses), I assured her, "It's for your own good — don't worry, soon your fender will be the best it's been in years." And soon it was, all new and freshly painted.

But the damage in my mind had been done. She was Getting Old. If the fender had rusted through, what of the rest of her? It was definitely time to Go Shopping. After several misadventures — God, I hate car salesmen! — I signed the contract with Back Bay AMC. They gave me a trade-in allowance of \$1,290, which was actually worth about \$1,350 to me because trade-ins don't count towards the final price and therefore aren't taxed in Massachusetts. Today, just a few hours ago, I drove over to B.B. AMC, not sure exactly where we stood in the paperwork process (which they had managed to foul up repeatedly over the past few days), and discovered that we had progressed to the point where I would actually Take Possession of my new Cherokee, and they'd take the keys to the Toyota.

I was caught by surprise at the suddenness of it. Ever since I'd bought her, I'd always kept careful track of her elapsed mileage and gas consumption, and I'd been planning on giving her one last ceremonial fill-up, calculating her gas mileage for the last time. Now, suddenly, the salesman was taking the keys — my keys! — and I was signing the title over to him. We walked out to the parking lot, where I removed the last of my possessions from her (most of the stuff was already gone, in anticipation of this). Almost before I realized it, the salesman had out a screwdriver and was removing the license plate, 298-BKP, that she'd worn all her life ... and it was over. Conscious of the man standing next to me, waiting to brief me on my new toy, all I could do was give her a pat on the roof in farewell. I should have said something to her then, and damn the salesman (who had no soul anyway), but I didn't. I make no excuses; I was more worried about the opinion of a lousy human being than that of a good car.

Later, after learning about my new Jeep, I walked to the Nantucket Sound store next door to see about getting it a radio (I'd bought the base model; it didn't even have an antenna). I walked past my old Toyota, planning (if no one was around) to say goodbye to her later. An hour later, when I left Nantucket Sound and returned to the lot, she was gone.

I didn't cry then. I just climbed into my brand spanking new wonder machine and (carefully) drove it over here to the office. I'm crying a little now. My new car is probably a fine and wonderful thing, but I don't yet know what gender it is, or whether or not it even has a soul. My old Toyota was a good machine, with a faithful soul, and I traded her to the slavers without even a farewell kiss. And in nearly eight years of using and abusing her, I never even gave her a name. Damn it.

When she realizes what's happened, I hope she'll forgive me. I think she will.

May 1, 1986

Teleconferencing with Joe and Gay Haldeman

The following is an edited transcript of a conference on the Compuserve computer network (aka CIS), which took place the evening of December 14, 1985. In addition to the Haldemans, the conference featured C.J. Cherryh, Beth Meacham of Tor Books, and Tappan King, who is now the editor of Rod Serling's The Twilight Zone Magazine™. Comments in angle brackets <> are those of the participants; comments in italics and square brackets [] are the editor's.

George the SysOp: All right, if I could have everyone's attention, please.

Tappan King & Beth Meacham: <corks popping>

Atlanta SFS: EGG NOG!!!!

C.J. Cherryh: Grin.

Joe & Gay Haldeman: Sounds good.

[Various hellos from the assembled.]

Joe & Gay: Hi, everybody. Please be patient with us; we're new at this.

George Ciffrancis: Greetings, Joe and Gay.

Joe & Gay: For anyone's info, Gay is typing, but Joe's looking over my shoulder.

Wilma: Hi folks! Welcome! First of all, I wanna let Joe know how much I enjoyed last night's *Twilight Zone*. A really fine adaptation of your work, I thought. *[Ed. note: The episode was "I of Newton," with Sherman Hemsley and Ron Glass, aired in the last 9 minutes of the 12/13/85 Twilight Zone. The previous 51 minutes were taken up by a really awful thing called "Her Pilgrim Soul."]*

Joe & Gay: My father-in-law thought the first one was mine and turned off the TV after it. I wonder how often that happened?

Wilma: I know that I will see you both at Boskone, but what's in the pipeline for new works?

Joe & Gay: Working on a grade-B adventure SF movie which I can't say much about, unfortunately. Just delivered novel *Tool of the Trade* last month. Working on third book of the *Worlds* trilogy.

Tappan & Beth: To follow up on Wilma's question, could you tell us a bit about *Tool of the Trade*: who published by, and when, and what about, and that sort of thing.

Joe & Gay: It's out to six different publishers, including Tor, I think. And we're just waiting.

Tappan & Beth: (OH?))

Joe & Gay: My agent, Kirby, thinks it'll be a breakout book for me. Beth, it may only have gone out a few days ago.

Tappan & Beth: Terrific! Beth is VERY interested. Haven't received it.

Joe & Gay: It's borderline SF; more an "international thriller." Also quite serious novel about sin and redemption (of course).

Tappan & Beth: Neat! <waiting impatiently> [*Morrow/Avon has since announced it will be publishing Tool of the Trade.*]

Raycat: Was just wondering if you are out of *Thieves' World* or if we will be seeing more of ya there?

Joe & Gay: Gay and I are talking about collaborating, doing a story that happens before mine in *Thieves' World I*.

Ron Brooks: Could you tell me about some of the books you have written? I am not familiar with your writing.

Joe & Gay: Won Hugo and Nebula awards for *The Forever War* in 1976; have written or edited about 17 other books, mostly SF. *Worlds* and *Worlds Apart* are my favorites, right now [I'm] working on *Worlds Enough and Time*, the third of the trilogy.

Cherryh: J&G, [I'm] going to Boskone too. How about Uranus flyby (25 Jan.)?

Joe & Gay: Tentatively planning to watch it on my bro[ther's TV]. But we'd rather watch it at JPL. Any details?

Cherryh: Grin. Starts 10am ends 6, Pasadena; bet Jerry could wangle same ... will look into it for you.

Joe & Gay: Thanks!

David Fandray: I am working my way backwards through Heinlein and recently [discovered] *Starship Troopers*. Was struck by the similarity with *Forever War*. Was this planned or coincidence? Is this an old old question?

Joe & Gay: Yes, it's an old, old question. I didn't plan to answer *Starship Troopers* with TFW; it was just a science fiction novel about Viet Nam. Both novels have similar structure, but so do *The Red Badge of Courage* and *The Naked and the Dead*: You take them through training, put them into combat, and see whether they live or die. Surefire war novel formula. (Heinlein liked TFW enough to read it several times.)

David Fandray: Nice work with the formula, I must say.

Grant Gainey: Re *Thieves' World*: How did you find the experience of working on a "group" project like that? How does it compare with the "normal" way you would write a story??

Joe & Gay: I enjoyed the bull sessions with Asprin, Gordie Dickson and the others, and it was fascinating to work within a magic system devised by John Brunner. But I forgot to use other people's characters in my story! George Martin pointed this out to me a few months ago. It'd slipped my mind.

Grant Gainey: How do you feel about others using your character?

Joe & Gay: I love other people using my character, but in fact I tried to kill him off so nobody else could use him again. It didn't work. Asprin informed me that a character who is killed by sorcery can be revived by sorcery.

F. E. Potts: Have you seen James A. Van Allen's article in the January issue of *Scientific American*, and if so, what do you think about it?

Joe & Gay: Haven't seen it, but I'm sure it's fine.

F. E. Potts: Well, depends on your point of view. It seems he feels man has no place in space and is very much against the space station and that it is just a "quasi-religious" aberration of sf writers.

Joe & Gay: That point of view is familiar, of course, and I do have some sympathy with it, in that those space dollars would go a lot farther, in terms of scientific worth, if they were applied to non-manned projects, in general. You can't blame a scientist whose life revolves around work requiring unmanned satellites having extreme views in this direction. My views are otherwise, of course.

Cherryh: I was about to say something re TW, but the last question rattled *my* cage ... like you I hold opinions of [a] different sort ... want to start a message thread in the messages? Ought to make a lively one. Personally I put Allen's article with the one from 50 years ago that proves lightbulbs are impractical.

Joe & Gay: Grin. Lightbulbs are impractical, Carolyn! MIT JOKE!!!

Tappan & Beth: <Tappan here> I've asked this of other writers in conference: Could you tell us a little about your working habits?

Joe & Gay: I get up early in the morning and write for several hours every day, usually that's between 3 and 4 in the morning. Then I go do other things. I use a Macintosh and am trying to learn how to rewrite. For many years I wrote one slow draft, a book taking about a year and a half or two years. I want to be able to blast it out like everybody else.

Tappan & Beth: Thanks. <morbid curiosity>

Grant Gainey: OK — another TW question here; what do you see/feel/know of the future of TW? The scope of the series seems to be expanding well beyond the original setting; will this continue?

Joe & Gay: All I know is that Bob Asprin and Lynn Abbey plan to run for president of the United States and Premier of the Soviet Union simultaneously. Other than that I know nothing about the scope of their ambitions.

ASFS (Judy Sutton): Joe, what do you DO canoe canoe? [Huh?]

Joe & Gay: Joe went to get a beer. This is a Gay, for a sec. He teaches at MIT for the fall semester every year and writes and travels and reads and sits in the bathtub and drinks beer and cooks wonderfully and draws and paints and plays the guitar and sings and writes poetry. Joe's back. He says go ahead. Maybe I covered most of it.

Grant Gainey: This is a general question re SciFi trends — Joe, "Combat SF" as a genre seems to be making a real come-back recently; do you see this as a possible reflection of the political climate in this country? Is SF showing the US is "getting over" the shock of 'Nam?

Joe & Gay: The trend is undeniable, and if I had half a brain, I'd turn out a half dozen clones of *The Forever War* and retire. But I'm not that kind of writer, and I've been trying to live down the "war writer" label for years and years. I think the market is reflecting a new willingness of Americans to tolerate military adventurism, and although I don't approve, I can't say I'm surprised. Who would be? We're a warlike nation.

ASFS(Bill Sutton): Joe, CJ and I ALMOST decided to come in tonight with a rousing chorus of "Locked up in a Spaceship..." [A folksong Joe wrote]

Cherryh: Grin.

ASFS: So, speaking of which, what are you going to sing for us tonight?

Joe & Gay: I can't find the proper control characters on my keyboard ... does that mean I'm out of key?

Cherryh: Joe, I darned near got typed as a fantasy writer by what I just happened to come out with first. Mostly this kind of thing seems the sort of stuff reviewers make their reps off ... what is your opinion of reviewers and such stuff?

Joe & Gay: I think we'd all be better off if we never paid any attention to them, although every now and then you do learn something from what they say. I've been slowed down by negative reviews many times, but I can't recall a good review ever causing me to write more, or to write more easily. A British playwright likened the relationship between an artist and a critic as being similar to that which exists between a fire hydrant and a dog and sometimes you feel as helpless as a fire hydrant, don't you?

Cherryh: <hilarious laughter> Grin.

George the SysOp: Joe, do you have anything else coming to the screen, either a movie, or another outstanding television show?

Joe & Gay: The movie that I'm working on now should go into production this summer (!!) and be released about a year from now. Fast work. (Let me repeat that I can't tell anybody very much about this movie, and it's not because there's anything mysterious going on. Just studio policy.) It's not from one of my own books; just easy money. *[The film has since been announced; it's called "Robojox" and was being filmed this summer.]*

ASFS(Judy): Did you have any control over the adaptation of "I of Newton," and if not, did you get big, BIG \$\$\$\$ for it?

Joe & Gay: No, I didn't even know that they had picked it up until after they had started production. My agent knew, but there was a breakdown in communications. Incidentally, I very much liked the adaptation; I thought it preserved the humor in the story very well, although some of the mathematics was lost in the translation. Yes, I did make big \$\$\$ by my own standards. I wrote that story back in 1967 and sold it to Ted White for \$15. The TV rights went for \$2500 and I didn't have to write a line. We had a great time watching it last night, sitting in front of a projection TV in the basement of the MIT Student Center, in the company of 40 or so students, ex-students, and SF fans. They laughed at all the right parts.

George the SysOp: The changing T-shirt sayings were a scream, by the way.

Yanai Siegel: [Have] TV rights been picked up for any of your other stories and if so, which ones are likely to be produced?

Joe & Gay: Options come and go, but there's nothing current.

Wilma: Joe, going back to "I", I don't remember the story and therefore don't remember whether or not the T-shirts were part of the story line. Were they or were they just part of the adaption?

Joe & Gay: They were a device made up by the screenplay writer that had the same function as a part of the story that would've cost a zillion dollars in special effects.

Cherryh: Did you get to see the night launch, or [were you] in Boston?

Joe & Gay: No, I was teaching a seminar in this very room that night (in Cambridge), sigh.

Cherryh: Re-sigh.

Shane: With apologies in advance if this question turns out to be an oft-asked one, Mr. Haldeman, what was the error on page one of *Planet of Judgement*?

Joe & Gay: What only two people figured out was first, the first page of the book is not the first page of the story, and the error is in the dedication. I said that it contained a word that sounds very much like my name. It was in the attribution to the quotation there, which should have been J.B.S. Haldane.

Shane: Finally! Thank you, sir!

Cherryh: Joe&Gay, do you have a permanent PPN, and will you be on here again?

Joe & Gay: We don't know what a PPN is ... is it catching?

Cherryh: Are you in CIS to stay? Would like to have you on Compuserve.

George the SysOp: C.J., the User Id (PPN) they have now is theirs to keep.

Cherryh: Grin. We will spend lots of your hard won \$. I will help.

Joe & Gay: We don't own a modem yet, but this could be addicting! Time is in such short supply right now that we don't dare get involved immediately. But maybe sometime soon ...

Cherryh: It is great fun; a convention every night if you want it. It's such a great 15 min. break from [your] writing schedule.

Yanai Siegel: I'll risk faux pas since it's near the end and say that I'm afraid I missed last night's show. Is the story in print & is there any chance for me to catch a video tape (I've got a VHS format VCR).

Joe & Gay: YOU CALL YOURSELF A SCI-FI FAN? AND YOU DON'T WATCH OUTER LIMITS (or whatever)?

Yanai Siegel: <I'm a BUSY Sci Fi fan..>

Joe & Gay: I don't know who has tapes, but there must be a lot of SF fans who tape TZ. Contact MITSFS, maybe? We don't even have a TV up here. [*Neither does MITSFS.*]

Yanai Siegel: Is the story in print still, though?

Joe & Gay: No, it isn't in print. It's in *Cosmic Laughter*, an anthology of humorous sf from Holt in 1972. Gay has copies for sale at \$20. (Is there no limit to science fiction writers' [greed]?) It's an autographed first edition and she only has a few copies left.

Yanai Siegel: Where can I send a \$20 check to get my very own AUTOGRAPHED copy of *Cosmic Laughter*?

Joe & Gay: (from Gay) Send it to me at P.O. Box 1041, Holly Hill, FL 32017. I also have a catalogue, but this is sounding mercenary.

John Manion: Any ideas of yours you'd like to see happen in the future???

Joe & Gay: I'm sort of a dystopic writer, and I live in the fervent hope that the things I write about won't come to pass. I once predicted a man named Ford would be president of the United States and look what happened. In my next story, both Carolyn and I make zillions of dollars and make the world free for democracy. And then buy it.

Cherryh: Right on for democracy. And buying it.

[Lots of people want in on the action. Joe gives them all shares.]

ASFS (Charles): Joe, about that man Ford, he wouldn't happen to come from another planet. Certainly the man after him was.

John Manion: Was it once said that Ford has a better idea?

Joe & Gay: Ford Prefect?

Yanai Siegel: <but where's his towel?> Joe, I've just checked the Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition (the one that's about a foot thick) and I can't find the word "dystopic." What did you mean by it?

Joe & Gay: Dystopic? Joe's looking it up in the Webster's.

Cherryh: eu-good; dys-bad; topia-place.

Joe & Gay: Thanks Carolyn. It isn't in the Webster Handy College Dictionary, either. But he didn't make it up...

Yanai Siegel: <I guess I'm a little slow this late... Thanks C.J.>

Joe & Gay: How much does this cost, anyway?

Tappan & Beth: Joe, more than you want to know.

John Manion: Relax! I've got Master Card.

Yanai Siegel: It's like yachts. If you've got to ask...

George the SysOp: \$6.25/hour (billed by the minute) at 300 Baud, \$12.50/hour for 1200 Baud.

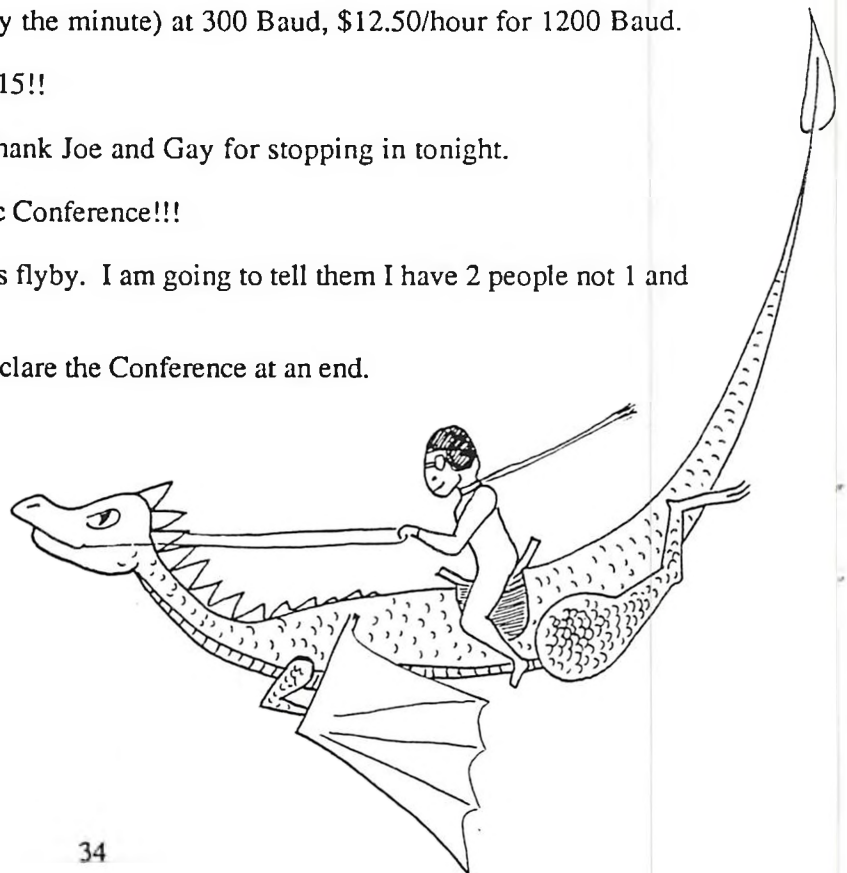
Joe & Gay: I think we've used up our \$15!!

George the SysOp: Hehhe. I'd like to thank Joe and Gay for stopping in tonight.

Tappan & Beth: Joe and Gay--> terrific Conference!!!

Cherryh: I have a guest slot in the Uranus flyby. I am going to tell them I have 2 people not 1 and see what I can get away with.

George the SysOp: On that note, I'll declare the Conference at an end.



Grandson of a Friend of a Friend of Minutes

Excerpts from the Minutes of the MITSFS have been appearing in TZ practically forever; as of TZ 34, we had made it up to 1972-73. Then the sequence was interrupted in TZ 35 to print a recent set of minutes done as a Poe pastiche, and last time Jourcomm didn't have time to look for the 72-73 minutes. I did look for them. I couldn't find them, nor could anyone else. (They are not among the minutes we have never been able to retrieve from Greg Ruffa.) So, I resorted to the next-oldest set I could find, the 78-79 minutes, excerpts from which follow.

10/20/78, 1700 SST

Guy Consolmagno (GC) moves that the minutes be approved as blue. Betsy Hosler moves that this be amended to "as brown." Amendment passes, 7-2-3+Spehn. Amended motion passes, 6-0-1+Spehn.

Someone moves to condemn the Society for having fewer votes than members present. Chickens, 0-2-3+Spehn.

LHE: Positive balance of \$1200. Will soon travel to Venezuela.

Motion that the Society have a new permanent temporary Onseck.
Nominees: Eric Sklar, Nominations B. Closed, Marvin 27, Richard M. Nixon, Greg Ruffa.

First ballot, Sklar 1.780999, N.B. Closed 0.23001, Marvin 0.5, Nixon 0.25, Ruffa 0.849, others 0.84, abstain 2.5.

Second ballot, Sklar 3.390109991, Phillies 0.9999, Y 0.25, Cordwainer Smith 0.125, Cordwainer Bird 0.125, Linus Pauling 0.20, N.B. Closed 1.2, Hitler 1, others 0.5.

Third ballot, Sklar 7.05629999, Whoever has a plurality 1, N.B. Closed 0.4500000000000001, Phillies 0.007, Leif Ericsson 0.5, Bob Hope 0.5, others 0.786, abstain 0.2.

Mr. Eric Sklar is declared new Temporary Permanent Onseck.

It is moved to condemn the old and new Onsecks for failure to transfer and use (respectively) a banana-shaped pen to write the minutes. Passes 15-10-5+Spehn. Meeting adjourned, 1800 SST.

Late November 1978 [?], 1700 SST
Called to order by Alan Wechsler.

President asks Onseck for the source of a mentioned copy of TZ 30. Onseck (Sklar) says he will be here for next 3 terms, will try to prepare TZ 30. Further nitpicking discussion of TZ.

Quotecom (GC): from *Washington Post*, "Correction: Because of a typographical error in Tuesday's *Washington Post*, it was incorrectly stated that KH11 spy satellite were printed in 1967. They were printed in 1876."

12/8/78 [?], 1700 SST
Meeting opened by R. Goldstein, who immediately left.

1701 SST (middle of minutes), Hy Tran (HDT) was present via telephone. President's report: Wait till I get there!

While in suspended animation:

- 1) Silverstein discovered a new Witter shipment
- 2) Reuben Thomas rushed in and announced, "Look at the moon!" We immediately turned off the lights and looked out the window at a brand-new moon (with the old moon in its arms)

Meeting resumes 45 minutes later.

LHE Report: \$1100. No, I'm sorry, we have \$1600.

Libcomm, if it existed, would report that a new Witter shipment arrived. Also "Pinkdex is on a computer file" but no one knows how to use it.

Intercomm (Costello): No reply from a Soviet editor written to 3 years ago. Maybe he was shot.

Jourcomm: Wechsler showed up last week and swiped our copy of TZ 30. It's being put out next week for sure!

Random: What's TZ 30?

Goldberg: I didn't hear a finger motion. I'm astounded!

Magoo [?]: Move to condemn that man for being Astound-ed. No second.

Discussion of Asimov's talk [on campus] and why he didn't visit the Library: "30,000 books are too many to autograph."

12/15/78, 1700 SST

Untitledcomm (GC): Part of my dissertation appears this month in the October issue of *The Moon and the Planets*.

Minicult (Carl): I don't know what's going on.

Motion to approve that man fails.

Minicult (Goldberg): *boston glob* reports loonies coming out during the full moon. "At full moon, it's bigger, so the tides are greater."

1/26/79, 1700 SST

Called to order by HDT.

GC: Move to censure the LHE for not spending fast enough. Chickens, 5-4-12+Spehn.

ROSFAP: "Say what?" People obey.

Committee to Overthrow Jourcomm: TZ 30 to printer RSN.

Moocomm: *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* has been released.

Spencer moves to suppress the report and the movie. Passes 37-0-3+Spehn.

2/2/79, 1700 SST

LHE is out of town and can't be found. Motion to commend the LHE for doing the right thing with the money. Fails 0-8-0+Spehn.

New Business: "What's the usual motion?" Finger motion passed, automatically.

Motion to condemn Costa Rica for growing bananas. Amendment: that Tom Spencer (TS) write a letter to Costa Rica that we condemned them for this, and that he report about this letter to us. Amendment passes 8-2-1+Spehn.

Holt: Clarify this amendment.

Carl: What sort of banana? Answer: A finger-banana!

Two verses of the adjournment song. Vote taken on motion; it chickens. Meeting adjourned after third verse of adjournment song.

2/9/79, 1700 SST

Moved to approve minutes as red (which they are [red ink, that is]). Amended to invest in freshman pictures for blackmail. Amendment fails, 2-6-2+Spehn. Main motion passes, 4-np-2+Spehn.

Libcomm (Chip Hitchcock [CJH]): The Library is still here.

TZ has troubled the printer. Also the rest of us.

Malcolm (Y) arrived claiming there were *people* in the Library.

Minicult: Harvard tuition over \$450 [sic] but toilet paper will be free.

TS has written a letter to Costa Rica, which was mailed at 1600, 2/2/79. There has been no answer. Much argument ensues about declaring Costa Rica non-existent.

CJH: Move to form committee to find out what Malcolm was dropping when he uttered the above remark. Passes. Committee is named Malcomm.

Motion to censure a random Oded Feingold for claiming that *I Will Fear No Evil* is a good book. Passes 8-3-4+Spehn+porcupine.

Motion to batter another random with a Costa Rican banana for making a useless motion. Passes 18-15-7+Spehn.

2/16/79, 1700 SST (Day 1 of Boskone 16)

Called to order by HDT.

Motion to censure man and moustache for not voting. Chickens 4-0-5+Spehn.

Motion to censure for voting only once. Moved subsequent motion. Huh?

[Matrix vote:]

	Y	N	C	
censure for voting	3	2	2	
subseq. question	6	4	4	= 0
Huh?	5	2	4	

All motions chicken.

PseudoCostaRicacomm: No reply to letter. Moved to appoint committee to investigate lack of reply and pay committee one canned Canadian banana per week if possible. Meeting adjourned 1737 SST.

2/23/79, 1700 SST
Called to order by HDT.

PseudoMoocomm: Frank Herbert is writing a script for *Dune*.

Discussion of whether *The Best of TZ* will be right-justified. "Of all magazines that should be right-justified, *Ergo* is the most important."

Old Business, Old Business Algol. Usual motions and seconds. Chickens 5-3-7+Spehn+3000 white labels+26" of Prell shampoo.

Minicult: An editor at Boskone said there would be an increase in women's issues discussed in SF.

3/9/79, 1700 SST

Motion to define the former Skinner as a calibrated alligator consuming a banana. Passes 4-3-3+Spehn.

3/16/79, 1700 SST

PseudoLibcomm: Meeting with the Institute Archivist March 23 to discuss preservation of ancient materials.

CJH suggests embalming them in 190 proof EtOH.

Old Business Algol: CJH does jumping jacks. HDT calls this Cobol.

CJH moves to purchase 100 gallons of 190 proof non-denatured EtOH to be drawn off as necessary and flavored with banana oil. Ties 12-12-3+Spehn. Bill Starr gets tie off the wall for HDT to break. HDT breaks tie, meeting adjourned 1719 SST.

3/23/79, 1700 SST

PseudoLibcomm: The Institute Archivist came today, drooled over the books, and promptly signed up for a four-year membership. She wants our historical files when we no longer want them.

Motion to commend Archivist passes 6-0-2+Spehn.

Subsidiary motion to commiserate with Archivist for joining MITSFS.

LHE: The books are being balanced, and the LHE is absconding to Detroit.

Motion to get photograph of new sculpture "Transparent Banana" in the temporary buildings. Fails 6-11-Spehn.

Miller motion, seconded, fails 3-5-3+Spehn.

Miller motion, seconded, ties 3-3-2+Spehn.

Discussion: should a second second (on the second motion) be allowed? By Skinnerial decree: No. Tie taken down off wall and broken by HDT.

4/6/79, 1700 SST
Called to order by HDT.

(Jourcomm/2)₂: TZ 31 hopefully out soon. "If you could see some of the things being submitted, you would be even more tempted to submit!"

Minicult (Cheryl Wheeler): In the current *Galaxy*, the MITSFS is referred to as the MISFITS [in a story by Frederik Pohl].

Motion to write letters to Fred Pohl and *Galaxy* informing them of their error. Passes 7-2-2+Spehn.
[*These letters were in fact sent — Ed.*]

4/13/79, 1700 SST
Called to order by HDT.

Minicult (GC): Sulfur volcanos on Io were predicted by Hal Clement in *Ice World*. Note of such was made at a colloquium at Cornell last week.

PseudoMoocomm: *Star Crash* has been released. Spaghetti opera: Giant spaceship "Murray Leinster," slaves throwing radium by hand into a reactor. Not playing in this area.

Motion to place a banana pizza in orbit around Proxmire, then put Proxmire in orbit around Jupiter. Passes 17-0-2+Spehn. Adjourned ~1725 SST.

4/20/79, 1700 SST
Called to order by HDT.

Motion to congratulate the Skinner for "forgetting" that Chip wished to edit TZ 30. Passes.

Motion to censure Temporary Onseck for masticating Gritch Book. Passes.

Minicult (GC): A person called the director of the Cornell libraries to complain about conditions and was told the director agreed and was resigning.

5/4/79, 1700 SST
Election Meeting called to order by HDT.

Motion to condemn Society for not having at least five times as many votes as people present. Chickens 2-1-very many+frog+Spehn.

ELECTIONS:

President, nominees — Otis Bricker, Idi Amin, Eric Sklar, Warren J. Dew, Gerald R. Ford, No Award, James Callahan, The Man in the Moon.

President, final vote (2nd) — Eric 12.19, Otis 1.1, Idi .68, WJD 2.5, Man in Moon .03, randoms 2.50300001.

Vice, nominees — Cheryl Wheeler, Carl Again, Warren J. Dew, Insufficient Data, Nelson Rockefeller, Who's On First, Goreous, Mycroft Holmes IV.

Vice, final vote (3rd) — Carl 9.43, Cheryl 3.8, WJD 3.2, all others 0.

LHE, nominees — Commander Koloth, Bert Lance, Koko, Nick Danger, Warren J. Dew, L. Van ReH [sic], Rod Cadanav.

LHE, only vote — Rod 9.18, Nick Danger .0001, WJD 4.3.

Onseck, nominees — Cheryl Wheeler, Paul Bean, Muffit, G.O., Multics.

Onseck, only vote — Cheryl 13.32, Paul Bean 2.06, Multics .51.

Official Second: Warren J. Dew.

Meeting now turned over to new President, who immediately appoints himself Skinner.

GC: Motion that someone be appointed general-in-arms to lead the coup d'état against the Society, which has been run like a banana republic. Passes 25-0-Spehn. Meeting adjourned 1800 SST.



While there is some debate about the year MITSFS was founded (as there is about almost every historical fact concerning MITSFS), the Society is generally conceded to have begun in 1949, give or take a few years. However, startling new evidence has been uncovered which proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that MITSFS is thousands of years older than has been believed. Twilight Zine is proud to present the first publication of this evidence ...

MITSFS Through the Ages

by Janice M. Eisen

The earliest trace of the existence of the MITSFS has been found in some Belgian cave drawings dating from approximately 100,000 years B.C. (See Figure 1.) Many archæologists have been puzzled by the object held in the man's hand, since the wrench was not invented until several millennia later. It is obvious to the educated observer that the device can only be a gavel.

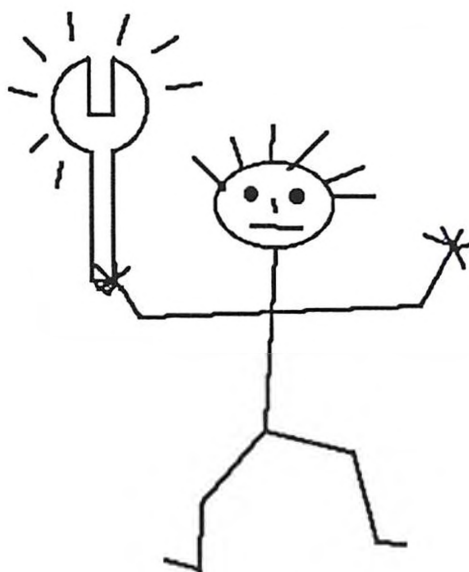


Figure 1

The gavel appears again in an ancient Egyptian painting found in the tomb of an unidentified minor official. (See Figure 2.) The hieroglyphics under the painting have been translated to read: "We are not rotating wind devices, we merely read the material." Unfortunately, no related artifacts were found, since the tomb was looted by grave robbers about three days after it was sealed.

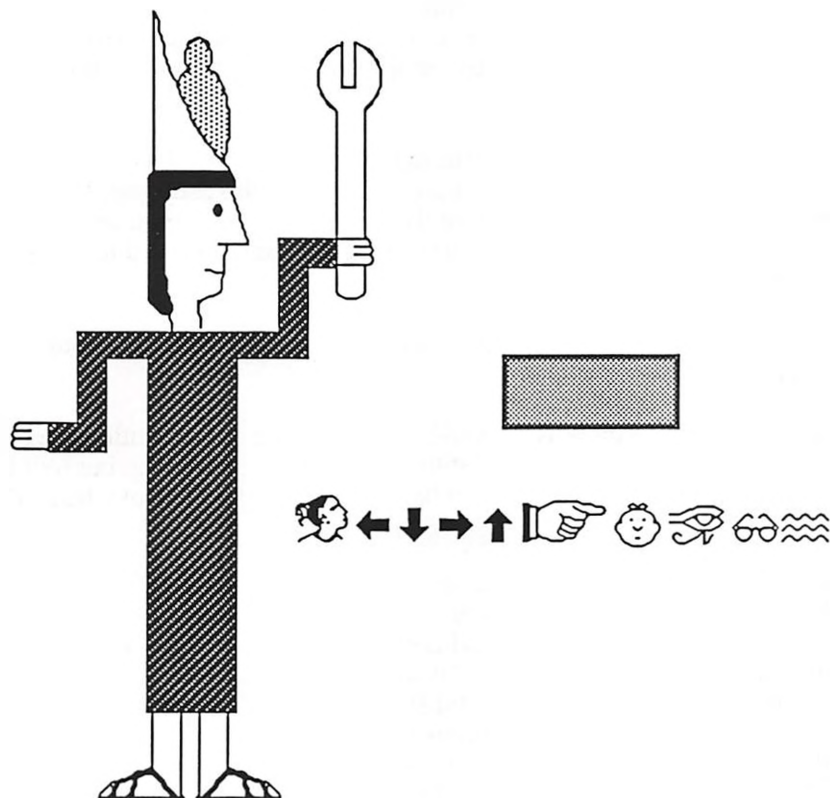


Figure 2

Evidence that the MITSFS existed in Biblical times has been provided by the pseudo-Apocrypha, which appear to date from the time of the Old Testament prophets, although they are not considered holy scripture by any known religion. The relevant passage occurs in the Book of Jedediah, Chapter 2:

- 14 And lo, the angel of the Lord came unto Jedediah and spake to him and shewed him wonders.
- 15 And Jedediah spake unto the angel, saying, What is this wonder thou hast shown me, which shineth like unto a golden horn?
- 16 And the angel spake unto Jedediah of the holy golden fruit, which is called banana. And the angel gave the banana unto Jedediah, and Jedediah consumed it and found it good.
- 17 And the angel spake again, saying, If thou wouldst have more bananas, then thou must travel unto the land of Mitsvis, which lieth between the lands of the Ellisees and of the Tekkites. For the banana groweth there in abundance.

- 18 And Jedediah heeded the angel of the Lord and travelled unto the land of Mitsvis to seek the banana. And his journey was of forty and two days.
- 19 And the soldiers of Mitsvis did lay hands on Jedediah, saying unto him, Thou mayest not eat of the banana, for it is holy. And Jedediah said unto them, Wherefore do you prevent me, for the Lord our God did send me hither to eat of the holy banana. And the guards did bring Jedediah before the king of the Mitsvis, who was called Scinher.
- 20 And Scinher spake unto Jedediah, saying, Because thou hast stolen of the banana, then thou must die. Yet I will spare thee, for thou hast courage, and thou lovest thy Lord. Therefore thou shalt remain here to serve me all thy days. And Jedediah followed the command of Scinher.

Unfortunately, at this point the book launches into an obscure parable about sheep and never resumes the narrative.

The next several millennia have as yet yielded no evidence of the continued existence of the MITSFS. The organization may have gone underground or become dormant, but it did not disappear, as the following passage from the recently-discovered first draft of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* makes clear:

A bande of strangers did we meete
 Who cried alöode and did repeete
 Folle manny an anticke geste and ponne.
 The flammes rose, hotte as the sonne.
 And these odd wordes they oft did shöote
 And jumpe and danse and ronne aböote
 (It soone grew auld — we'd had enoffe)
 "We are naught fannes, we reede the stoffe."

The last known literary reference to the MITSFS prior to 1949 turned up in a fragment of an unpublished play by William Shakespeare. The success of *Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark* apparently convinced Shakespeare to write a sequel. Unfortunately, he had made the mistake of killing off all of the major characters quite definitively. Since the concept of "prequels" was unknown at the time, Shakespeare eventually decided to send Hamlet's college friend Horatio to another court, thus providing a link between the two plays.

Unfortunately, negative reaction to the play (tentatively titled *Zog, the Prince of Albania*) resulted in its never being produced and the burning of all known copies. One copy escaped destruction, but it has suffered much damage from time and dampness, so that only fragments are left. In Act I, Horatio recounts his travel adventures to a spellbound Zog:

Horatio: But aye! A tale must wondrous do I bring
 Of jolly lads and maids, a motley tribe,
 Yclept the Mitsfiss.

Zog: 'Sblood, the name is strange.

Horatio: Indeed, my lord, and they've strange customs too.
 Their gatherings are shrouded in weird lore,
 Unearthly, Sire, or so it seemed to me.
 And speak they often of their only god,
 Whose name is Skinner, and they claim that he
 Hath pow'rs that reach beyond both space and time.

They work with metal, but in forms absurd.
They sacrifice to Skinner ev'ry week
A long and yellow fruit that tastes quite good,
But whence it comes they do not deign to say.
Their rabbits have no —

Soldier:

Sire! The troops advance!

The tale is interrupted at this point for military preparations, and no trace of the rest of it has survived.

No further clear references to the MITSFS prior to 1949 have been found. Some scholars believe that Louis XIV's famous statement, "*L'état, c'est moi*" [I am the state] was influenced by his friendship with the Skinner. Others theorize that early versions of the U.S. Constitution contained an electoral system based on MITSFS election procedures. Yet others see a MITSFS influence on calypso music in the Caribbean.

Attractive as these theories are, no proof of their validity has yet been found, despite exhaustive research funded by a federal grant. We may never know what drove MITSFS underground, or what prompted its re-emergence in 1949. In any case, the evidence is overwhelming that the MITSFS is the oldest human organization in the known universe.

* * *

Money Grubbing

Oh, come on, don't turn the page! I promise this commercial will be brief ...

I. Helping the MITSFS If You're Well-Off

MITSFS has an Endowment Fund, established for the Society by Robert Sacks, under the auspices of the MIT Alumni Fund. The interest income from this fund will be very important for us as we struggle to keep up with the huge amount of sf being published these days while fighting off suggestions from FinBoard that we buy fewer books. Donations to the fund count as donations to MIT, and so are **Tax-Deductible** (unless tax reform severely changes the situation). If you are interested in being canonized, please write to the Skinner, c/o MITSFS, at the address given on the inside front cover.

I.A. Helping the MITSFS At No Additional Cost to Yourself

If you are an MIT alumoid and subscribe to *Technology Review*, you can help us out by designating your subscription fee to go to the "MIT Science Fiction Library Fund." Please let us know if you do that, so we can make sure the money goes to the right place.

II. Making a Fashion Statement

You, too, can wear an **Official MITSFS T-Shirt!** They've got the official MITSFS insignia (a copy of which should appear here, but I couldn't find it; take my word for it, it's terrific) in bright red, silk-screened onto a gray 75% cotton/25% polyester T-shirt. They cost a mere \$5.00 and may be purchased at the Library or by mail.

If you're ordering by mail, please be sure to specify your size (Small, Medium, Large, or Wookie) and enclose postage and handling of \$1.00 for the first shirt, 75¢ each for the second and third shirts, and 50¢ for each additional shirt. Please remember that we're dealing with the Post Awful, and allow plenty of time for delivery.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

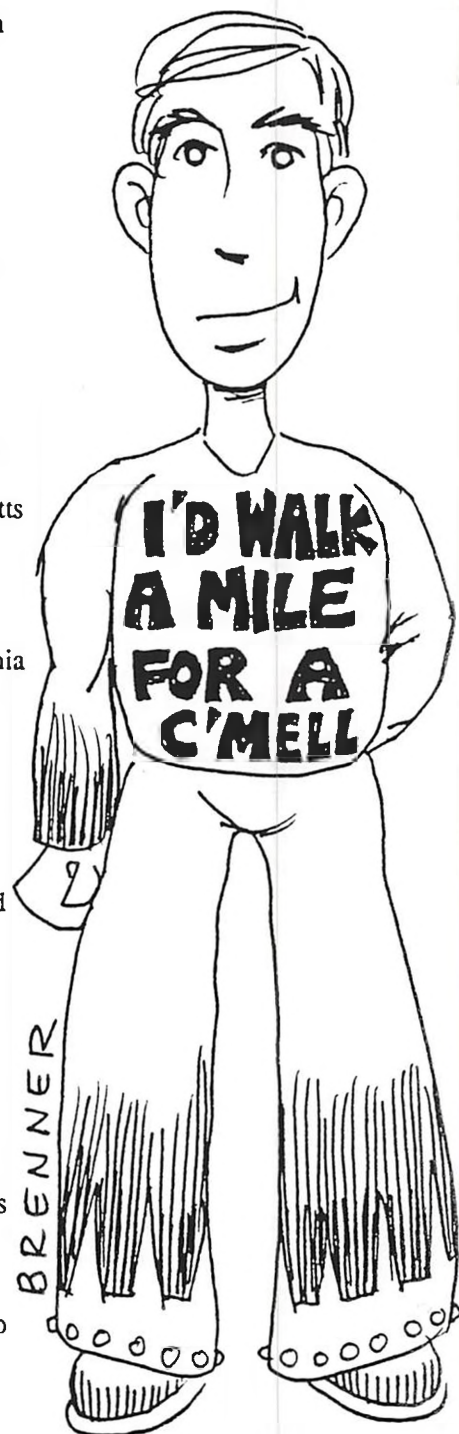
The following people's names are in *Twilight Zine's* old files, but we do not have a current address. (Some of the addresses date back to the '60s.) We'd appreciate any information about their whereabouts.

Name

Last Known Location

Lon Atkins
John Bangsund
Richard Benyo
Robert Bernstein
Ken Bissinger
Jerry Burge
Joanne Burger
Dave Burton
R.D. Christian
ChUSFA
Frank Cocki
Mrs. Leigh Couch
Scott Davidson
Joel Davis
Gene DeWeese
Bill Donaho
Earl Evers
Fred Galvin
Gerald Geary
Gary Goldberg
Nils Hardin
Arthur Hayes
Kenneth E. Hicks
Fred Hollander
Jon Inouye
Donald Jackson
Dwain Kaiser
Al Kuhfeld
Mario Kwait
Richard LaBonte
Lee and Jim Lavell
Ethel Lindsay
Russell Lynch, Jr.
Bill Mallardi
John E. Maroney
Melvin Merson
Bernie Morris
Jerry Page
William T. Park
Ross Pavlac
John J. Pierce
Laramie Sasseville
Clifford Simak
Ajai K. Sinha
Ed Smith
Roy and Chris Tackett
Mike Timmreck
Riccardo Valla
Laurine White

Canoga Park, California
Melbourne, Australia
Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania
Chicago, Illinois
Albany, New York
Atlanta, Georgia
Lake Jackson, Texas
Indianapolis, Indiana
Omaha, Nebraska
Urbana, Illinois
Waltham, Massachusetts
Arnold, Missouri
Princeton, New Jersey
Boulder, Colorado
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Berkeley, California
San Francisco, California
Berkeley, California
Fort Devens, Massachusetts
East Lansing, Michigan
St. Louis, Missouri
Timmons, Ontario
Marietta, Georgia
Pacific Palisades, California
Culver City, California
Adrian, Michigan
Upland, California
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Dahlgew, West Germany
Ottawa, Ontario
Indianapolis, Indiana
Surbiton, Surrey, England
Arlington, Virginia
Akron, Ohio
Lockbourne, Ohio
Oak Park, Michigan
Providence, Rhode Island
Atlanta, Georgia
??
Chicago, Illinois
Westfield, New Jersey
Cambridge, Massachusetts
Minnetonka, Minnesota
New Delhi, India
Washington, D.C.
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Warren, Michigan
Torino, Italy
Sacramento, California



Letters of Comment

22 January 86

Dear Jourcomm (presumably Bill Starr): *[Wrong again -- Ed.]*

You're getting this LoC because:

You really *do* trade fanzines with me.

While the Clockwork Grapefruit is not in the league of TZ (mainly because I can't get anyone by m'self & close relatives to submit anything (this is a desperate plea to all you out there!)), *[Ha! You won't get any submissions from these deadbeats.]* it does exist. I manage to get it out N times per year (where N is a real number greater than or equal to 1.0). Next time I'll send you 2 copies to be sure. Maybe I'll even submit something...

Comments on TZ 36. If Will Murray stops writing "Doc Salvage" stories you have my permission to have him shot on sight (also on the arms, the legs, and any *other* extremities). Hot damn, but that shit is funny! The "Bozon Waves" cartoon was charming. While it is well known that we physicists have our own little quarks, quantum mechanics *still* makes me jumpy.

A note on the "Incarnations of Immortality" review. At least they're not Xanth (**gag*retch**) books. Or "Bio of a Space Tyrant." That's already a point in their favor.

If you haven't all seen "Tripods" yet (adaptations of John Christopher's books) Do So With Utmost Haste. The quality is far higher than most BBC SF shows. Also, "Planet Earth," high-quality pop science (much like "Life on Earth" or the much-mourned C-Mos). Catch 'em on your local PBS station (WNET Channel 13 down here, WGBH (I think) up there.)

Keep it up, O not-fans-just-read-the-stuffers.

FTS,
Dave Weingart
31 E. 13th St.
Huntington Station, NY 11746

[Don't put your publication record down — it's better than ours, and we're nominally a quarterly. Haven't caught "Tripods," but I'll look for it; those books are the first sf I remember reading. By the way, I grew up in Huntington Station (though the part I lived in was eventually made part of Melville) — did you go to Walt Whitman High?]

* * *

February 7, 1986

Dear Twilighters,

Thank you for sending *Zine* 36. You'll want to take note of my new address — I'm no longer on Edgewater Road. I feel guilty at getting a copy marked trade, because I don't currently publish anything and don't have plans to start again.

Book review sort of notes -- I recently read Barbara Hambly's *Dragonsbane*, which isn't a sequel to the the Darwath trilogy of hers you reviewed, but has some similarities in theme and the way magic is depicted as working. And it's similarly *good*. Like many recent writers, she disapproves of indiscriminate dragon-slaying, and the dragon in the story winds up as a sort of additional hero. It occurred to me that the story could almost be read as an explanation of where R.A. MacAvoy's *[Tea With the] Black Dragon* came from, except that this black dragon is European

in background rather than Oriental. (On the other hand, MacAvoy's also shows up in Europe in the past in one of her *Raphael* group.)

Best,
Ruth Berman
2809 Drew Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55416

* * *

Dear Mr. Starr:

I got your letter [*sent if we could not figure out why someone was on the mailing list*] with the recent copy of *Twilight Zine* — still coming to my old address. [*Do you see a pattern developing here?*]

The reason I was sent TZ originally is that 10-12 years ago I donated some material — Arkham House catalogs primarily, I believe. I'd hate to think you're losing money sending me your magazine. So don't hesitate to delete my name from your subscription list.

Thanks and good luck.

Sincerely,
George Edmonson
9341 Farewell Road
Columbia, MD 21045

[*It's always good to know you're appreciated. Anyway, George, if you want to get off of our mailing list, you have to try harder than that — this counts as a LoC.*]

* * *

Dear Folks,

Awhile back I got a letter from you asking, "Why the hell I was getting *Twilight Zine*."

It could be because I have a larger collection than you do and in awe you're honoring me.

It could be that about 15 years ago I donated some minor items to your collection and your gratitude knows no bounds.

More likely, though, it's because Marc Alpert [*a former Skinner*] put me on your mailing list because he wanted to. In any event I've enjoyed *Twilight Zine* and would like to continue receiving it. If not — not.

Thanks,
Stephen T. Miller
1 Heatherwood Court
Medford, NJ 08055

[*Such enthusiasm, Steve! It's touching to see the loyalty TZ induces in its readers.*]

* * *

1/17/86

Dear Bill, or whoever,

Why am I getting *Twilight Zine*? Damfino. I think it started years ago as a trade for *Yandro*, which was then a monthly but is now more of an annual except we didn't have an issue in 1985. Or it could have been in return for locs; sometimes I commented and sometimes I didn't. (I used to review all fanzines received, too, but I finally got smart.)

So, you aren't the Bill Starr who wrote (writes?) stf adventure books. I don't suppose you're a descendant of Belle Starr, either; too bad.

Frankly, I don't see why Harry Warner let the possibility of finding himself hating everyone else deter him from disliking "Rubenesque bodies." What's wrong with hating everyone else? It makes one stand out from the crowd. (Usually; doesn't always work in fandom, however.) On the other hand, I not only remember "Vic and Sade," I have an lp record of the show, plus a couple of cassette tapes recorded by Paul Curtis. Nice show. Too bad Del Rey can't bring it back like they're doing with "Barnaby."

To each his own; since I never liked *Ringworld*, I thoroughly enjoyed *The Integral Trees*.

Buck (Robert) Coulson
2677W-500N
Hartford City, IN 47348-9575

* * *

December 24, 1985

Dear Bill:

It was a pleasure to receive another *Twilight Zine* after such a long interim, a double pleasure to discover that it is so legibly reproduced, and a pleasure redoubled to find the contents excellent enough to justify publishing again and in such a clear manner. In all conscience, I can't let Christmas Eve come to an end without thanking you for such a yuletide happening. [At least somebody appreciates us!]

Your description of the MITSFS proceedings and library is enough to make me think that a hermit's fanac isn't ideal after all. Of course, I have one advantage over you people: I just let books and magazines and other stuff accumulate and never need to worry about keeping them in proper order, although it does create problems when I want to find a specific item. Just recently I outdid all my other feats of chaos when I managed to mislay a set of the complete works of Bulwer-Lytton. I hope your collection is covered by MIT's insurance policy. Some of your holdings would bring so much if huckstered today that a thief could carry away quite a few thousands of dollars' worth of printed matter in one or two medium-sized cardboard boxes. [It's not entirely clear what our insurance situation is, but apparently we are only covered at all for catastrophic damage, e.g. the entire building burning down. We are not covered for thefts, water damage, and suchlike. This situation is complicated by our never having had a real appraisal of the Library's value. We have had occasional thefts, but nothing on a large scale.]

An oddity: one item in your books reviewed this time, *The Integral Trees*, came into my possession just a few hours before I received this *Twilight Zine*, via the local Goodwill Industries secondhand store. It was among a dozen very recent paperbacks I acquired for a dime apiece in what appeared to be new condition (and I missed twice as many more like them at the hands of a dealer who had already arrived and snatched before I walked in). It gives me an odd feeling, as if the space-time continuum were folding inward upon itself or something, because normally I don't get a science fiction book in secondhand condition until a year or more after the fanzines have reviewed it. I'm pretty sure I'll read it despite your less than wildly enthusiastic review. I admit to having acquired in this batch two or three of the most recent Gor novels although I'm not so sure I'll ever read them; I don't have the sexual appetite to make me a Gormet.

I liked Lisa Kroh's little poem, except for the way she ends some of her verbs. Not even I am old enough to have used regularly these archaic verb endings as a boy, but I'm pretty sure "I seekest" is impossible and I'm just as dubious about "they hath." The -est ending should be used only with the second person singular pronoun, I'm pretty sure, and the -th is reserved for third person singular.

The only fault I can find with "The Television Child" is the fact that it scared me more than is good for me. Otherwise, it's an uncommonly well-told story, one that I wouldn't have wanted to stop reading partway through because it genuinely captured my full attention. I suppose the author intended it partly as a parable on the hungry and the potentially violent people of today's world. I hope it doesn't have as potent an effect on the nerves of all its other readers as on mine, because if it does, nobody on the *Twilight Zine's* mailing list will want to watch a documentary or charity appeal about hunger in Africa or poverty in Asia again.

Fortunately, "Land of Long Spooks" took my mind off Elizabeth Graham Monk's terrible fable and caused me to laugh most heartily although a bit guiltily. Technically, I suppose, we shouldn't write or read anything that could possibly offend a people as sinned against as blacks. I console myself with the reasoning that Doc Salvage is a white and I can pretend my laughter is reserved for his behavior in Will Murray's story. I can also ponder on the possible consequences if by some wild set of circumstances the writer's PBS adaptation and this story got mixed up and "Land of Long Spooks" was broadcast over PBS before anyone realized what had happened.

Your ex-Skinner may have set an all-time record for having his name appear in the widest assortment of variant spellings in any single fanzine issue. Tim Hucklebery, as he signs his letter, seems to have a slightly different name on each appearance on other pages. Maybe it's a running gag in your tradition or something because it doesn't seem to be a particularly difficult name. *[Partly it's a running gag, but you'd be surprised at how much trouble people have with it. The correct spelling is Huckelbery.]* The Hagerstown man who had the most trouble in this respect was Elbert O'Keeffe, who was civil defense director for the city and county for many years. As a journalist, I wrote many stories about his activities and invariably, Elbert got changed to Albert or O'Keeffe got changed to O'Keeffe or both by the time the items saw print. Just the other day I received a Christmas card from him and found it signed with his middle name, so maybe after all these years he has given up trying to convince people about the other two.

The cover is good and I like the way you used a wide illustration for it. Until *Twilight Zine* becomes a newsstand publication, there's no particular reason why it or any other fanzine should always have the cover illustration oriented in the same way as the text pages inside.

Yrs., &c.,
Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21740

* * *

24 February, 1986

Dear Bill:

I was very pleased to receive TZ 36. How did they ever con you into that job? Anyway, I'm glad to see the society alive and well. I might even be convinced to make a donation to the MITSFS endowment fund, especially if someone sends me more details on that. *[See p. 43]*

The multifarious book reviews are excellent; I hope you get on review lists. Maybe you ought to put some circulation figures on the "fine print" page (then again, maybe not ...). At Stanford, there is an SF bboard, to which I occasionally contribute recommendations/unrecommendations. Should you have an e-mail address (preferably uucp), and should you need

old book reviews, I can probably send you my verbiage. *[We do have one, in fact. Electronic submissions are welcome. Send them to mitsfs@athena.mit.edu.]*

I would like to make a correction to the minutes of 9/21/84 (TZ 36, page 60): I am not, never was, and probably never will be a former Skinner. You see, after being elected President of the Society, I never appointed myself (or anyone else) Skinner. A technicality, you might say, but I feel I must correct the record. Anyway, to answer your question on what I'm doing, I'm attempting to finish a Ph.D. in M.E. at Stanford, after which I will join the ranks of the unemployed. I am told by my advisor that I can probably finish within 12 months, but you know the story of how many grad students it takes to change a light bulb — just one, but it'll take him (or her) seven years ... Especially now that the government is considering major funding cuts (and my research is gov't sponsored!).

There is a chance that I'll be in Boston for the weekend of April 18-20, in which case I'll certainly try to attend the Society meeting. *[He was, but he didn't — though he did go to dinner with us afterward.]* Whether or not I do show up, please give my warmest regards to anyone in MITSFS who dates back to my era.

Hy Tran
P.O. Box 10553
Stanford, CA 94305

[About your not having been Skinner, Hy — I beg to differ. You are referred to in the Society's minutes several times as the Skinner. Therefore, you were. As a former Onseck, I am proud to remind you that whoever writes the history down defines the truth.]

* * *

September 14, 1985

Dear Mr. Starr,

I was very happy to see my story, "The Television Child," in *Twilight Zine* and enjoyed other parts of the magazine including your reviews. You're right, it's an excellent story and I would like to get more copies to show my friends and foes, so enclosed is a check for up to \$15 for as many copies as that will cover plus mailing expenses. Please send two by first class.

On the whole, I liked the minor editing changes, especially putting Midge's thoughts in italics. I am, though, a tad upset with the sentence on p. 31 that goes: "Only when eating did the figures look alive, with quick, jerky movements and eyes that had too much white darting around." In my manuscript the line reads: "Only when eating did the figures look alive with quick, jerky movements, and then their eyes, eyes that had too much white, darted around." To conclude and drop the topic for now and ever more, I won't take any responsibility for any whites of eyes that may be darting around.

But still I am delighted and in spite of this quibble, the writing, as usually happens, looks better in print. And one more thing, I appreciate your promptness. You said that the story would be out around Labor Day and prestozoom, it arrived here one day after Labor Day. In my ordinary experience it seems that life is short, art is long and the world of publishing s l o w and often I've found myself wondering if a piece of mine would be published posthumously, if at all. Again many thanks and my best wishes.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth G. Monk

* * *

There should be one final letter here, one I know we got, but for the life of me I can't find it. It was from Dr. Marc ("The") Alpert, a former Skinner. I do remember one detail, and it was a question I can answer. Alpert wanted to know whether our ancient manual typewriter Harlan (which we've since replaced by an almost as ancient IBM electric) was the same as the little tiny portable one he typed his thesis on. No, Marc, it wasn't. The last person to try to use that portable for typing was me, shortly after I became Onseck, and I almost immediately gave up and took the correspondence home to type. It has since been safely ensconced in the MITSFS time capsule, where it will remain to puzzle archaeologists of the future.



The MITSFS Want List

compiled by Ken Johnson

If you have a copy of any of the following magazines which you are interested in trading or selling, or if you know of anyone who has, please write to Ken at the address given inside the front cover. We are only seeking copies which are in good enough condition to bind into volumes.

American Magazines

Adventures in Horror/Horror Stories

1970/71 all

Amazing Stories

1927 Jan

1978 Jan, May

Amazing Stories Annual

1927

Analog

1970 Apr, Jun

1973 Sep

1975 May

1976 Jan, Apr, May

1977 Jan, Mar, Apr, May, Jul

1978 Jan, Feb, Jun, Oct, Nov

Doctor Death

1935 Feb

Dusty Ayers and His Battle Birds

1934 all

1935 Mar, Apr, May/June, Jul/Aug

Fantastic

1972 Jun

1975 Oct

1976 Feb, Aug, Nov

1977 Feb, Sep, Dec

1978 Apr, Jul

Galaxy

1969 Jul, Aug

1972 Jan/Feb

1973 Nov

1974 Jun, Nov, Dec

1975 Jan, Jun, Sep

1976 Oct

1978 Jan, Apr-Jun

Ghost Stories

1926 all

1927 all

1928 Jan, Feb, Apr, Jun-Sep, Nov, Dec

1929 Jan, Mar-Dec

1930 Jan-Apr, Jun, Jul

1931 Apr, May

Girl from UNCLE Mag

1967 Feb

IF

1969 Sep

1970 Apr, Jul/Aug

1972 Jan/Feb

1973 Jan/Feb, Jul/Aug, Nov/Dec

1974 Jan/Feb, May/June

Isaac Asimov's SF Mag

1978 Jan/Feb, Mar/Apr, May/June, Jul/Aug, Sep/Oct

1979 Jun

1984 Jul

Mag of F & SF

1973 Mar, Dec

1974 Jan, Apr, Jun, Jul, Sep

1975 Feb, Nov

1976 Jun

1977 Feb, Sep-Dec

1978 Feb, May, Jun-Nov

1979 Feb

Marvel Tales

1934 May (#1)

Mind Magic

1931 all

My Self

1931 all

Other Worlds

1957 May

Scientific Detective Monthly

1930 Mar

Amazing Detective Tales

1930 Jun, Aug-Oct

Sky Worlds

1978 Aug

Starling Mystery Stories

1967 Winter (#7)

Strange Stories

1939 Feb, Jun

1940 Feb

Tales of Terror From the Beyond

1964 Summer

Thriller

1962 all

Weird Tales

1923 Apr-Nov

1924 all

1925 Jan-Oct, Dec

1926 Jan, Mar, Apr, Jun-Sep, Dec

Whispers

#1

Wonder Stories

1930 Aug

1931 Jul, Oct

1933 Dec

British Magazines

Amazing Science Stories

#1

British Space SF

Vol 2 #1, 3, 4

Fantasy

1939 #2

Futuristic Science Stories

#11, 14, 15

Mag of Fantasy and SF

1954 Apr

New Worlds

1960 Jul (#96)

Out of This World

#2

Science Fantasy

1964 Feb (#63), Apr (#64)

Science Fiction Adventures

1958 Jul (#3)

Scoops

1934 #2-20

Supernatural Stories

#6, 9-12, 16, 20, 21, 30, 31, 33, 34, 37-39, 41, 45, 101

(*Out of This World*)

#13, 15, 17

Tales of Tomorrow

#8-10

Tales of Wonder

#1, 3, 13

Vargo Stratten SF Mag

Vol 1 #5

Vortex

1977 all

Wonders of the Spaceways

#8

Wonders of the Universe

#1

Worlds of Fantasy

#11, 12

Australian Magazines

Thrills, Inc.

#3, 11, 14, 22

Void

#1

Canadian Magazines

Astonishing Stories

1942 Jan, Mar

Super Science Stories

1945 Apr, Jun

Uncanny Tales

1940 all

1941 Jan-Nov

1942 Jan, Mar, May-Dec

1943 all

You are getting this because:

___ You contributed:
___ an article ___ art ___ a loc ___ something else

___ I'd like you to contribute.

___ You paid. (Sucker!)

___ You helped produce TZ. (Thank you!)

___ We trade.

___ We'd like to trade.

___ Editorial whim.

___ Your name's on an old mailing list, and we'd like to know if you're still interested.

___ We bought a mailing list from Lyndon LaRouche.

___ You're a former somebody.

___ You're a big-name something-or-other.

___ We want our minutes, Greg!!!!

___ Thinking of you makes me weak in the knees.

___ I have contracted to assassinate you. This paper is saturated with an untraceable poison which will kill you within the next 30 seconds.

___ We're trying to curry favor.

___ Your name said backwards is a secret Satanic message.

___ I liked your letter to *Penthouse* Forum.

___ You stubbornly refuse to switch to Daylight Saving Time.

___ You stubbornly refuse to switch to the Gregorian calendar.

___ I read about you in the *Weekly World News*.

___ You've been declared pornographic by Edwin Meese.

X I don't know why you're getting this. Let me know, or you won't get the next one.

