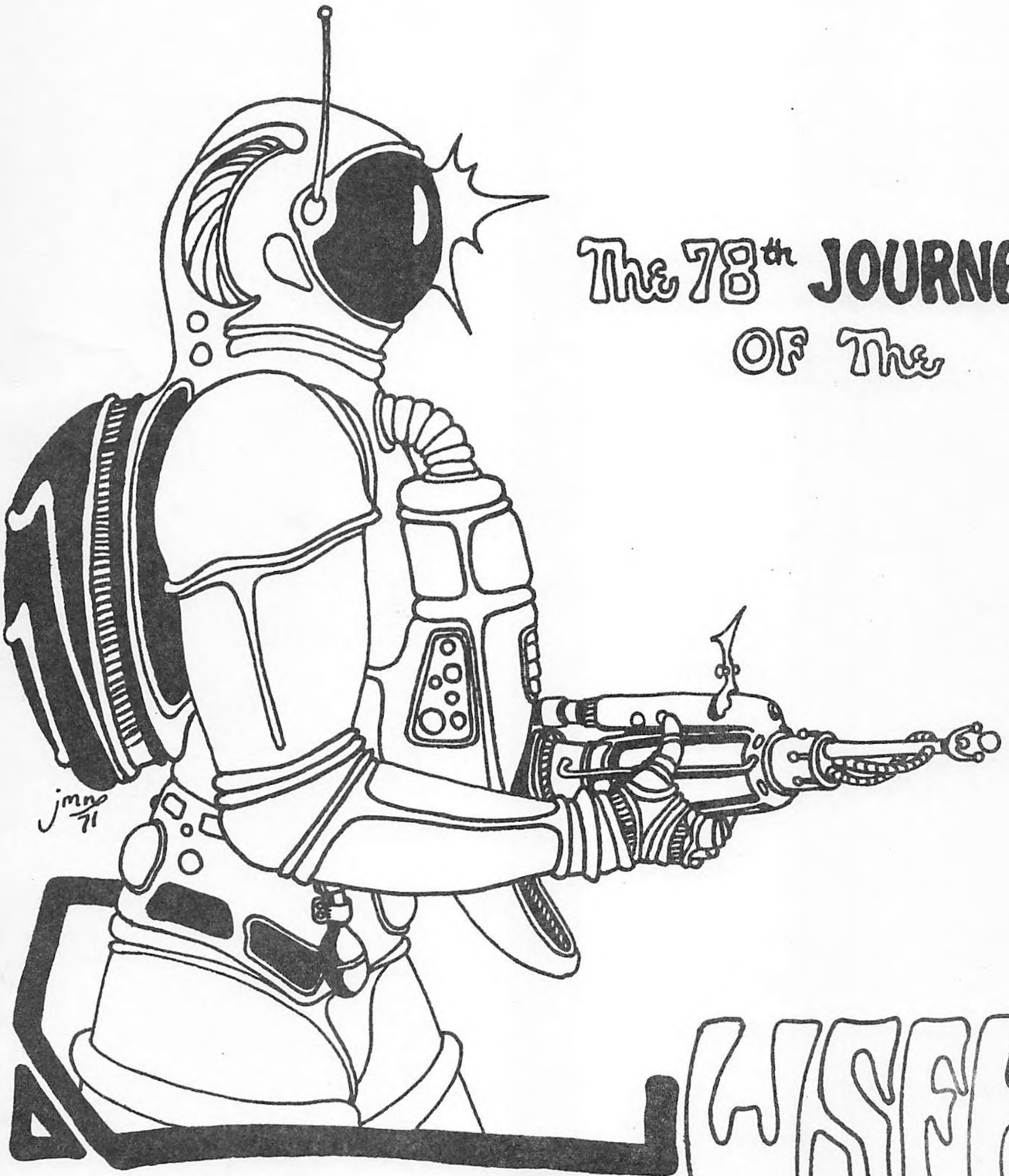


The 78th JOURNAL OF The WSFA

THE WSFA JOURNAL

(The Official Organ of the Washington S.F. Association)

Issue Number 78: Aug.-Oct. '71

Published approx. bi-monthly. Thish 50¢; subs. 4/$1.75, 8/$3.25 (see pg. 2 for info re Supplement, SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL). Free for published contributions; prearranged trades only. Deadline for #79: December 10.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Front cover by Mike Nally; back cover by Dany Frolich; interior illos by Alexis Gilliland (1, 3, 6, 9, 11, 15, 18, 21, 22, 23, 25, 28, 31, 34, 35, 38, 41) and Jeff Schalles (44). All stencilled by Alexis Gilliland.

- -

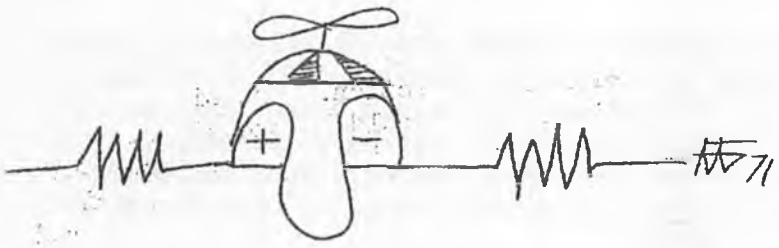
In Brief --

Sorry for the delay in getting this issue out; it was all (but the first two pages) on stencil by late Sept., but a very intensive job-related course consumed all our time for the last week of Sept. and all of Oct. (and we do mean all -- 7 a.m. thru 1 a.m., seven days a week incl. holidays....). So, #78 is a quarterly issue, rather than a bi-monthly.

Speaking of quarterly issues, TWJ may soon go back to quarterly--our eye trouble has reached the point where we can no longer run off issues as large as this one, so we are going to accept some of the publishing help which has so generously been offered (and thus will add 2-4 weeks per issue, making the continuation of a bi-monthly schedule virtually impossible). More on this next-ish.

Doll's House, the second part of Bob Jones' STRANGE TALES article, and Mark Owings Electric Bibliograph not yet received; hopefully, they'll all be back in #79. #### Delap Prozine Review columns in SOTWJ #31 (Mar.-Apr.) and #37 (May-Jun.; out in 7-10 days). #### SOTWJ's pubbed since lastish (some sent with thisish to 3rd-class subbers): #'s 30-35. SOTWJ is still 20¢ ea., 6/$1.10, or 12/$2.00 (or, via 3rd-class, 12/$1.50, 2 at a time or with TWJ, at discretion of ye olde edde).

Fanzine Clearing House urgently needs fanzines. Send several of each issue of your 'zine as you publish it; or send those rapidly-accumulating fanzines you no longer have space for. Helps both new fans and fanzine eds. (Send to Editor.)



WOT, NO SENSE OF WONDER?

DEATH KNELL OF THE GOLDEN AGE
OF SCIENCE FICTION

by
Mike Glyer

"The Golden Age of Science Fiction? Why, I know when the Golden Age of Science Fiction was! Ah...1938 to about 1950. From Campbell's ascension to the realization of atomic energy!"

Roll over and go back to sleep, Waldo. We'll wake you again tomorrow morning and let you guess once more. No, ladies and gentlemen, I submit that we have just slept through the greatest era in science fiction. The Golden Age has sat among us all, like a lump, waiting to be recognized. Not an age of Pulp, not a time of increased science in literature; rather, a stage of maturity where the old dreams of science fiction were realized and writing came to full bloom. The Western world became a science fiction civilization. And we missed it.

Fans, you have just been eaten alive and don't even know it. You look around to view the increasing dimensions of fandom, the popularization of sf, the acceptance of sf writers into the intellectual "elite" of writers, and you say that the Golden Age is in the future. Bullrear.

Look at it this way: what does it take to create a "golden age", when science fiction is productive of ideas and worthy of your interest?

(1) Large amounts of good, well-written sf appear--more than ever before. For the next few years there is a "traffic-jam" of talent clawing its way through the mass of ms. into print. (2) Sales of prozines and books go up. More people read and discuss sf, and outside the normal circles sf is noticed where before it was ignored. (3) Science-fictional ideas or techniques branch out into other media: art, movies, music. (4) The intellectual level of sf commentary in fanzines improves markedly. (5) Revitalized ideas, new conflicts, and increased energy appear among a balanced pantheon of writers. No philosophy dominates; all vie for attention.

At the last flood stage these things typified pulp literature. Heinlein, Asimov, van Vogt, and many more appeared out of nowhere, prompted by Campbell and his ASTOUNDING. More and more zines appeared as time passed (by the 1950's there were upwards of 20 prozines), while radio was famed for sf-type notions ("The Shadow", "Superman", other kiddie shows like "Captain Midnight"), and the movies serialized comic-strip stars Rogers and Gordon. A number of now-forgotten but good fanzines existed in the late '40's (see Terry Carr in FOCAL POINT for his discussions of them). Campbell's insistence on more science in his fiction prompted a flow of ideas and comments which changed the genre completely.

Like that Age of Pulp, our science fiction Renaissance is fast fading now. What the 1940's were to scientifiction, the 1960's will be to us in the future,--the only doubt being the survival of sf in its present form.

I. HANG ON HEINLEIN, HERE WE GO!

As a last burst of pyrotechnics, a phoenix diving into the flames of death and rebirth, ANALOG ignited the Golden Age of Science Fiction. The Zine That John Built marked the first year with two things that should become classics to roll down the ages. Frank Herbert's Dune began serialization in December, 1963, while Spinrad's short story "Outward Bound" appeared earlier. Non-ANALOG tributaries to the passing flood, Simak's Way Station and Laumer's "Long Remembered Thunder" added fine, literate sf that year.

"This is only the beginning, folks, only the beginning", and it was true. Since that year, when Kennedy was shot, Lyndon Baines Johnson filled the White House Offices, and non-violent protest was still thought radical, science fiction has unobtrusively reaped the fruits of a generation of writers who grew up with ASTOUNDING. Though not a single masterwork appeared in ANALOG, the seven years following 1963 elicited greatness. Brunner, with his Stand on Zanzibar; Zelazny, Lord of Light; Keyes, "Flowers for Algernon". There was Heinlein's The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress, and Brunner's follow-up The Jagged Orbit, Aldiss' Cryptozoic!, and the famous Heinlein anthology The Past Through Tomorrow hit the market.

Short fiction, writers' bread and butter, refreshed itself from the imaginative fonts of men at the top of their form. The famed hacks Christopher Anvil and Mack Reynolds (who between them accounted for 20% of ANALOG's stories from 1960 to 1970) hit their stride. Anvil's best, the novelettes "Strangers to Paradise" and "The King's Legions" appeared. Reynold's United Planet series produced a handful of fine stories concerning the revolutionary Section G.

Entertaining characters peppered prozines as if loosed in a shotgun blast: Anderson's Flandry, Laumer's Retief, Niven's Beowulf Schaeffer. Laumer sold dozens of Retiefs, and proved that one could make a living by wearing out the notion that diplomats are asses. Anderson and Niven both produced their men from environments which set the scene for other fine short stories: Niven's Known Space series has lost him more Hugos (nominated, but unrewarded) than he cares to count. Anderson's universe has backed up Nicholas van Rijn lo these fifteen or twenty years, and produced the 1968 Hugo-winning "The Sharing of Flesh".

Harlan Ellison escaped from the Outer Limits (or at least from the show of that name), issuing stories by the carton, with writers as collaborators and alone, in anthologies and magazines, even signing autographs. Nominated for sf awards many times, frequent winner of Hugos, Ellison with his "Beast That Shouted Love, etc." took a Hugo in the aftermath of the New Wave civil war, and his "A Boy and His Dog" took a Nebula. Ellison's Dangerous Visions got into print several important stories by pros who had been unable to sell them for pulp use. "Too hot to handle", its contents hurdled the barrier which often keeps well-written stories that haven't been "stinked up just right" from public view.

Robert Silverberg was a disparaged writer at the start in 1963. But his consistency and fame improved, and Up the Line solidified his claim to greatness.

As good as science fiction was during this seven-year span, without the underpinning of many non-famous but talented writers who filled the prozines year after year it would have been nothing. The genre compares to a pontoon bridge that rests on water--if there is not a lot of good writing supporting our reputation, all we have are a lot of variegated novelists whose good works wouldn't fill half a shelf; they would hang suspended in space.

The anthologists prove that many writers only produce a good story occasionally, which is why those writers aren't famous. The ones worth reading which they create are not forgotten, though, as long as there are teams like Aldiss and Harrison, Carr and Wollheim to preserve them. Each group puts out anthologies featuring the best short stories of each year.

Other anthologies of note were deliberately assembled out of older stories in order to satiate the demand for good sf. Nine by Laumer, for example. Or writers contributed new material, to Spectrum (Kingsley Amis), Orbit (Damon Knight), and items like Three for Tomorrow.

II. VENDOREM PARADISIO

Today, just a calendar-full of months later, fanzine readers hear of the tragedy pro magazines play out because their distributors are trying to do them in. "There's a shortage of news-stand circulation", gripes Ted White, whose AMAZING and FANTASTIC are ever victims of shipper chicanery. Many are his stories of villainy at the hands of distributors, a series of the Perils of Pauline that sends rumors flying semi-monthly about the imminent collapse of the Cohen zines.

Then there is Ejler Jakobsson with GALAXY and IF, two zines that can't make up their minds whether to be monthly or bimonthly, but are absolutely sure the price is going sky-high either way. Paperbacks are up to 75 and 95 cents, and higher.

But before 1970, science fiction was Vendorem Paradisio, bastard Latin for seller's market.

It's a trick of the American economy that has lately been played on the poor professionals. Though science fiction's purveyors imitate fans in their aloofness from mainstream literature and national trends, the U.S. economy is eager to beat down anything that tries to get along while ignoring it.

The golden age of science fiction would never have happened if the good writing hadn't been saleable. Lyndon Johnson, the president damned for Vietnam, managed to produce year after year of prosperity. With wages increasing and producers expanding, people had money around to spend on luxuries and other unnecessary things--like science fiction.

Science fiction received indirect boons. The types of careerists likely to buy sf for relaxation, the kinds of minds who pick up prozines and paperbacks for entertainment, were buried under the tons of money Washington gave to their industries, and therefore, to them.

Aerospace personnel and research scientists (who make ANALOG the best-seller), and students (vast numbers of who read sf) had bushel baskets full of projects, contracts, and grants thrown into their laps. Making good money, they could indulge themselves and they did. NASA programs, the defense industry, government-sponsored scientific projects fueled their pockets, and fueled the minds of hard-core sf writers with novel ideas. Perry Chapdelaine himself used nearly half a million dollars for a government-funded computer education experiment.

The result? ANALOG went over the 100,000 issue/month sales mark for the first time in 1968. GALAXY and IF, long tax-losses tolerated by their owners, made strong gains in circulation. AMAZING and FANTASTIC were revamped under Ted White after having been marked for dead.

Great books which had marked time without recognition (or with little of it) at last came off the publisher's shelves and were grabbed down by a growing legion of novices and "head" fans. Stranger In a Strange Land, the Heinlein masterpiece which (so advertisers tell us) is the underground Bible; Bradbury's The Martian Chronicles and Fahrenheit 451, his most popular works; Walter Miller Jr's 1959 A Canticle for Lebowitz; and Vonnegut's series of science fiction novels achieved fame.

Other works did what no science fiction story had ever done. The Andromeda Strain cracked the best-seller list. "Flowers for Algernon" became Charly, the Oscar-winning movie.

Movie rights were snapped up as rapidly as the books came out. Burgess' Clockwork Orange has completed filming; Logan's Run was bought and dropped.

Reprints of everything flooded the bookstores. Older writers got a new lease on life before a younger sf audience: Edmond Hamilton's Captain Future, the Doc Savage series, Burroughs' writings.

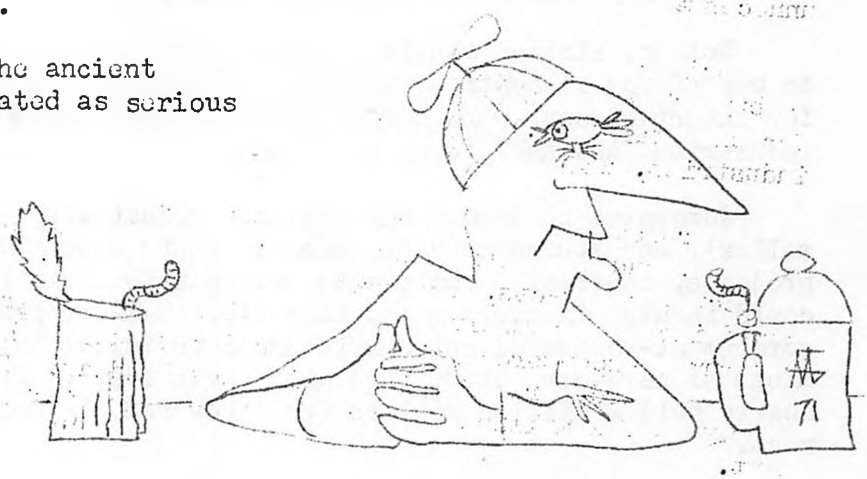
To top it off, the non-science-fiction Tolkien trilogy Lord of the Rings influenced the sf genre more than any book printed in the genre. By capturing the imaginations of readers who had never read another sf or fantasy book in their lives, it was able to take these imaginations and point them in the direction of non-mainstream literature. For many it was their first exposure to that kind of approach to writing.

The acceptance of Tolkien also added impetus to the later New Wave movement where different interpretations of reality were made and accepted. It partly laid the groundwork for later "speculative fiction" techniques by adding an audience to sf readership not so stultified by a long tradition of hard-core Campbellianism.

III. STAR TRAIPSE, OR "I DON'T GIVE A DAMN IF THAT STAR REALLY IS A WHITE DWARF, THIS IS TECHNICOLOR!"

In 1957 Invasion from Mars (a movie about a kid who kept seeing citizens with transistors planted in the backs of their necks) was released. Considering that it was the most expensive science fiction movie ever made, in its time, the only way non-literature science fiction could go was up. So it went.

During the mid-1960's the ancient highwater marks were obliterated as serious artists and film industry budgets were turned to the job. As a result, two universally famous products evolved: 2001: A Space Odyssey, for movies, and Star Trek, for television.



Amid wailing and gnashing of teeth by every fan and pro critic, the main reaction to 2001

(called Twenty-oh-One by everyone but me) was, "Gee, that sure is great stuff, but I wish I knew what it meant." Clarke even put out a companion book in order to clarify the matter, but didn't succeed. At any rate, it was the milestone in its category.

Hollywood probably accepted sf because of the wide attention gained by NASA for its Moon efforts, but the trend will perpetuate itself as more rising film makers adopt sf techniques and ideas. George Lucas' student film for USC, THX 1138, bought and redone by him for Warner Bros., shows this.

Films elsewhere that distinguished themselves by seriously treating their subject when all about them other studios were raping theirs, were Colossus: The Forbin Project and Robinson Crusoe on Mars.

Before Star Trek the television industry treated science fiction purely as a mercenary effort. If they could fill time and sell ads by running an old sf movie or a hack sf series, they would do so. Outer Limits managed a few good scripts, but like Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea its attractions were few and its monsters many.

All sf television shows suffer rather than benefit from the media in which they work. Temptations and flaws that don't exist elsewhere plague television. Star Trek, which managed to stay on with the backing of 200,000 letters, was unusual in that it often overcame TV's handicaps--it died finally when it couldn't do that any more.

Foremost of all traps is that a TV series by definition contains a running cast of characters. Characters in turn demand development. In a situation comedy, or a Western, viewers vicariously live the character's experience by attaching their personal identity to the situation. TV viewers by a long tradition of watching those items gloss over incongruities (like the good guy shooting 10 times without reloading), for they have seen it all a thousand times before. But the notions of science fiction beg interpretation and expansion. Essentially the only two links Star Trek had with conventional TV action drama were the love angle, and the threat of death. (While much can be done with them, all variations are still the same thing at root.) The rest of many ideas and plots used were frequently explained through dialog. At last, what it came down to was that show after show Captain Kirk would orate pious pseudo-Shakesperean speeches and make out, Mr. Spock would run around perfunctorily saying "Fascinating; illogical", and the Doctor--often against all reason--would dispute whatever stand the captain took that week as inhumane. The limited possibilities for dialog forced by strait-jacketing these characterizations--added to the fact that most of the time actors hadn't time to adequately study their scripts--destroyed Star Trek.

To relieve the dialog Star Trek could also sprawl into TV's second pitfall: visual effects. Whole shows were structured on optical tricks. This saved words, and brought it back into the realm of pie-in-the-face and shoot-the-bad-guy, but such is not the stuff of good sf. Special effects have to be kept "special", not squandered and made commonplace.

IV. JUNIOR FLINGERS

Cross a fan with a tube of ink and you have a fanzine. This mongrelization perpetrated by sf readers bears a tradition of 40 years' standing.

Good fanzines assist any good era for science fiction by unifying the active fans, establishing outlets for criticism, advertising, and news. Though at least

100,000 regular sf readers exist (to judge from ANALOG's circulation), it is the active 1/100th of them who supply most of the genre's writers, editors, and artists. These same people are the fanzine writers, publishers, and subscribers.

The communication brought about by good zines has just about no impact that I can see on the sf industry except as mentioned above. Perhaps readers are motivated to write to pro editors by them--editors pay a lot of attention to fan letters--probably too much for their own good.

But fanzines are important sources in tracing the history and evolution of science fiction, for they reflect how the different novels and stories were received, and record what the various writers were thinking about when their works were in production. Those fanzines that contain intelligent comments about literature are the most valuable.

Australia's SF COMMENTARY, like THE WSFA JOURNAL has got a reputation for well-thought, well-researched material. But the most successful fanzine of the past few years has been SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW.

SFR became the focus for what some clowns call Eighth Fandom. Its subscription list was unrivaled, its contributors mostly famous pros and fans. This zine is interesting in that its rise and fall closely parallels the Golden Age. Resurrected in the mid-'60's as PSYCHOTIC, it soon flipped over to its new name, accumulated more and more subscribers, copped two Hugos, then burst like a balloon, dying out as did the years of high-quality sf. This zine was 75% book reviews--the heaviest archives of any fanzine. It concentrated on the literature, and contradicted the early '60's trend of political commentary and fan gossip in the amateur press. It also avoided the latr '60's tendency to mix rock commentary with sf commentary in the midst of a hippie (for lack of a better word) influx into fandom.

If most fans believed we were just through a Golden Era, this article would already have been written. However, though the Junior Flingers never know when sf is having a good season, their very existence shows it.

V. CAUGHT IN THE RIPTIDE

Those we said were part of it claimed they weren't; those who said they were we said weren't any good. It created a civil war among writers and fans. Its leverage gave Harlan Ellison another Hugo. It allowed Michael Moorcock, a name whose very mention sets off Larry Niven as a match would gunpowder. It encouraged Spinrad, fostered Aldiss, postdated Burgess, predated Heinlein's I Will Fear No Evil. It was the New Wave.

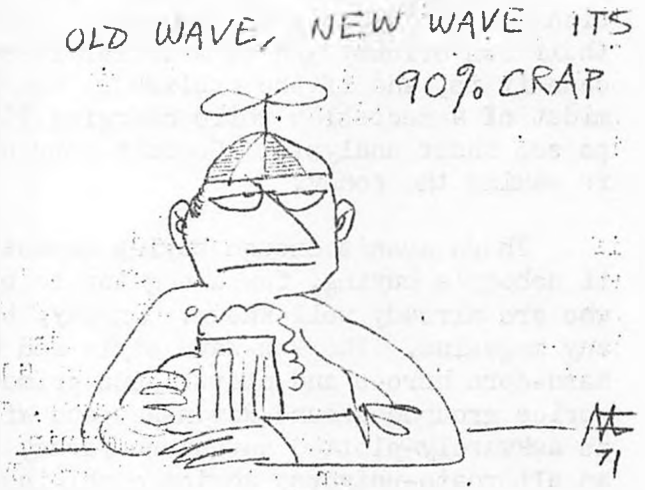
According to Larry Niven the New Wave merely resurrected experimental styles that mainstream writers had discarded in the '20's and '30's, or exploited others that had been developed by the mainstream. He cited Brunner's Stand on Zanzibar as using techniques evolved by John Dos Passos. He also excoriated Moorcock as a faddist or even creator of fads, most of which were in questionable taste and only survived because they were excused as "new wave".

However, the New Wave was more important than Niven would let on, and has changed the science fiction genre so thoroughly in the past five years that a concise definition of "science fiction" no longer exists.

In the first place, a knock-down-drag-out fight is good for any kind of business. Competition among ideas engendered by the Wave evolved an editorial

pragmatism which managed to get the best New Wave and hard-core writing into print (along with whatever else fit). The foundation of the "Milford Mafia" and the Milford Writers' Conferences resurrected the old-time Heinlein suggestion that sf might better stand for "speculative fiction", and proceeded to infuse non-science back into the genre from which it had been banned by Campbell. Relying on their abilities as "literary" writers, Knight, Ellison, Russ, McCaffrey, Norton, Wilhelm, Williamson, Laumer and Fontana paraded across the pages of prozines, bringing to bear dream-like stories which did not necessarily rely on the dictates of logic, and returned whole categories of adjectives and adverbs to common usage in sf. For a time they struggled up from oblivion. Then they became equal with the hard-cores. Now they nearly dominate the sf marketplace--a marketplace which has ended the Golden Age.

The creation of the SFWA, to combat editorial larceny, also brought about the Nebula Award under whose light writers finally got around to saying, "We write; therefore we know what good writing is." Though definitely not an accurate statement, it was close enough to suit most fans and writers. With the exception of the putrid Rite of Passage, a crippled combo of Heinlein plots and characters, which won the 1968 Nebula Award for Best Novel, the Nebula has been a satisfactory award. The "Milford Mafia" has dominated the SFWA and has placed many times in award voting. But since few other writers are as active as they, what can one expect?



Not only did the New Wave provide competition in form and in the marketplace, but its non-science plots ripped open thirty years' tradition in sf. The anti-hero movement found its way into prozines via the Wave. Acid trips and drug stories proliferated in NEW WORLDS, a Wave standard; Spinrad freely sprayed blood and gore against old-time taboos, and with his Bug Jack Barron wrote one of the first sf novels to deliberately predict a plan of future society for the next 25 years.

Heinlein's I Will Fear No Evil will either be the most farsighted result of the New Wave--or another "latest and greatest" flop to be buried with Bug Jack Barron. Its very writing extrapolates the trend towards simplification that the English language has undergone coming from Dickens, to Hemingway, through Joyce, to contemporaries like Vonnegut and Brautigan. The movement to journalistic preciseness in sentences here extends itself to paragraph and narrative, an open novel mainly of character insights and lean on background. Whether it is a forerunner of modern fiction will be decided in the next 20 years.

The essence of the New Wave came in vocabulary, story content, and overt imagery. Where the Wave washed out, when it did, was in idea content. Since science fiction is an idea genre, if the story didn't come up with some good ideas it was dismissed as bad writing by the hard-core group and as failed sf by the Wave supporters.

VI. DRIFTWOOD

The Golden Age of Science Fiction ends somewhere in the midst of 1970.

One of the main causes of its death was economics. As Robert Moore Williams, pro writer since 1936, noted: "It's all part of the continuing cycle of boom and bust. The publishers always end up hurting themselves by overexploiting the boom: then comes the bust."

Science fiction did too well. Publishers bought up book after book, glutted the market with unknown names as well as the usual fare. Then, as now, with Nixon's Planned Depression, they were caught with a backlog of contracted manuscripts, warehouses full of unsold books, and their pants down. Dell and Lancer are currently in the throes of disaster. Weekly come fresh rumor's that Ted White's prozines are going to bite the green weenie.

As the publishers and magazines suffer, they note that back in the Depression of the 1930's pulp zines had a boom era. But they neglect the fact of their own prices: 3/4 of a dollar is still 3/4 of a dollar no matter what decade it is, and if the publishers are expecting it to up their sales in the midst of a recession while charging 75¢ a magazine or paperback, they ought to go see their analysts. Consult your neighborhood used-book dealer to see who is making the money.

There aren't enough buying markets left to foster a major era of sf. And if nobody's buying, few are going to be writing, and those few will be the ones who are already well-known. Anyway, the results of 1963-70 are clear enough in any magazine. The New Wave style and vocabularies are being hybridized with hard-core heroes and plots. One prime example is in Wallace Macfarlane's series grouped around Ravenshaw and Wild Blue Yonder Inc. Started in ANALOG as awkwardly-plotted adventure yarns, they have now spread to other zines as an alternate-universe series combining characterization and philosophy with adventure. Another example is Perry Chapdelaine's "Breathe! Breathe! Oh God How I Would Breathe!", issued in a Panther anthology, which is 95% New Wave--but whose last 5% gives it scientific overtones.

One last trend, which because of economics has been stifled, is to introduce the ecology mess into science fiction. With all the publishers running around like chickens with their heads cut off, not much has been done with the idea--but just enough to make me hope it dies permanently. It takes no imagination to seed a Sierra Club conservation pamphlet with characters, sketch in a rocket ship, and call it science fiction. But this has been done in IF, and may catch on elsewhere.

Now all fronts are quiet. The five points may be shelved until the next Golden Age comes along--until all publishers can afford a "traffic jam" of talent--until sales go up and sf literature catches up with other media--until the genzines start putting out again--until we find another John Campbell or Harlan Ellison to give us a kick in the right direction. Until....?

* *

FOR SALE OR TRADE

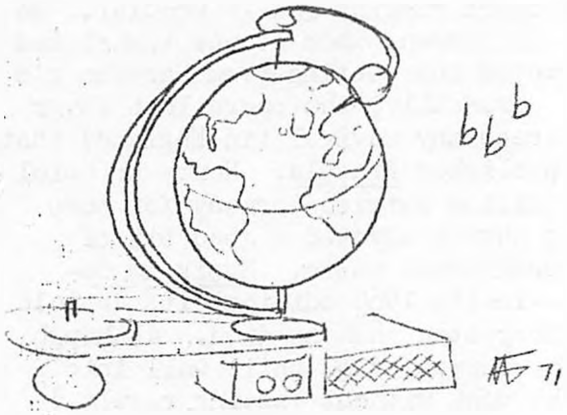
#198. A stuffed feathered serpent. Few feathers left, else good condition.

#199. An Atlantean Harbor Directory. (Problem with water-skiers then, too.)

#200. Something invisible, origin doubtful. Make offer.

#201. Recipe for making thyzphister soup. "First you catch the thyzphister..."

-- Don James



MUSIC OF THE SPHERES
(or, Sci-Fi Music)

a column
by Harry Warner, Jr.

IV. Heinrich August Marschner (Who he?)

You know by heart the story of how it all happened: Bram Stoker was the first to turn the ancient vampire legend into a popular success through a creation of his own imagination, and after that, stage and screen adaptations of the Stoker novel made Dracula synonymous with vampire.

But you never hear about a previous wave of popularity for a vampire tale that swept through Europe. I haven't been able to determine if Stoker were acquainted with it. But there are some striking similarities between his famous novel and Heinrich August Marschner's opera, "Der Vampyr", which was composed in 1827. Moreover, Marschner may have been a minor influence on musical works quite popular in fandom; the Gilbert & Sullivan light operas, no less a personage than Richard Wagner wrote music for one of Marschner's operas, and every good pianist plays one of Marschner's melodies even though you'll never find his name in record catalogs.

Marschner got his libretto from a brother-in-law. The vampire in the opera is named Lord Ruthven, which should immediately ring a bell in G&S fandom, and the vampire's soul will pass into Satan's hands unless he turns over three pure young brides to the demons within a year, a condition that also is reminiscent of one of W.S. Gilbert's unfortunate villains. Many of the bits of business that Stoker and the Dracula movies popularized are to be found in Marschner's opera: the vampire's attacks on young ladies, his habit of being active at night, and his spectacular death. In the opera, it's done differently, though, through a bolt of lightning.

Nobody hears much about Marschner nowadays, but "Der Vampyr" was a smash hit when it had its premiere in Leipzig in 1828. Germany had gone mad over the supernatural on opera stages a few years earlier, when Weber embodied all sorts of fantastic elements into "Der Freischutz", and Marschner seems to have had the older opera about magic bullets in mind when he set the vampire legend to music. He uses the same key of F sharp minor for the most frightening big scene in "Der Vampyr" that Weber had adopted for the famous bullet-casting scene in the Wolf's Glen in "Der Freischutz". There are similarities between the two overtures, and both composers relied heavily on chords of the diminished seventh to illustrate fantastic happenings.

A very young Richard Wagner wrote an allegro in 1833 and inserted it into an aria in "Der Vampyr" while he was rehearsing that opera as an employee of the Würzburg theater. (This sort of thing went on all the time in early 19th-century opera houses, just as a Broadway musical will sometimes get help from this or that composer when a weak spot appears.) The Marschner opera and its financial success might have even influenced Wagner's choice of fantasy subjects for most of his own operas. He was working on "Die Feen", an opera about fairies, at the time.

It's awfully hard to be sure how long an opera remains really popular. We know that Marschner's opera became a favorite in London, when it was translated into English by Planché (who for some reason moved the setting from Marschner's Scotland to real vampire territory, Hungary). Gradually, the opera lost favor on the continent, and I haven't been able to trace any revival (in England) that Stoker might have seen in the 1890's when he published Dracula. Henry Krehbiel wrote in 1891 that Marschner's operas hadn't existed outside Germany for more than a half-century, which leaves me wondering why he devoted a good bit of space to the composer in an English-language book about music. Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart is almost as ambiguous--in its 1960 edition, its article on Marschner says: "Marschner was virtually forgotten when he died. Although his major works stayed in the repertoire of the German stage until well into the 20th century,...efforts to revive his works went without lasting result." There was definitely a revival of "Der Vampyr" in Dresden some time around the turn of the century, because this resurrection caused it to get described in Charles Annesley's The Standard Operaglass. Hans Pfitzner did some editing of the score, and in this form Marschner's opera made a new debut in 1924 at Stuttgart, setting it off on a new series of performances in Germany.

Curiously, another vampire opera was produced in the same year as Marschner's score. A completely forgotten composer named Peter Joseph von Lindpaintner composed it, Stuttgart was chosen for the premiere, and that's all I know about it.

But "Der Vampyr" isn't the only reason why Marschner shouldn't be forgotten in any thorough survey of 19th-century fantasy. In the early 1830's, he wrote "Hans Heiling". It was another big hit, and it also has an element that makes you wonder if Gilbert, who wasn't as ignorant of music as he pretended, had seen a production or read the libretto and remembered it. It's a sort of topsyturvy foreshadowing of "Iolanthe", for Hans, who is king of the gnomes, falls in love with a mortal, and soon finds himself in trouble with both the mortals and his own people. There's even a queen who holds to Hans much the same relationship as Gilbert's queen has to Iolanthe. Marschner's opera lacks the ingenious denouement of the G&S work, but the opera's props include one I don't recall finding anywhere else in fantasy fiction, a magic book whose pages turn by themselves.

Marschner's music probably wouldn't impress us very much, if we by some chance could hear a performance of one of his supernatural operas. (As far as I could find out, there isn't a score of any of his operas in Maryland's public library system, and I also failed to turn up a copy of any of the handful of books written about him, none of which has been translated into English from the original German.) From the few extracts I have been able to run across, the music sounds like watered-down Weber, and might create the same smiles if performed today that we put on when we hear the Sir Arthur Sullivan music to the supernatural occurrences in "Ruddigore". In many years of music-listening, I've heard only one complete aria from a Marschner opera performed. Nelson Eddy, of all imaginable singers, did an aria from "Hans Heiling" on the radio many years ago, the same selection that can occasionally be found in printed collections of opera music for baritones.

The one Marschner melody that we can hear at any time we please is in a piano work by Schumann, "Symphonic Variations". Schumann wanted to pay tribute to a British friend, Sterndale Bennett, so he started off the finale of his piano work with the theme of a chorus from Marschner's "Der Templer und die Jüdin". The words for the chorus in the opera are in praise of England because the opera is based on Scott's Ivanhoe. Schumann even develops in a musical sense the Marschner melody, combining fragments of it with the principal theme of his variations. Here's yet another curious parallel for the G&S fans. Sir

Arthur once decided that those light operas would soon be forgotten, so he wrote a grand opera which he thought would make him immortal. His subject: Ivanhoe.

In a sense, all this music is in suspended animation, if not altogether dead, but in another sense, Marschner and the epoch he personifies are quite relevant to our time. There are great resemblances between the wave of romanticism that was sweeping Europe 150 years ago and the youth rebellion of today. There are revolutionary overtones both now and then, young people in both eras take the motivating force that older persons normally hold in other times, and somehow, a great interest in both folklore and individually-written fantasy is common to the two waves. Only Weber's music is heard with fair frequency, from that romantic age, out of all the thousands of operas and other musical works that were based on fairy tale creatures, supernatural elements, and other fantasy themes. Maybe someone will someday untangle all the influence of one composer on another, translate all the folk tales and literary fiction and plays from which the operas were derived, and we'll find ourselves not the first generations obsessed by the elements of sword and sorcery.

* *

CHARACTERS I HAVE KNOWN
by James Ellis

#381. JASON MT. SANDALWOOD. Suave bon vivant, interplanetary playboy. Owner of the opulent Crystal Canal Hotel at Iceport City, Mars. Possesses priceless collection of pre-Zyn Period kl'eth etchings. Onetime husband of optic star Huntress Vaille.

#382. SIR PERCIVAL FAIRSTONE. Welsh biologist, developer of the Fairstone method of brain transplantation. Acknowledges Bassett Morgan's weighty contributions to this emerging science.

#383. GUENTHER IRONHARDT. Amsterdam diamond merchant. Indicted, with the Soho LSD-runner HARKER PARAVANE, on the charge of possessing and distributing contraband radium. Their escape from custody by means of a stolen sardine boat has been a cause celebre in Europe for weeks. The pair is still at large and are believed to have masterminded the recent hijacking of an Erebus satellite launcher from its pad at the Wingfoot Proving Ground.

#384. ABIGALE DREAR. Widow of the distinguished meteorologist WEATHERAL DREAR. Mrs. Drear's twice-a-week syndicated column "Cry On My Shoulder" is now in its fiftieth year of continuous publication. Happy anniversary, baby!

#385. CLAYTON "CLAY" TERRAINE. Fiar-haired boy of the Interplanetary Mapping Service. He was aboard the mapping-ship Roman Candle--CAPTAIN JEREMIAH HARSH commanding--when that vessel was last heard from. Believed lost somewhere in the Asteroid Belt.

#386. JABEZ "LIGHTHOUSE" BRAMBLE. Tended one-man lighthouse at Ceres Station for forty-seven years. Terse, unsocial, crusty old fellow; resents forced retirement.

#387. RED BEN THORNBUCKLE. Former crack trumpet player--led his own group, "Thorny's Horns", for some years. Now leader of a high-spirited band of space marauders known as "The Vorple Blades". Number One on the Terran Space Police's WANTED list.

* *

L-1

BACK-ISSUE LIST II

The following back-issues of THE WSFA JOURNAL and supplements thereto are currently (as of 1 Oct.) available. Many are in very short supply (issues of which there is only one copy remaining are not listed at all; they will be offered--if not gone by then--to anyone ordering a complete run of avail. issues), so please name alternates when ordering (asterisks indicate issues of which there are less than five copies on hand). Prices on this list in effect until postal rates go up again, at which time new list will be issued. Persons ordering $5 or more worth of 'zines at one time may deduct 5% from the total; persons ordering $10 or more may deduct 10% from the total. Prices include postage & packing. Minimum order: $2.00 (but we will accept orders for less than $2 if an extra 25¢ is included for mailing expenses). Checks & money orders should be made out to "Donald L. Miller"; send orders to Don Miller, 12315 Judson Rd., Wheaton, Maryland, USA, 20906. Payment must accompany order.

THE WSFA JOURNAL --

Issue #	Price	Issue #	Price	Issue #	Price	Issue #	Price	Issue #	Price
* 7	.15	28	.15	40	.25	56	.85	73	.60
* 13	.15	30	.20	41	.35	58	.45	74	.50
16	.15	31	.25	42	.60	62	.45	75	.50
17	.20	32	.25	* 43	.35	63	.45	76	1.50
18	.15	33	.15	* 44	.30	64	.45	77	.50
20	.15	34	.30	46	.15	* 65	.60	78	.50
21	.15	35	.20	* 47	.35	* 66	1.10		
* 22	.40	36	.40	* 49	.30	* 67	.60		
23	.25	37	.35	* 53	.30	* 69	.60		
25	.15	38	.20	54	.30	* 71	1.25		
* 27	.20	39	.25	* 55	.30	72	.60		

SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL --

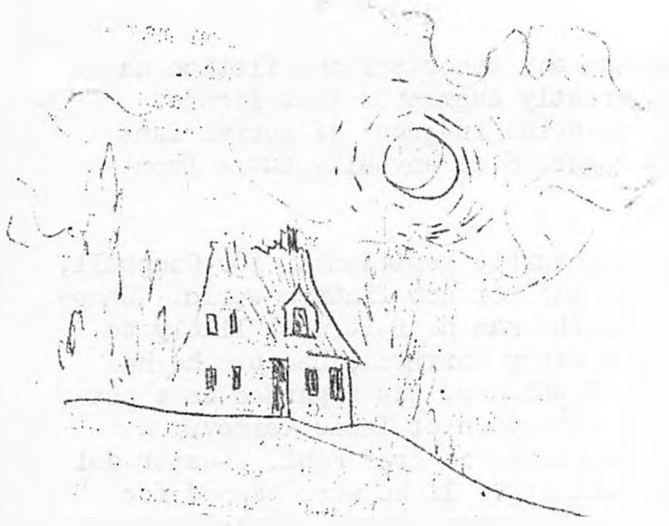
Issue #	Price	Issue #	Price	Issue #	Price	Issue #	Price
3	.20	* 16	.20	24	.20	32	.20
* 6	.20	17	.20	25	.20	33	.20
* 8	.20	18	.20	26	.20	34	.20
* 11	.20	19	.20	27	.20	35	.20
12	.20	* 20	.20	28	.20		
13	.20	21	.20	29	.20		
14	.20	22	.20	30	.20		
15	.20	23	.20	31	.20		

OTHER Supplements --

Issue #	Price
* 43-1	.05
47-1	.05
* 51-1	.05
72-1	.20
72-2	.20
73-1	.20
* 73-2	.20
* 75-1	.20
* 75-2	.20

Supplements 43-1, 47-1, & 51-1 were WSFA Business Supplements. Later Supplements (72-1, etc.) were "overflow" Supplements (i.e., contained material for which there was no room in TWJ proper). SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL was a "news" Supplement thru #16, and became a "general" Supplement (with news, reviews, and other material) from #17 on. All of the SOTWJ's & "overflow" Supplements were 10 pages in length: the Business Supplements were generally smaller. All of the TWJ's priced at 15¢ or 20¢ were 10 pages or less; sizes of the others varied upwards, with #76 being in excess of 130 pages. Annual DISCLAVE Special issues were #'s 22 (1966), 42 (1967), 56 (1968), 66 (1969), 71 (1970), 76 (1971). Interior art appears in all issues after #57; covers started with #56 (except that #'s 56-59 lack back covers, & there is a front cover only on #42). Most covers are available separately, as is the SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW Memorial Art Portfolio from #76 ($1.00, limited ed.). Finally, we have (quantities very limited) a couple of specials (choice of issues ours; all pre-art (i.e., pre-#56) issues, including none with asterisks): 110 pp., $1.25; 200 pp., $2.00. ### Lists of Diplomacy, misc. game, and misc. SF fanzines for sale will be avail. later. Our prozine collection also for sale ($5,000).

-- DLM



JOHN W. CAMPBELL:

A PERSONALIZED OBITUARY

by
Sam Moskowitz

John Wood Campbell, editor of the world's leading science fiction magazine, ANALOG, died suddenly is his home at 1457 Orchard Rd., Mountainside, N.J., between 7:45 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., Sunday, July 11, 1971. He was 61 years old.

He had been suffering from high blood pressure, a chronic sinus condition and gout, for a large part of his life. Of the three, the high blood pressure condition was by far the most serious, requiring very powerful drugs to keep it under control. These drugs inhibited the flow of adrenelin and made it difficult for him to walk up stairways or elevated planes.

The day of his death he awoke feeling below par and suffering from lower abdominable pains. Later he had discomfort and pain in his back. He called his doctor and close friend Ralph Hall of Westfield, N.J., who made a special trip over at 4:00 p.m. to examine him. His blood pressure was not unusually elevated and the cause of discomfort was difficult to diagnose.

He had no appetite for food, and at 7:45 p.m., his wife, Peg, gave him a glass of milk and some cookies and he settled in front of the television set. She went down in the basement, where she has a work room. After a few minutes, alarmed by the lack of any type of noise or movement, she went back upstairs. It was about 8:00 p.m., and he was already dead.

John W. Campbell was undoubtedly the towering influence of science fiction since 1937, when he became editor of ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION the October of that year. With the rise of other capable editors such as Anthony Boucher and H.L. Gold, it had been felt that his imprint upon the field had solidified by the late 1940's. His death, caused by an aneurism of the abdominal aorta, brings home the reality that the direction of the field has been held in thrall by him until how. He and his magazine, paying the highest rates, attaining the greatest circulation, are still the basic standard of today's magazine science fiction. Only a new editor, with economic resources and prestige of a profitable and stable publication like ANALOG, is in a position to change the direction of science fiction--providing he has the ability.

The great names that John Campbell either discovered or developed are still the yardsticks of today's fictional achievement--Robert A. Heinlein, Arthur C. Clarke, Theodore Sturgeon, A.E. van Vogt, Fritz Leiber, Isaac Asimov--to name but a few of the headliners.

ANALOG as a publication won more Hugos than any other science fiction magazine, and his authors and artists as a group greatly augmented that figure. Though in recent years it was not as popular with the in-group of active fans as previously, it has never at any time been regarded as anything but a front-runner.

Speculation at present centers around the possible replacement for Campbell, for that man will be a very important figure in the science fiction world. Campbell was known to have favored Poul Anderson as the man he felt most likely to continue his policies. There was a period when Harry Harrison, because he had edited Campbell's collection of editorials for Doubleday, was regarded as a possibility. Campbell also leaned heavily in the direction of Isaac Asimov. A particularly well-qualified man who might be available is Fred Pohl. Lester del Rey, who was a friend of Campbell's, is a possibility. If he were tapped for the post, his wife, Judy-Lynn, would be a valuable asset with her experience on GALAXY.

Resumés began arriving within a week of his death.

Katherine Tarrant, who had been John Campbell's secretary and associate editor for 32 years, single-handedly managed all the technical aspects of the publication, but did no story selection. She had already announced her retirement for January, 1972 before Campbell died, and would not continue long on a full-time basis past that date no matter who came in.

The suggestion has been made that Condé Nast might drop the magazine now that Campbell is dead. This is highly unlikely. ANALOG is a profitable property, and in these times of economic recession it actually may be bringing in more revenue than many big slicks which have been squeezed by the cutback in advertising budgets.

A remarkable era in the history of magazine science fiction has ended. Even if magazines continued to be viable entities in the years ahead, it would be highly improbable that any one editor will again command such powerful influence for so long a period as the late John W. Campbell.

* * * *

There is plenty of time and plenty of pages for personal reminiscence, and since I knew John Campbell personally since 1936, there is a great deal to tell. For the present, there are still a few facts apropos to the day following death.

John Campbell worked at home three days a week and came into New York on Tuesday and Thursday. His office was in the Graybar building, which is on Lexington Avenue alongside Grand Central Station, New York. In the last few years, he took a train to Newark, N.J.'s Pennsylvania Station, where he would switch to the Hudson Tubes, which carried him underneath the World Trade Center in lower New York in 20 minutes. From there he would mount a spiral ramp and walk one block east to the Fulton Street station of the Lexington Avenue subway and take the express into Grand Central Station.

Since October, 1968 I had worked at 205 E. 42nd Street, one block from John's office. I usually took the Pennsylvania Railroad into Pennsylvania Station, New York, and then the subway to work. The Pennsylvania Railroad trains came in on track One, and on the other side of the platform, the Hudson Tubes trains were dispatched to New York. Every Tuesday and Thursday I would check the Tubes train and platform, and if John were there we would ride into work together. If not, I would take the Pennsylvania Railroad. We never met returning from New York, because he left early to avoid the crush.

Every time we rode in together he used me as a sounding board for his latest editorial. One of the pleasantest surprises I received was when I found he positively delighted in the historical articles I wrote on science fiction. Shortly after Under the Moons of Mars appeared, he spent the entire trip into New York asking me to expand upon points in the book. He read the stories for what they were, and he enjoyed them, but his favorite was Murray Leinster's classic "The Mad Planet". He had bought ARGOSY in the twenties for its science fiction, and he had also bought WEIRD TALES whenever it contained a story he was convinced was science fiction. He enjoyed reading Edgar Rice Burroughs, and discussed a number of his novels with me.

The medication for his blood pressure and the pain of walking with the gout had him moving up the ramp of the Hudson Tubes in New York at a crawl and stopping every couple of steps. During 1971, he no longer walked the block to the Lexington Avenue subway, but flagged down a cab, and we would ride uptown to the Greybar building together.

Half of the time the cab drivers would enter into our conversations. Two of them had read science fiction since the first Gernsback AMAZINGs. One of them remembered Campbell's early stories, the other didn't believe the man in the cab was Campbell.

Campbell had discovered that if the cab mounted Park Avenue Overpass at Grand Central and stopped near the Greybar building on that bridge, there was a narrow alley where he could enter a side door of the Greybar building without mounting the formidable Lexington Avenue bank of steps.

Once in a while I took a few minutes off and went up to the 17th floor with him. To reach his office it was necessary to walk through several others, and his was in a far corner facing on an inside court. There was a window air-conditioner unit projecting through one of the casement windows on his right, and on his left were lined up the Hugos his magazine had won. Against the far wall was Kay Tarrant's desk, with a three-cornered barrier of books, magazines and manuscripts behind which she was literally invisible if she bent her head.

On one side of the room were the files of ANALOG. The bound volumes of ASTOUNDING and UNKNOWN were under lock and key in a metal-doored cabinet. On the other side of the room was a high book case containing books that had come in for review, some dating back to 1947. The quantity was not great, possibly 150 titles, most before P. Schuyler Miller began reviewing. Others had either gone to Miller or had been given to people who visited the office.

Sometimes the latest Kelly Freas cover was propped up alongside his desk, ready to go down to the offset house.

John had a worn metal desk, and his typewriter, which was concealed in the desk, was an ancient silent, anywhere from 30 to 40 years of age, with pica type. Otherwise, the room had an almost spartan, dusty appearance, and needed painting.

Whenever the two of us were available we would have lunch together, occasionally with an author or an artist. It was difficult to get to the check first--John usually picked it up.

If my own responsibilities had not been so pressing, it could have been an even more frequent and pleasant situation.

Our relationship had brought us closer together through the years. We were contemporaries in science fiction, had seen the same events pass during the past

40 years. Nothing he said particularly outraged or disturbed me, because I had gotten to like the one-of-a-kind man whom I had known from my teens into middle age. On his part, he felt that I was the custodian of the records, and that they would be honest.

The last time I saw him was within a week or two before he died. I had just started to get on the Pennsy for New York, when in the middle of about 100 standees waiting for the next tube train to pull in I spotted John. Normally, I would have quit the train and ridden in with him. That morning I had to be at a meeting of our company's publishers in the Cloud Room of the Crysler Building at 9:00 a.m. sharp. The firm's top men would be there. I decided not to indulge myself, and to pass this one up. I would never have another chance.

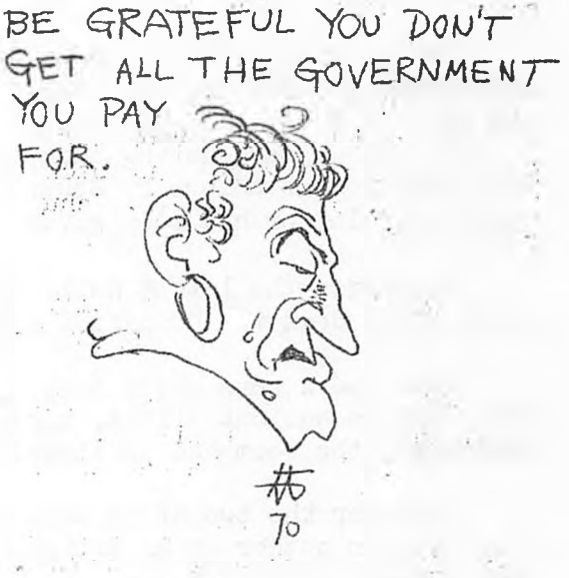
I heard the news from Gerry de la Ree, who had heard it from Charlie Brown, who had heard it from Lester del Rey, who had been called by Peg Campbell. I phoned Peg, who was remarkably composed, talked for a few minutes, and then asked if anyone was sending the obituary to the NEW YORK TIMES. She said that no one was. I told her to let me take care of it--that was the least I could do.

The next morning Kay Tarrant called me at my office and said she was going out to Mountainside that afternoon. I asked her to wait until I got over to her office.

Fifteen minutes later I was there. I pulled Campbell's old silent out of his desk, and sat down in his chair. Kay gave me some ANALOG stationary, and--trained to write against a deadline for the past 18 years--I wrote the obituary in 15 minutes and then retyped it. I slanted it deliberately. There wasn't going to be any Dianetics, Dean Drive, Psi Powers, Dowsing Rods. That could wait on the writing of a longer history of John's life. The TIMES was not going to be given the scent of any kookiness. The man deserved to be recognized for his very real achievements within science fiction. I didn't remember how many Hugos he had received, so I counted the ones by the window, and then asked Kay if she thought they were all there. She did.

I decided to implant a trademark in the obituary, so I inserted a line that he had received First Fandom's Hall of Fame Award, which would not be presented until September.

I had brought along a copy of the August, 1963 AMAZING STORIES with my article "John W. Campbell: The Writing Years", which I ripped out of the issue and appended to the article. Kay had a reprint of an article on John from a 1960 SATURDAY EVENING POST, so I added that, too. As an afterthought I pencilled in Peg's telephone number so they could call her and get any background information.



The problem now was photos. By chance, Jay Klein had sent John a dozen copies of a shot taken of him at the last Lunacon as Guest of Honor. I attached one, and Kay got a manila envelope.

"Have you got a messenger service?", I asked Kay.

"No," she said, "but I can send the office boy."

She called him in, and I instructed him to ask for the obituary editor and deliver the envelope to him.

I closed the desk with the typewriter, and Kay rounded up a few last things and grabbed her bag. While I had been typing, she had gulped down some lunch at her desk.

"After 32 years, you don't take easily to another man sitting in his seat," she said. "No matter who it is, the magazine will have to change. There won't be another one like him."

We pressed the button for the elevator.

"Are you good at hailing cabs?", she asked.

"If there's one around, I'm as good as the next guy."

The elevator reached the main floor and we got out.

"You know," she said, "I would just like to go home and never come back."

"You can't do that, Kay. You're the only one around who has the slightest idea of how the magazine is put together."

"I know," she said, softly, "I just feel like it--I'm not going to do it."

The second cab pulled over to the curb. As she got in I told her I would call her the next day.

There was a lot more in the days ahead, but in retrospect, it seems like a good place to stop.

* *

FEVER QUEST

I have passed lost, unhappy days,
A darkling age of sick confusion, groping. . .
Wandering empty midnight streets,
A restless specter
Haunted by the sentence of an emptier dawn. . .
Trembling on the garlanded, fragrant,
And awfully baited rims of obscene pits. . .
Sounding the troubled deeps
Of fungi-sentineled drearland pools,
And pretending not to see
What I saw down there. . .
Hailing phantom sails from rotting wharves. . .
Riding cloudy nightmare roads
Astride a moth-winged steed
Who seemed to know the way. . .
Debating futile claims with laughing masks. . .
Listening to hear again a bell-note
Muffled in windy distance;
Muffled as well in unendurable mystery. . .

-- James Ellis

THE INKWORKS: Comics Column
by Kim Weston

Well, the price war is on again. DC wants to retain the 25¢, 52-page comic, now about four months old, and Marvel--after one month at the 25¢, 52-page size--switched back to 36 pages and the 20¢ price, reportedly claiming that dealers don't like the 25-centers and that they don't sell as well. After the big build-up Marvel gave the larger size and how they were such a good deal, I've been curious to see what they are going to say in the Bullpen news column about the switch back to small size of this month's issues. So far there has been nothing said.

CONAN #12, December, 1971, Marvel Comics, features a 16-page story called "The Dweller in the Dark", which had originally been scheduled for the never-to-be-published second issue of Marvel's 50¢ Black-and-White "Adult" comic book, SAVAGE TALES. Story (Roy Thomas) and art (Barry Smith) are fine, though the art loses detail in the transition from the large-size B&W comic to the smaller color comic. That so much blood and gore and so much implicit (and explicit) sex was approved and not censored by the Code may surprise some readers.

The Comics Code was recently revised to allow portrayal of drug use, and such horror characters as Werewolves and Vampires, and already books containing all three of these have hit the stands. From Marvel comes one comic, MARVEL SPOTLIGHT #2, February, 1972, which is not so exceptional for the Werewolf story (by Jean & Roy Thomas and Gerry Conway), which is fairly good, but for the art by an artist credited as Michael Ploog. The thing that makes the art so interesting is that it is brimful of faces, figures and various other artistic devices that seem to be pulled straight out of old Will Eisner "Spirit" stories. There are traces of other art styles, most notably that of Ramona Fradon, but the Eisner influence is most pronounced. Never having heard the name of this artist before, I cannot help but wonder about him, and want more information about him. If the art is "swiped" (traced or copied from other artists) it is quite well integrated, and the artist must be reasonably talented. If it is not swiped, the artist has chosen a fine master to emulate. If the latter is the case, let us hope that he has absorbed not just the technical devices and drawing style of Eisner, but some of his spirit (no pun intended) as well. The story is quite a display piece; I hope it does not exhaust the artist's entire repertoire. But the only way to tell is to see more, and for that we must wait.

On the tail of an admirable three-issue Spiderman story revolving around drugs and done without the Comics Code seal before the recent revisions comes a two-issue Green Lantern-Green Arrow story (story by Denny O'Neil, art by Neal Adams & Dick Giordano), also on the drug problem, in which we learn that Speedy (Green Arrow's youthful sidekick) has dropped out and become a junkie. The story is generally well handled, although I'm told there are a couple minor technical errors in the use of heroin, and the story fairly successfully treads the fine line between being too sympathetic towards addicts and being too preachy.

As a bonus, the second drug issue reprints a beautiful 1947 Alex Toth story of the original Green Lantern from the 1940's, and more are promised. This is one of the good features about the 25¢ books--about 25 pages of new story and art plus 15 pages of reprints, many of them fine old stories from the 1940's (Marvel had about 34 pages of new story and art in their one month at large size, as opposed to the present 21 for 5¢ less). Particularly notable are Jack Kirby's four books which reprint Simon & Kirby classics from the early 1940's such as Boy Commandos, Sandman, and the Newsboy Legion. Eventually DC expects to feature between 35 and 40 pages of new material, but the reprints are acceptable for now, and in some cases are to be preferred over new material.

* *

SLEUTHING AROUND FOR CLUES
(Book Review)

by Albert E. Gechter

Sherlock Holmes: Ten Literary Studies, by Trevor H. Hall (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970; 157 pp., $7.95).

A while back I reviewed W. S. Baring-Gould's pseudobiography Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street, and it provoked a certain amount of pro and con discussion among readers of this magazine, just as the book itself did among Sherlock Holmes fans. One of the matters discussed by the Holmes fans most heatedly was Baring-Gould's account of the great detective's recent death. The consensus of opinion was that, despite his advanced age at the present time, Sherlock Holmes is still alive and still in retirement, living as a beekeeper and part-time author on his farm on the coast of Sussex; he is still an occasional consultant to the British government on problems of crime and espionage and does a little detecting on the side every now and then. Mrs. Hudson is still keeping house for him, but Dr. Watson passed on some years ago.

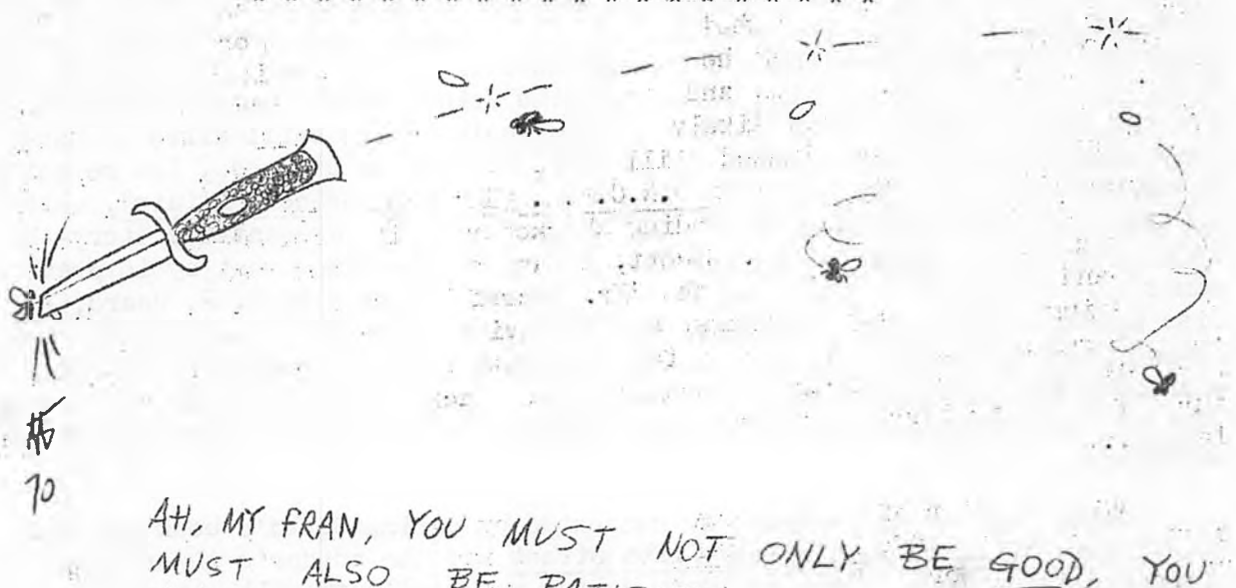
We hear little about Holmes now, because he shuns notoriety and avoids publicity as much as possible; even back in the 1880's and '90's, when he was most active and was cleaning up all the crime in London practically singlehanded, he seldom was mentioned in the newspapers and usually insisted on letting Scotland Yard get all the credit for what he did. As regards the report of his supposed death and the likelihood that he is instead still alive, this has happened before, more than once, to him, and surely the Baker Street Irregulars fan-club are the people who are most likely to know whether he's still alive or not--and they insist that he does indeed still live! By way of evidence, let me point to David McDaniel's The Man From U.N.C.L.E. #13: "The Rainbow Affair", which portrays Sherlock Holmes as a leading character in its present-day story--he appears under the alias of Mr. Escott, a name he sometimes went by in previous times--and let me also point to the "Mr. Mycroft" series by H. F. Heard, likewise having contemporary settings, and involving detection by an elderly beekeeper from Sussex who was once a famous sleuth but now prefers to live in obscurity and operate under an assumed name. Mack Reynold's story "The Adventure of the Extraterrestrial" may well explain why Holmes has been hard to find lately...

Another matter of controversy suggested by Baring-Gould's book and its sequel Nero Wolfe of West Thirty-Fifth Street was the author's theory that the present-day New York detective, Nero Wolfe, was really the illegitimate son of Sherlock Holmes and Irene Adler. Hardly anybody disagreed with the idea that Holmes was at one time romantically involved with Miss Adler and may well have had a son by her. The controversy was over the identification of this son as Nero Wolfe, most readers believing this is untrue. Now there are indeed cer-

certain Holmesian characteristics displayed by Wolfe, but he most closely resembles Sherlock's brother, Mycroft Holmes, instead of Sherlock; therefore, if Baring-Gould had stated that Mycroft was Nero Wolfe's father, he would have had fewer doubts about his accuracy among the readers. And it likewise seems doubtful that Irene Adler was Wolfe's mother. Actually, if one were to look around for a modern detective resembling Sherlock Holmes enough to be his son, one would be most likely to select his younger "double" and "impersonator" and would-be successor, Solar Pons of Praed Street, London, whose adventures are "agented" for him by August Derleth. I mentioned this once in a letter to Derleth, and he didn't deny it, so you may draw your own conclusions about it.

Now here comes Trevor H. Hall with still another "nonfiction" book about Holmes, and he agrees with about half of what Baring-Gould wrote and disagrees with the rest. Hall is a magistrate in Leeds, England, a life-long Sherlock Holmes fan, a biographer of Edward Gurney, and an expert on stage-magic, conjuring, occultism, spiritualism, ESP, etc., and a skeptic about supernatural matters. In this book Hall tries to reconstruct Holme's origin, family background, early life, education, decision to become a detective, feud with Professor Moriarty, and zeal to expose fake "supernatural" occurrences. Holme's hobbies, interests, pastimes, love-life, and scientific experiments are all analyzed. This is not a full-scale biography of Holmes; instead it is an assortment of loosely-connected essays about his life and times. Most interesting to fantasy fans is Hall's discussion of why and how Holmes and his "literary agent", Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, had a serious disagreement between each other about spiritualism and the supernatural. Hall ducks the question of whether or not Holmes is still alive, but implies that he is. He accepts the idea that Holmes and Adler were lovers and had an illegitimate son, but refuses to believe that this son was Nero Wolfe. He says this son is probably still alive and most likely would be named Sherlock John Hamish Mycroft Vernet Holmes-Adler. He proposes that the Holmes fans try to locate such a person in Britain and the United States. Well, I find this to be fascinating, even though I don't agree completely with all of it, and I'd say the book is worthwhile reading, and Holmes addicts will probably wish to own it. I'd rather not discuss Hall's ideas at any more length here and now for fear that I might spoil the book for prospective readers.

* *



THE CLASSIFIED TOP SECRET LEAK

Sci-fic
by
Alexis A. Gilliland

The other day my high source in the State Department (what he gets high on is top secret, but it comes in diplomatic pouches from a foreign country which shall remain discreetly unnamed) called up and said: "Hey, Gilly...", (My friends call me Alexis, but I have never seen any reason to correct him.) "I got a hot leak for THE WSFA JOURNAL!" I asked why an obscure fanzine should be selected for such an honor, and the reply was they don't really want it to get out, but they would like to feel the public pulse on the issue. Sort of conduct a poll?, I asked. My contact was...oohh... noncommittal; more like a trial balloon, he said. What was really wanted was a preview of public opinion made without stirring up the animals. THE WSFA JOURNAL, it turned out, had been selected because (a) THE WSFA JOURNAL had been repeatedly cleared by the FBI since the late '40's, (b) THE WSFA JOURNAL was the most obscure publication of which they were aware, and (c) the story they wanted to break was somewhat science-fictional, which should be right up our alley.

Alright, I says, let's have it. Well, there was some background, naturally. The sort of thing you read on the front pages a few weeks ago gets put in the file and stamped "classified". (If you only hear it on the radio, it rates "secret".)

Anyway, it seems that on March 25, 1971, there was some trouble in Bengal over the election returns. Seemingly, the Punjabis were averse to ceding control of the country to the more numerous Bengalis, and as a result of their stern countermeasures, there are presently some 7,000,000 refugees in India and an unknown number of dead in Bengal (my source declined to give an estimate; body counts have been a bad word at the State Department for some time). Anyway, Red China has been West Pakistan's true friend and staunch international supporter in this affair.

On August 9, 1971, the Indians signed a 20-year treaty of mutual support and admiration with the Russians. The same afternoon India demanded that Pakistan not try (or at least not condemn to death) Sheik Rahman Whozis (that's what my source said--he is very highly-placed, but his memory is not what it should be) before a secret military tribunal on August 11, 1971, as scheduled.

Well, I told him, this is all very interesting, but I heard it on the radio already. So it's at least secret if not top secret, right, Gilly?, was the reply. Now comes the good stuff. We figure that by mid-November Bengal will be having a famine, and more millions of refugees will be trying to get into India, and the Indians know it. Therefore, they figure: better have the war in October before all the refugees arrive. You're kidding, I said. No, no! India is really mad and they can't afford to take on any more Bengalis, so they are all set for a showdown with Pakistan.

The really good part is this: Russia has moved 800,000 men to the Chinese border, with atomic missiles (tactical, of course), and they are getting ready to perform a...ah...cutting-out operation on China, in regards to the Chinese nuclear capacity. You mean nuclear castration?, I said. Exactly, was the reply. You turn a nice phrase, Gilly. Well, I said, this has been in Joe Alsop's column for months and months. Including the anti-aircraft buildup around Vladivostok and the 200,000-man Mongolian auxillary force. Doesn't that prove it was secret?, asked my source. The Chinese have the hydrogen bomb and a 1000-mile missile, we said in unison.

Ha, ha, Gilly, you're a card!, said old source. Good thing you aren't a security risk! Well, listen. This is what I am leaking. We think, one faction here in the State Department, that China will not submit to nuclear blackmail, and that when China is asked by Pakistan to support its war against India, China will support Pakistan, in spite of what Russia may say, and the Russians will then seize that provocation to engage in nuclear--ha! ha!--castration. There was a long pause.

You mean, I said, that an asinine opinion which could be formed on information gleaned by a mildly-diligent perusal of the newspapers constitutes the substance of a security leak?

Right on, Gilly!, said my source, it should be just about what THE WSFA JOURNAL can handle, too. An obscure leak for an obscure journal. Well, hellfire, I muttered, an obscure leak by an obscure bureaucrat. Speaking of security, old buddy, is the phone line secure? There was a pause, then a giggle. Locally we call it the Tapline, he said, oilily.

Well, then, I replied, let me tell you a top secret. More giggles. Based on a careful reading of the papers and on the persistent advocacy of manned bombers (such as the B-1) by Air Force officers who should , by their age group, be staunch ICBM supporters, I have come to this conclusion: The question: Why, if the Russians launch a salvo of missiles at our Minuteman silos, can we not simply launch our Minutemen ICBM's at their preselected targets, must be answered: because we can't.

The giggles stopped. Why not?, my source asked. Besides, he added, we want to preserve our options; we said as much to Congress. Balls, said I. They wanted tens and hundreds of billions of dollars to build an ABM system to preserve a politician's options? They are shifting back to manned bombers to preserve their options? Listen, source, it is my belief that on five-minutes notice...which is all they'd have in event of a nuclear castration attack...we couldn't get 10% of our Minutemen out of the silos. No wonder they want to preserve the "option" of not having to shoot off those 1,000 missiles at short notice.

Kee-rist Awmighty...! My source was utterly wiped out. Gilly, listen... if this line has been tapped I don't know you. You can't leak something like that, even if it isn't true...I mean, even if the NEW YORK TIMES doesn't want to know that! I mean...oh, Hell and Damnation! Who ever heard of leaking something into the State Department! He hung up.

The phone rang. A very polite gentleman said: "This is the National Security Agency, Mr. Gilliland. A car is on the way to pick you up for an interview in the interest of the National Security."

That was an hour ago. Don, if I don't tell you not to print this, go ahead and print it. There's the door bell now, Two A goddamned M--what a way to run a country!

* *

Book Reviews

Serial Reviews

Tactics of Mistake, by Gordon R. Dickson (Doubleday, $4.95).

I have a confession to make. Every once in a while, I develop an urge to read some good old-fashioned entertaining science fiction, to take a brief vacation, as it were, from symbolism, stylistic sophistication, psychological probing, socio-political commentary, satire, pathos, parable, and all of the other qualities that make modern-day speculative fiction such an exciting part of literature. Good old-fashioned entertaining sf, you know--ASTOUNDING/ANALOG-type material, like Poul Anderson, Hal Clement, Murray Leinster (the good stuff, such as "Combat Team", etc.), Mack Reynolds, Gordon R. Dickson, some of Blish and Randall Garrett. You know. Problem-solving stories; ingenious solutions to difficult and complex problems by heroes (marked by tactical brilliance and tunnel vision) who generally fly in the face of orthodoxy to pull off their coups.

The only cure for this periodic urge is to indulge it, a process which rapidly leads to its disappearance. For I know from long experience that after three or four entertaining books the entertainment will begin to come a little thin and I'll be ready to return to the latest Ace Special. Reading that particular variety of science fiction has always been, for me, much like eating whipped cream or licking the foam off of beer: a good deal of fun at the moment, but unsatisfying in the long run. No doubt this is in some degree attributable merely to personal preference, for there are other types of fiction, notably mythic fantasy, about which the same could be said, yet which I find far less like foam or whipped cream.

At any rate, during my most recent spate of reading "good old-fashioned entertaining sf", I encountered Gordon R. Dickson's Tactics of Mistake. Ah, here is the almost quintessential ANALOG novel, serialized in that august journal in 1970 and now published between stiff covers by Doubleday. A world of several centuries hence, technologically far advanced over ours, but socially and politically just 1970 writ on a cosmic scale, with the Western Alliance and the Eastern Coalition engaged in a semi-polite Cold War which includes indirect (and sometimes direct) participation in some very impolite brush-fire wars on far-flung planets. Within this context, we see eight or nine main characters, nearly all (inevitably) culturally American whatever their names and supposed geographic origins, dominated by the hero, Lt. Col. Cletus Grahame, former head of the Tactics Department at the Western Alliance Military Academy. Grahame is a fantastically brilliant and subtle theoretician-tactician, who coldly plans moves years in advance and manipulates other figures like so many puppets, wheels-within-wheels-within-wheels, circumventing his own superiors and defeating the enemy, all the while pursuing a goal of his own, which is nothing less

than the elimination of both the Alliance and the Coalition as influences out among the colonies. He succeeds, naturally. That was never in doubt from page one. All of the fun consists in how he wins his inevitable victory.

In the very first chapter, Grahame confronts his major opponent, Coalition Secretary Dow de Castries, in the lounge of a neutral spaceship and one-ups him with the old shell game. Dickson plays the shell game with his readers, too, beguiling us with the quickness of his hands and the artistry of his flourishes, lest we have time for a hard look that penetrates the novel far enough to reveal the shallowness of many of its elements. As in most such stories, all of the Colonel's fantastically delicate and detailed plans depend on a whole bunch of erratic and fallible people doing exactly what he predicts they'll do exactly at the right time; it depends on them being perceptive when his plans require them to perceive, stupid when his schedule calls for them to be stupid, and so forth. It is all so contrived that one penetrating whisper of skepticism, at any moment in the sequence, will make it all collapse like a gigantic house of cards. But Dickson moves fast, and so Cletus Grahame can take a force of a few thousand mercenaries, trained in a pseudo-yoga art that turns them into super-Green Berets able to march over 50 miles of bad terrain in a single day and leap tall buildings at a single bound defeat the entire combined armies of Earth. So beguiling are his finger movements toward the end that he can assert that the mercenary army's women, children and cripples have not only defeated but captured an entire Earth occupation army--assert this, mind you, without even hinting at the means by which this miracle was accomplished--and it isn't until an hour after putting the book down that the reader exclaims, "Hey, now wait a minute...!"

All of this, though, is intended more as criticism of the type than of Gordon R. Dickson or this book in particular. For what it is, Tactics of Mistake is an excellent novel, and reading it was a lot of fun. A year or so from now, when I happen to be in the throes of that urge once more, I imagine I'll want to read it again; and it'll be a lot of fun again. If you happen to be in the throes of such an urge right now, buy this novel and indulge it.

-- TED PAULS

Vermilion Sands, by J.G. Ballard (Berkley Medallion Book #S1980; 75¢; 192 pp.).

I remember when I would spend summers at the beach with my family, and particularly the focused, ending of those summers. Invariably, around Labor Day I would be sitting in the middle of a mood that I see now as a painting, with a long perspective of a street stretched out in front of me. On one side are houses, diminishing into dots, with Venetian blinds in every one of their windows, all pulled down, and all angled the same. The sun is almost down, and the slatted shadows reach across the street to the beginning of the beach on the other side, and the sand is red. This picture in my mind frightens me a little, as does Ballard's book, with its ended summers.

I am not a cross-reference man in this case, as I have not read much by Ballard, so I'll take my critical cues from the collection's most important feature, its mood. These are all ingrown, introverted stories of bright burnings before darkness, and are powerful in that last intensity. Some are the best, all of the individual stories are worth the book's price.

The book is focused on emotion, with houses that relive previous owners' darkest fears and machinations, clothes that change form and color in sympathetic and symbiotic union with their wearers, and paintings that record their

subject's soul. In the story that won a Hugo, "The Cloud Sculptures of Coral D", Ballard has his characters batter their cloud-seeding planes against the twin reefs of the many layers of a woman's ego and a strangely personal nature.

The story personifies all the other stories, and pulls tighter and hits harder, avoiding a tendency of some of the others to almost become mere, mood pieces, saved only by narrative skill. "Cloud Sculpture" is always its own story; events taking place among the clouds above Vermilion Sands seem to bring the whole planet into the inverted mood. The characters are sharp and patterned, like an Aubrey Beardsley illustration. The ephemeral cloud sculptures are the perfect mirror for transient human ego structure, and the climactic storm this structure's destructive power.

This collection is set upon strange, minor keys, and is compelling in its melancholy. Ballard has looked over his shoulder at sundown on a beach in late summer, and has seen Dorian Gray through the Venetian blinds.

-- RAY RIDENOUR

- -

Half Past Human, by T.J. Bass (Ballantine #02306; 95¢).

It was only recently, while reviewing Jon Hartridge's Earthjacket ((in coming issue of SOTWJ--ed.)), that I discussed the peculiarly British school of "utopian" sf, involving cities "self-contained and artificially sustained by a superior but often deteriorating technology, rigidly stratified into dominant and subservient classes, oppressive, over-populated, stifling, totalitarian and usually decadent". T.J. Bass may or may not be British, but Half Past Human is decidedly part of that school of prophetic science fiction. In discussing the type of story, I wrote of "a boring sameness, a repetitively morose atmosphere, and a formula predictability in the hero's successful defiance of society". It was probably inevitable, therefore, that the very next example of the school that I read should be a roaring exception.

What makes Half Past Human exceptional, primarily, is that Bass blends superb craftsmanship with deliberate perversity bordering on eccentricity. The combination is unbeatable. The former, by itself, might be dull, and the latter, by itself, would almost certainly be disruptive; together, the effect is wondrous. For instance, the author has this thing about describing, time and time again, the most dreadful wounds and manifestations of disease, but he does so using medical and biological textbook terms. The result is detachedly gory, if that isn't a contradiction, and raises a persistent question about what Bass was intending. The same question is raised by other elements. For example, there is a cybernetic device constructed in the form of a walking staff which calls itself Toothpick. I don't think that Bass was trying to be funny, yet on reflection it seems absurd that he would not be trying to be funny.

The plot is not particularly noteworthy. It is the standard one, with one of the standard variations. But what Bass does within the framework of that plot is extraordinary. There is, first of all, background so subtly presented and so naturally interwoven that there is no point where the reader feels that the narrative has been slowed or interrupted so that background can be sketched. Indeed, there is no overt feeling of "background" at all; there is, instead, simply a widening, deepening picture of a wholly believable, consistent world. The details are extremely fine and remarkably well-related. This is augmented by a convincing atmosphere and a consistent view of the philosophy and psychology that would be adopted by individuals in a world of three trillion where

deceased citizens and excess, unauthorized infants are routinely processed into meat patties. Consider this passage, written from the viewpoint of one of the rebels who leaves this "utopia":

> "For two whole days Moses fought his way through the stinking crowds. He was weak from trying to keep his footing in the slippery excrement and crushed roaches, sore from stumbling over decaying neglected bodies, and continually nauseated by the rotten vapors that saturated his nose filters. He was sorry he had come.
>
> "He stepped out at a strange shaft city to catch a nap. There were the usual piles of refuse and bland stares. He found a corner to sit down and sleep in. A sickening thud woke him up. A small gob of something wet hit his cheek. A jumper. Another suicide. From the skeletal fragmentation Moses judged that he or she had started a quarter of a mile upshaft. There appeared to be more than one body. That irritated Moses. The jumper hadn't had the simple decency to scream a warning so the impact area could be cleared."

That attitude toward death and suffering prevails throughout the novel, and I have rarely seen such a tone handled so well over several hundred pages.

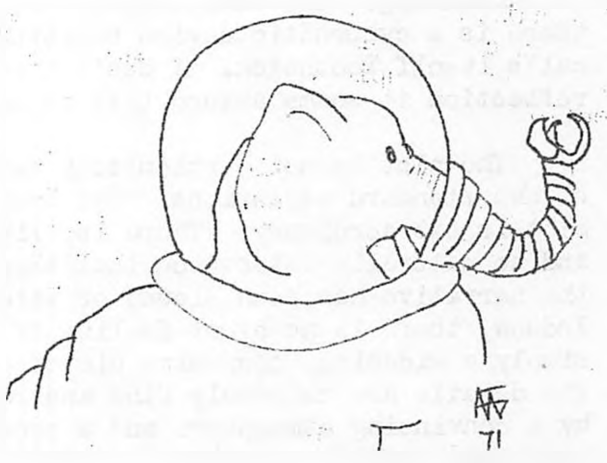
But this does not exhaust what is noteworthy about Half Past Human. T.J. Bass also counts among his abilities effective characterization. There are five major characters portrayed in considerable depth and with admirable skill. More important, I think, this ability and the others are not really separate. Bass's characters are part of his background, and the emotional tone is part of both. The novel is an orchestrated whole, conceived and executed as a total entity, and so successful as such that the reviewer cannot slip a razor blade (or whatever its literary equivalent) between any two of its elements.

Memorable it certainly is, even for individual readers who may not care for it for one reason or another.

-- TED PAULS

Universe I, edited by Terry Carr (Ace Books #84600; 249 pp.; 95¢).

Universe I is the first volume of a new series of anthologies containing all new science fiction stories. In his introduction, Terry Carr tells us that Universe is a science fiction anthology first and foremost--and although we may find an occasional fantasy in it, we will find no "speculative fiction" as he understands the term. The format is attractive, having a full-page illustration by Alicia Austin and a short introduction accompanying each story. The following is a list of the contents, with comments appended where they are worthwhile.



"West Wing, Falling", by Gregory Benford & Gordon Eklund -- This is a fair story of tragedy concerning an attempt to evacuate a world built within a comet pending doom.

"Good News From the Vatican", by Robert Silverberg -- On the back cover it

says that it "tells of the election of the first robot pope", which is about all there is to say about this story.

"Jade Blue", by Edward Bryant.

"Nor Limestone Islands", by R.A. Lafferty -- This story contains a reference to Charles Fort--a reference which was surely the inspiration of the story. It concerns islands of floating rock in the sky. Fair.

"Time Exposures", by Wilson Tucker -- This is a fairly good story of a murder investigation carried out by a camera which photographs up to 14 hours in the past. However, the story depends too much on the novelty of the idea, which isn't really novel. Kuttner's "Private Eye" (ASF Jan. 1949) is yet to be surpassed!

"Mindship", by Gerald F. Conway -- A fairly good story of the dangers of insanity aboard a starship powered by a psi-drive.

"Notes For a Novel About the First Ship Ever to Venus", by Barry N. Malzberg.

"Poor Man, Beggar Man", by Joanna Russ -- A fantasy piece.

"The Romance of Dr. Tanner", by Ron Goulart -- A typical piece of his pretentious humor. Fair.

"The Human Side of the Village Monster", by Edward Bryant -- A fairly good pessimistic story of the future which offers an interesting solution to a lack-of-food/excess-of-garbage problem.

"Mount Charity", by Edgar Pangborn -- A good story of three immortal animals who have observed and recorded history for the last three thousand years.

"All the Last Wars at Once", by George Alec Effinger -- Surprisingly, this is a fairly good "black humor" story which describes a 30-day period of open war between the many factions within our society. It suffers from a slightly weak ending, but also contains a good observation on the nature of prejudice.

All-in-all it is a rather mediocre anthology, but there is something about it which augers well for the series. The next volume is due out in November.

-- MICHAEL T. SHOEMAKER

- -

Best SF: 1969, ed. by Harry Harrison & Brian W. Aldiss (Berkley #N1982; 95¢).

The rival compilations of year's finest science fiction stories continue to be a source of wonder and splendid irony, if not a profound commentary on the diversity of human tastes. In preparing their selections of 1968 sf, the two principal editorial teams, Harry Harrison & Brian Aldiss for G.P. Putnam, and Terry Carr & Don Wollheim for Ace, managed to select a total of 31 stories without a single duplication, a truly extraordinary accomplishment. For the 1969 anthologies, they have nearly repeated the feat--of a total of 29 stories, only Ursula K. LeGuin's "Nine Lives" appears in both volumes. In this particular installment of the perennial debate over which stories constitute the finest of the year, I believe that Harrison/Aldiss easily win on points. Best SF: 1969 is by far the finest anthology of the series, with at least half of its selections having a reasonable claim to belonging among the best science fiction published during that year.

"Nine Lives", strangely enough, is not really one of them. I suppose that I should bow to the apparent unanimity of opinion to the contrary, but even after seeing it in two "year's best" anthologies and the Nebula awards volume, I find this LeGuin story minor. It is competent, certainly, but it lacks the poetry and power of this author's best work. Its presence in this book is just marginal enough to be distressing, without being outrageous; in this, it is similar to Frederick Pohl's "The Schematic Man", which is clever entertainment but nothing more. Both are perfectly good stories, which any sf magazine would have been happy to publish in any month, but they don't deserve to be given serious consideration as among the best of the year.

Several of the other selections are disappointing in one way or another. For example, Ken W. Purdy's "The Dannold Cheque" is a low-key bit of slick prose that is devoid of content. It entombs one minor idea in an over-abundance of typical PLAYBOY writing. The only other genuinely poor story in the lot is by Algis Budrys, who should know better. "Now Hear the Word of the Lord" is dull and, really, not worth even the few minutes it takes to read it. A cipher, which could hardly have had less impact if it had consisted of eight blank pages. "The Electric Ant", by Philip K. Dick, is at least interesting, and quite well done, but is remarkably straightforward (for Dick) and predictable--something PKD almost never is. Finally, among the disappointments, there is Joseph Wesley's "Womb to Womb", which combines a very good idea with competent execution, but is mortally flawed by a lack of emotional content in a story that needs emotional content if it is to have impact.

Somehow these failures, partial or total, while comprising a substantial chunk of the anthology, don't really detract that much from it. For the outstanding stories dominate this volume completely. And among them, J.G. Ballard's "The Killing Ground" stands out particularly. Every once in a while, Ballard takes time off from his patented excursions into imagery and esoteric symbolism to write a "real", conventionally structured science fiction story, a linear story with an actual plot involving actual people. Here, he does it well. "The Killing Ground" is a superb story of the near-future, in which American armies are occupying most of the world and rag-tag local guerillas are fighting in villages along the Thames. Nearly equalling this gem in "The Snows Are Melted, the Snows Are Gone", by James Tiptree, Jr., a beautifully executed story of the post-Armageddon future and a marvelous symbiosis between an armless girl and a mutated wolf. Then there is Anthony Burgess' "The Muse", which offers an excellent portrait of Elizabethan England, a fascinating answer to the question of who wrote the plays attributed to Shakespeare, and the expert, precise writing one would expect from Burgess, and Brian W. Aldiss' "Working in the Spaceship Yards", which makes up in superb writing what it lacks in plot. "Hospital of Transplanted Hearts", by D.M. Thomas, is neither poetry nor prose, but a chart of fascinating relationships and sensitive word portraits that really has to be seen to be appreciated. Purists may question its right to be considered sf, but it is nicely done. Purists may also question "Eco-Catastrophe!", by Dr. Paul Ehrlich, which originally appeared in RAMPARTS as an extrapolative article, but as far as I'm concerned an essay on the destruction of life on Earth written from a post-1979 viewpoint has as much right to be called an sf story as any other piece of extrapolation. Pg Wyal's short, "The Castle on the Crag", is a powerfully written fable of the future, and the even shorter "The Man Inside", by Bruce McAllister, is crisply competent. Finally, there is Jon Hartridge's story of modern (future) man travelling back to our pre-Neanderthal past, "Like Father", which is fairly predictable in its denouement but carried off excellently.

It is arguable, as always, whether the stories that Harrison & Aldiss have collected in this volume are really the best of 1969, but they've come closer this time than ever before.

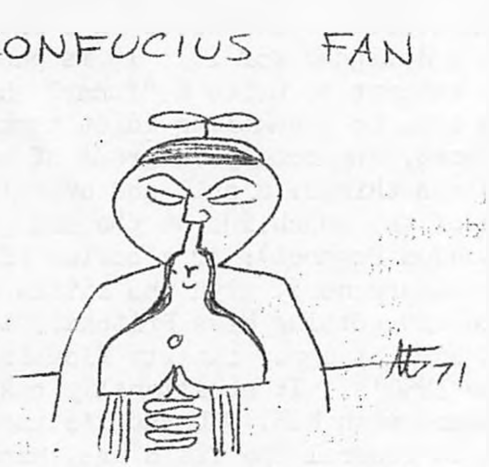
-- TED PAULS

- -

The Zolotov Affair, by Robert H. Rimmer (Sherbourne Press, 1967; 191 pp., $3.95; Signet Book Q4574, April 1971; 220 pp., 95¢).

Every now and then, someone writes a semi-humorous economic fantasy about a little man who discovers how to make gold and about the financial consternation this causes. Two titles that come to mind are Alfred Toombs' Good As Gold (1955) and Frank O'Rourke's Instant Gold (1964). These appear and are usually immediately forgotten. The Zolotov Affair has a bit more going for it, though--specifically, a naked protagonist in a mink coat. This has already helped it last long enough to get into a paperback reprint, with a special afterword on "Sexenomics" added.

The story is narrated by Marge Wentworth, the secretary of the bank president to whom Zolotov, a meek high school chemistry teacher, brings his first bar of home-made gold. When Zolotov's home blows up and burns down a couple of weeks later, Marge is impressed enough to persuade her boy friend that there might be something in it after all, and that if they can find and help Zolotov, he might be grateful enough to part with some of his gold. No sooner do they show an interest in Zolotov than they are pounced upon by spies--sadistic Russian spies, polite Chinese spies, uncouth Cuban spies--all of whom try to kill each other for possession of Marge and Craig and their supposed knowledge of where Zolotov and his secret are. One of the Chinese spies is a master hypnotist who turns Marge into a nymphomaniac. Her life becomes a series of escapes and chases around the world, usually clad only in her mink coat. After about 100 pages of this, the cast has divided itself into (a) those who want Zolotov and his gold, and (b) those who want Marge. Group (a) includes all the spies and Marge; (b) includes those who've had sex with Marge and are no longer interested in the gold. At this point Marge escapes from both (a) and (b) and finds Zolotov, who is now ensconced in a North African fortress preparing to destroy the world's economy in order to bring about universal peace. Marge joins the party by marrying the widowed professor and teaching his 13-year-old son the facts of life. Zolotov is successful, but is killed when his fortress is bombed by an enraged gold-mining company. Marge retires in mourning with her new 13-year-old son back to a life of seclusion in the U.S., followed by the two members of (b), now arguing amiably as to which will get to marry her and which is most is most probably the father of her unborn child. The ironic ending (dare I reveal it?) is that the artificial gold is unstable and all turns back into lead after a year, anyway.



In case you're wondering where the redeeming social importance is in all this, Rimmer explains in his afterword on sexenomics in the Signet edition that this "is probably the most antiestablishment novel written in the past several years. The real reason I wrote it was to sugarcoat an economics lesson . . . and see if I could make some of the younger generation aware of just how intrinsically their lives are being and will be regulated by money . . ." If there's a lesson under all that sugar, it's effectively hidden. Such lines as, "At least lead has industrial uses. What good is gold...really, except for decorative purposes?", aren't likely to impress the members of the younger generation who know anything about the industrial uses of gold--the gold foil on the Apollo spacecraft; gold dental fillings; gold in computer hardware. (That particular quotation is not

unreasonable since it's made by Marge, and it's in character for her not to know any better; but nowhere does Rimmer show that he knows any better, either.) As a novel, it's nothing but lightweight froth. (Rimmer comments in an aside that it's a great deal of fun for a male to try to write in the first-person female. I'd be interested in hearing some first-person female opinions of the result.) As a sugarcoated lesson in economics, you'd do better to follow the adventures of Scrooge McDuck. Move over, Good As Gold and Instant Gold.

-- FRED PATTEN

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Never in This World, edited by Idella Purnell Stone (Gold Medal #T2406; 75¢).

Of all the sub-varieties of literature within the sf genre, none is so consistently poorly done as the humorous science fiction short story. Sustained humor is difficult to achieve under any circumstances in sf (as compared, for example, to fantasy), but it is practically impossible to achieve in a short work. The premises of the genre simply aren't designed for it. It is phenomenal to see an experienced, talented professional attempt to write a "funny" short story and be reduced, in the twinkling of an eye, to a bumbling idiot turning out the most pathetically puerile drivel. Short, supposedly-humorous sf nearly always evolves into one of two equally worthless things: a dull and over-long recitation which exists for the sole purpose of the punchline at the end (when that punchline is a pun, the story is an extended Feghoot); or a series of increasingly improbable and childish slapstick occurrences, with the little blue men from Jupiter upsetting the office routine and getting Miss Pritchard to finally notice Arnold (or vice versa). This sort of empty inanity flourished in the pages of AMAZING and FANTASTIC during the 1950's. It occasionally rears its grotesquely absurd head these days, for instance with K.M. O'Donnell's insultingly dreadful novel, Dwellers of the Deep--but in general the field has, happily, outgrown such trivial garbage.

Now along comes Idella Purnell Stone, an anthologist of no particular repute (or talent) thus far, and she has somehow stumbled into the preposterous delusion that an anthology of sf "humor" is called for. Poor foolish lady. She should have spent more time in the company of science fiction writers and readers; they would have disabused her of this misplaced notion. But she didn't, and they didn't, and the result is this abominable volume--fittingly distinguishable from halfway across a drugstore by its purple and green letters on dog-vomit yellow background. That gross cover is emblazed with: "12 famous science fiction writers, in rare and whimsical moods". I would contest "whimsical", for the term implies some droll aptitude that is not evident in most of the stories. But I'll concede the "rare"--so long as it is used euphemistically, as in the "rareness" of hunks of animal meat left too long in the summer sun.

There are two lines that I found funny in the entire 250 pages of this anthology, one in each of the two longest stories, Randall Garrett's "Look Out! Duck!" (40 pages) and Rick Raphael's "Make Mine Homogenized" (50 pages). Both of these stories are minor, but readable, and together with "Or Else", by Henry Kuttner & C.L. Moore, which isn't "humorous" and wasn't intended to be, they comprise everything of merit in this volume. Three mediocre stories, really, that one wouldn't pay much attention to if they appeared in a contemporary anthology (like Orbit). But for this egregious compilation of froth, they are top-level. What's left is nonsensically shallow offal: a Feghoot, an imitation Feghoot by Asimov, a poke at pretentious literary criticism by Poul Anderson, a Murray Leinster story with a cop who talks like something out of a 1948 B movie, a German dialect story, and others of that ilk.

Why in the world was Never in This World published?

-- TED PAULS

The Left Hand of Darkness, by Ursula K. LeGuin (Ace #47800; 95¢).

The most perfect form of science fiction story, in my opinion, is the type of story presently characterized by the phrase "Secondary Universe". Developing, from scratch, a completely alien environment, and making it believable, is one of the most difficult types of science fiction to write; but, when it comes off, it is beautiful.

A second type of thematic material, very difficult to handle--and, thanks to what has been described as a puritanical editorial policy, rarely published--is the idea of an alien sexual order. Until recently, only a few such stories, among them Rogue Queen and certain of Philip José Farmer's stories, have seen the light of day. (Considering certain recent books, however, the editorial restrictions of bygone days had, if nothing else, one beneficial effect: it was so hard to get an sf story with a sexual theme published that it damn well had to be good.)

From the above comments, it may be surmised that the book in question deals in depth with both of these themes.

Genli Ai, First Mobile to Gethen, or Winter, is attempting to bring about the joining of that world to the interworld federation, the Ekumene. We take up his story, and that of the Gethenian Lord, Estraven, in the land of Karhide, where the king was mad.

Genly and Estraven had developed a sort of friendship, which, in the course of a political powerplay, results in both of them being, essentially, evicted from the country. Genly ultimately ends up in a prison camp in the neighboring country of Orgoreyn, a bureaucracy, and Estraven reaches him. They then return to Karhide over the ice.

Simple? No.... You see, Winter is an ice world, with only a bare minimum of food to sustain life, and practically no food on the great ice caps. The journey is something like walking from Nome to St. Petersburg, in the dead of winter, with no polar bears or seals to lunch on.

Then, too, there is the matter of sex. The Gethenians, unique among the human peoples of the galaxy, are ambisexual. (I'm guessing at that word.) For about 21 days of their 26-day month, they are essentially neuter. Then, for about five days, they enter the period of kemmer, in which they become fertile males or females, as external conditions determine. Obviously, the natives consider Genly, the (to us) normal male, a permanently rutting sexual pervert. Estraven overcame his aversion, not a difficult thing, really, in a more or less non-sexually oriented culture. The major dilemma, however, caused by this peculiar sexual factor, is the fact that the ice journey takes more than 26 days, with the obvious problems. The author handles the problem, however, in a lot better manner than I suspect Farmer would ever manage.

Some minor points. There is a fact often mentioned by scholars of language to the effect that words for specifics are generated in a language by their own need. That is, a Lapp has about 20 words for reindeer in various conditions, ages, and states of mind; a shipbuilding people develop a long line of classifications for what an inlander would call sailboats; and the French have a dozen

words for love. This is a fact often ignored by writers. Ursula, however, has remembered this fact and has used it to advantage, showing the many words for different degrees of cold, snow, and ice conditions that would be natural on a world like Winter, thus making the idea of such a tremendous cold seem far more real.

The excellent handling of an incredibly difficult theme; the careful attention to even the smallest of essential details; the fine delineation of character; all of these led to a Hugo for this book when it came out (in 1969; the current review is of a 1971 reprint). It well deserves careful reading; and I recommend it heartily, and with no reservations.

-- DAVID A HALTERMAN

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

The Boy Who Had the Power: Juvenile science fiction by Jean & Jeff Sutton (G.P. Putnam's Sons; 189 pp.; $4.95).

The scene for this novel is at once established as extraterrestrial by such judiciously lexical words and phrases as "lush green panda grass", "the big yellow sun Klore", and "browsing gran". The otherworldly ethos is consistently threaded throughout.

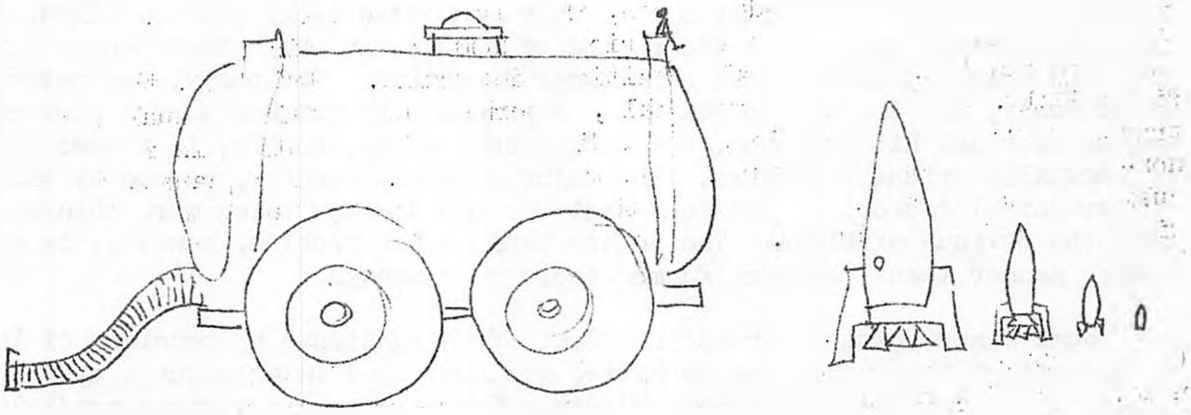
But certainly the adult reader, and I suspect the greater majority of the astute young people to whom this is aimed, soon see through this mentonymic ploy, for almost everything else about the locale is obviously as terrestrial as a circus, which the teenaged hero Jedro joins to escape a cruel boss. There are moments of excitement and suspense, but both descend to levels of transparency so clear that the outcome is discernible to young and old reader alike before the end of the first chapter.

This doesn't mean the book is a bad one. To the contrary, it's an excellent juvenile, with the kind of breathless naivete that sends a flush of well-remembered warmth through both the young in mind and the young at heart. It's space opera pure and simple, and no superminds, no telekenetic powers, and no dangled-carrot of immortality can detract from its simplistic charm. It's an excellent book to cut science fiction teeth on, and the young at heart of any age will find it inoffensively pleasant.

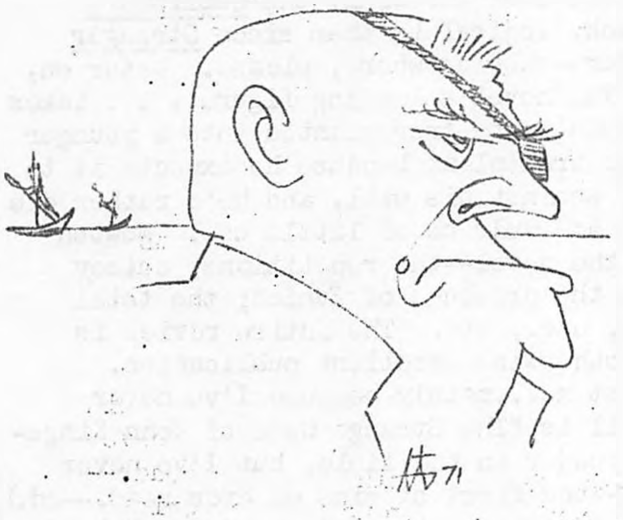
That's good enough.

-- JAMES R. NEWTON

* *



#7



FANSTATIC & FEEDBACK: Lettercolumn

Arthur Hayes, Box 1030, S.Porcupine, Ontario, Canada (26 Jun '71)

No intentions of joining in, or contributing to the discussions in your lettercols, other than to comment on various price increases that have been taking place of late in the publishing field. This, in so far as I am concerned, is mainly with pocket books. Just as I do with more mundane material, when the selling price gets to be what I consider unreasonable, I start boycotting it. With pb's reaching uncomfortably close to the dollar mark, I've quit buying these 95-centers. I am not trying to get others to join me in this--am just expressing what I am doing and thinking.

Magazines. Haven't done much pulp reading for some years now, and I find that the magazines deal too much with short stories, or novellas. I am now more interested in novel-length stories. With short stories, you occasionally run into an exceptionally good one, but have to wade through dozens that are a waste of time to get to the good ones. A waste of time, so I wonder what I'll do when I run out of the backlog of unread stuff and I still follow my boycotting of over-priced pb's and dull pulp zines....

Jerry Lapidus, 54 Clearview Dr., Pittsford, NY 14534 (9 Jul '71)

((Re TWJ's 75 & 75 --ed.))

I was looking at Doll's comments on TOMORROW AND...5 and THE LEGAL RULES (for which thanks much, by the way), and I happened to notice the following value-judgment: "Good repro, and plenty of art. Most valuable item is the Offutt material. An interesting issue, but somehow less stimulating that #'s 3 and 4." Now although I think both of the new issues of TA have been better overall than any of the previous ones, I do agree with Doll that, individually, none of the things we've printed so far come up to the Williams linguistics article, or the Ellison fiction/essay in previous issues. But just for fun--and because I sort of had the inkling of a memory of the past--I looked through my back issues of TWJ, and found Doll's review of #4. And I was right! Here's what she said about that issue:

> "It is unfortunate that the print is so small, because the contents must be worth reading.... But it's evening, I'm tired, and it's just too much trouble making it through all that tiny print. Another time, maybe."

Hmmm. Pardon my intrusion, but it would seem pretty difficult to be "less stimulating" than that, at least as she described it!

. . . I know not who James R. Newton might be, but at least based on his review of I Will Fear No Evil in TWJ #75--GET RID OF HIM, FAST! Certainly we don't require that reviewers all agree with other reviewers; if a reviewer can present a logical basis, any point of view on a book is acceptable. But this unquestioning praise of a book almost everyone has admitted is very inferior serves no purpose except that of wasting space. Bringing in this Futurist crap only serves to make Newton's arguments more ridiculous, as if it needs the help. Newton hasn't even got his facts straight about the book. He says that "the author considers /IWFNE/ in a direct line of development from Stranger . . ."

Really? I wonder where he discovered this tidbit? Certainly the publishers have made this tie-up in publicizing the book, logical to them since Stranger is Heinlein's biggest seller. But the author--show us where, please. Later on, in summarizing the plot, Newton tells us: "The novel's leading figure . . . takes a calculated gamble by arranging for his brain to be transplanted into a younger body." Wrong again. Smith arranges for the transplant because he expects it to KILL him; his doctors are keeping him alive against his will, and he'd rather die than live as he is now. I could go on, but it would be of little use. Newton doesn't even mention the major problems in the novel--the repetitions, cutsey dialogue; the total lack of explanation for the presence of Eunice; the total lack of logic in the presence of Jake; etc., etc., etc. The entire review is worthless, and really has no place in your otherwise excellent publication.

. . . The Leinster poll results interest me...mainly because I've never heard of the #3 story. What or where in hell is "The Strange Case of John Kingsman"? I consider myself a pretty complete reader in the field, but I've never even heard of this one. ((Try ASF, May '48--the first sf zine we ever read.--ed.))

I still welcome Richard Delap's magazine reviews, commend you for printing them, and hope you continue to do so. It seems there is little if any prozine reviewing going on these days, and Richard's comments--even if I usually don't agree with them--are always informative and entertaining.

Specifically, I see that Richard is one of the few who seem to think as I do about Silverbob's "The World Outside", from GALAXY. I thought the background and the ideas were excellent, but the characters and plot used in this particular episode were inferior, at least for modern Silverberg, and were certainly inferior to several other urbmon stories.

Alexis Ringworld review is, thankfully, up to his usual standards, although I'm a bit saddened that he doesn't at least try to touch on some of the novel's defects. I enjoyed the book and liked all the things he did--voted for it in the Hugo balloting--but there are definite flaws in the novel (tendency in the last third to become much too wonderous-travel-novel, abrupt ending, others), and I just can't help wishing the review had been a little better balanced in that direction too.

. . . In partial answer to Mike Glicksohn's question, "Of what real use are prozine reviews anyway?": To me, they're extremely useful. Not telling me what to buy, for I--admittedly--buy all the prozines, regularly. BUT--I don't have time to read all the fiction by any means! I read the feature material usually when I buy the magazine, read the fiction by authors in which I'm very interested, and then put the magazine aside for later reading. Reviews like Richard's give me at least the chance to find out about some good stories I probably would ordinarily have skipped altogether, so I read all prozine review columns I come across.

I like Flandry, Sandy, although I haven't been able to find all the Flandry stories in volumes I can afford. Has it all been published in paperback? If so, I haven't seen at least two of the books in question.

But also, Sandra--when Anderson is writing about a system or against a system he feels strongly about, he tends to get carried away a bit. His Operation something novel last year or the year before in F&SF, for example, got so carried away in rather overtly attacking the contemporary Peace Movement that the attack all but took over the story.

I'm very glad to see Mr. Silverberg break his own restrictions on giving fanzines information about his own writing. For although, as he says, such things are indeed often "resonant and pretentious", I usually find them fascinating, especially when I've read the material so discussed. And his discussion here of the order of writing is especially interesting--thank you, sir!

And here I'm going out on a limb again. I know this is probably totally off-base, but I can't help feeling, when I read The Second Trip, that this novel was at least indirectly inspired by I Will Fear No Evil. All through the novel,

I kept saying to myself, "Silverbob probably read the Heinlein, said 'I can do better than that!', and went on to expand on ideas from To Live Again and "Passengers" and do just that." Is there any truth to that theory at all?

A second note on James R. Newton. His one-paragraph review of Tower of Glass in TWJ 75-2 is even less useful than his review of the Heinlein novel I talked about before. What possible use is served by a one-paragraph plot synopsis of a major novel?

One more note on TWJ #74: According to a note from Lem somewhere (I think in SFR), Lem approved of the translation of Solaris from French to English, but didn't like the translation from Polish to French in the first place. Or do I have that backwards...?

Larry Propp, 3127 N. Sheridan Rd., Peoria, IL 61604 (11 Jul '71)

Re TWJ #76:

Ouch. I read through most of #76 looking for hooks for an LoC and didn't find any. Hmmm! I mused, and decided to use as an LoC hook the fact that no such hooks exist in TWJ. Then I got to "Fanstatic & Feedback" and found that Dave Piper had already stolen that one. Aaugh!! But it's true, you know. Look at that double-page table of contents in #76, for instance. Out of 27 entries, only seven provide conversation hooks. Throw out several of them immediately (I haven't read Lem; Swann's article is nice, but I'm not about to write a letter on why I like fanzines; Klein's article is interesting, but I'm not a member of the SFWA; and I don't grow Bonsai trees), and what is left? Alexis' two short pieces and the letter column.

I take that back--I guess there's the fan fiction. Personal prejudice: I don't read fan fiction. But that still isn't much.

On the other hand, especially since the death of SFR, I look forward to every issue of TWJ; the reviews are consistently literate and informative, enabling me to at least know what has come out recently.

Re TWJ 75-2: Was that last at all intelligible? Anyway, Alexis, nice article on "People, Power and Pigs", especially the first few paragraphs. I keep getting branded as either being naive or a secret pig in my most secret heart of hearts for refusing to condemn all cops, judges, prosecuting attorneys, etc. As just one example of how the young radical totally ignores history, no one seems to know the derivation of the epithet "pig" as used today. I believe it first came to national prominence during the early and middle '60's, when participants in Southern civil rights marches were opposed by characatures of law enforcement officials, the most memorable being "Bull" Connor, who ordered cattle prods to be used against Dr. King and his marchers. Granted, they looked vaguely porcine, but the point was that they ignored the realities of the situation, arbitrarily misused their power, and sought rationalization for their actions in worn-out clichés such as "uppity n----s!". Which is just what many radicals are guilty of today. Who are the real "pigs" in our society?

Did you see an article Poul Anderson did for SFR (part of his "Beer Mutterings" column) defending as a much-maligned minority group the "pig"? Not completely successful as a satire (as Poul himself admitted), but very interesting.

Richard Delap, 1014 S. Broadway, Wichita, KS 67211 (12 Jul '71)

((Written by Richard in response to the John W. Campbell letter published in TWJ #77, before the death of Mr. Campbell. The letter was never mailed, as word of his death reached Richard just after he had written it. --ed.))

Dear Mr. Campbell:

I thank you for your comments re my "angry things to say" about the Kent State editorial. You make it clear what was your proposed intent; what you fail to see is that your comments are as reactionary and hysterical as the underground liberals you seem so contemptuous of. Emotional reactionary comments are not particularly good, on either side, except as a way to impel rejection from any

intelligent audience, and it seems a sad thing to me that Americans seem to have an awful compulsion to react violently before they think. I realize that you advocate using the brain first, but I can't help but feel that any result of such, contrary to your considered assessments, will not only be not accepted by you but will only lead to more asinine side-taking such as your Kent State remarks.

My basic philosophy is most emphatically not totalitarian, and I'm sorry if I've left that impression. Totalitarianism is essentially a damning system to both its supporters and its subjects, and as much as I admire our "freedom of the press", it must be remembered that that freedom must be <u>given</u> to all. In this respect you have every right to present what is to me a biased and inherently immoral view of the incidents at Kent State, while I in return am free to condemn your expressions as prejudiced and disproportionate. This is, hopefully of course, the way to lead to a confrontation in public and an open expression which leaves the matter free for mass scrutiny and discussion.

My objections, then, are not so much against your opinion as against your presentation, an upholding of the virtues of slaughter for the public good. Many people who are blinded by the "emotional" reaction you mention are easily led to accept opinion from writers and speakers who espouse their fanatical claims in public as the <u>only</u> truth. And for one who purports to withhold final opinion until as much information as possible is gained, your editorial shows a decided lack of intelligence, compassion (or dispassion, if you prefer), and honesty. It is instead revengeful, hateful and deceitful.

You say it is the "viewpoint of the towners--<u>not mine</u>", yet there is nothing in your editorial to differentiate the two, and your readers are sure (as I did) to link the two views as an inseparable one. You accuse the "mass media"--a vague term, which can encompass almost any book, magazine or newspaper you care to put into it--of expressing a "liberal viewpoint". Yet I remember reading several articles expressing the opinions of the townspeople who were not at all pleased with the student demonstration and weren't in the least reticent about saying the deaths were well-deserved. I didn't agree with most of these expressions and had a hard time understanding the callous acceptance of death as a reasonable answer to social problems, but I did have the opportunity to read them and was not offended by their opinions being <u>expressed</u> (however much I might have been offended by the opinions themselves).

What offends me, re your letter, is that you <u>now</u> claim to be expressing the feelings of thses townspeople--all of them, Mr. Campbell?--and that your editorial bears no mark of your own opinion.

I'm sorry but I don't believe that, and if I weren't so respectful of my elders I'd accuse you of lying through your teeth. People will not live by your hardline social moralizing because you want them to; they live the way they must and it is up to those who love them for what they are to help protect them from themselves...and from each other.

((In view of the unfortunate death of Mr. Campbell, and the fact that he would now be able to neither read nor reply to the above letter, we suggested to Richard that there might be some changes he would like to make to the letter before its

publication in TWJ. Richard's reply (which we print here as an epilog to his letter):

"Re my answer to Campbell's letter--I'm sorry, Don, but I find it would be extremely dishonest to reword my reply to Campbell. His death may be tragic but it does not change my opinion of his editorial expressions one iota. Had he lived to read the letter I believe he would have found food for thought in it; as it is, I hope readers will find it. Because Campbell is now dead does not immediately make his opinions and decisions during life flawless, and it most certainly does not alter my opinion of them. Were I to change one word of that letter would be something that, I'm sure, would have infuriated and appalled Campbell. He might not have agreed with me but to pander to his pov when I obviously didn't agree would surely have angered him even more. I at least have that much respect for JWC, so leave the reply as it stands. According to Poul Anderson, in a eulogy in LOCUS, 'A few writers may have been overwhelmed by his intellect, but this was never what John wanted.' And Hal Clement states: 'Disagreement was always there, and John thrived on it. Just how often his remarks were meant to be taken as dogma is hard to say; in general, I think he would have been disappointed if any of them were.' Which leads me to suspect that JWC has had more influence on my thinking than I might like to admit--albeit in an apposite direction, but still with a reason for choosing that direction. It can never be denied that JWC was one of the major forces in the evolution of science fiction, and it is certainly something that I will never forget." --ed.))

Philip José Farmer, Peoria, Illinois (23 Jul '71)

Second thoughts about Tarzan training Doc Savage to travel through the lower, middle, and upper terraces of the jungle.

Doc Savage, according to my calculations, which you will read in Appendix 2 of The Private Life of Tarzan, was born circa 1901. Tarzan was not discovered by the civilized world until 1909 and was thereafter too busy to train anybody, until about the middle of 1919. It is possible that Doc's father, who would have been first cousin of Tarzan's father, did talk Tarzan into teaching his second cousin arbonautics. To do this, Doc would have had to come to Africa, where the trees grow tall and big and thick enough for 250-pound adult human males to voyage. (And forget about the vine-swinging bit. That's a movie invention; in none of the ERB Tarzan books is Tarzan described as using vines a la circus acrobats.)

Tarzan would have done the training for curiosity's sake and for fun, of course, and Doc's father would never have dared to offer him a fee. Nor would Doc, despite the blurbs you see on the backs of some Bantam DS's, have ever been able to compete successfully with Tarzan in this form of athletics. I have no doubt, however, that he was a close third. Tarzan's son, Korak, would have been second, not because he was stronger than Doc but because he was lighter.

At the time that Doc was being trained by the immortal ape-man, he had not attained his full growth yet and so would have weighed about 250. When fully grown, he would weigh, I estimate, about 310, and so would be handicapped proportionately.

Come to think of it, Korak may be the No. 1 arbonaut. For short stretches, that is. No one has more endurance than the Lord of the Jungle, and, as Korak once said, "There is only one Tarzan!" After which, he retired from the wild (except for a stint forced on him when he was trying to find his parents).

James R. Newton, 5565 Columbia Pike, Apt. 802, Arlington, VA 22204 (17 Aug '71)

((Jim's response to Harlan Ellison's letter in TWJ #77. --ed.))

Dear Suffering Ellison:

I'm relieved that you do admit I'm free to dislike your story ("The Region Between") on any grounds I choose. I did dislike it, on the grounds I explained in my review.

But I argue vehemently your contention that choosing to dismiss it because of typography either disenfranchises me as a critic or demonstrates impoverishment

of opinions (whatever those aoristic platitudes mean). As a matter of fact, you confess your own shortcomings when you take my use of "sophomore" to task. I used it, deliberately, to indicate my conviction that your use of what you call "flexible typography" was indeed rather sophomoric, that is, "suggestive of or resembling the traditional sophomore, esp. in intellectual pretensions, conceit, overconfidence, assumed knowledge, or the like."

Naturally I said nothing about the story itself--I couldn't find it! It escaped me completely, much the same as a story told in Urdu would, no matter how well-told it might have been to one who understands Urdu. I haven't got time to wade through typographical garbage like that trying to find some unknown something. There are too many really important things in this life to waste time and effort trying to peel your tunicate typography from whatever kernel of worth you think three years and great care put inside.

And even if you had put the Great Truth in there someplace (which I seriously doubt), what good is it if a reader (and believe me, I consider myself as close to an average reader as anyone) can't find it? On my side of the tracks quality doesn't have to be wrapped in "added dimension".

As for historicity, who needs it? I wasn't reading (or comparing you with) Poe or Cummings or Joyce or Sterne or Bester. I was reading--or trying to read--"The Region Between", and you turned me off. It's as brutal as that.

If that's poor taste and chutzpah, so be it. But I'd rather be a critic with chutzpah than an author who turns even one reader off. The loss is yours, not mine.

Let me give you one last piece of advice, not as a critic, but as an individual who sincerely likes science fiction (but who cares less for fantasy): don't try to take your frustrations (at the confines of linear form, or anything else) out on us, your readers. We're really on your side, given half a chance. We buy your work for any number of reasons: to be entertained, to be informed, to broaden intellectual scope, and many others. Don't be cute with us. If you have something to say, man, say it and quit trying to gussie it up in such a (I've got to say it again) sophomoric way. We don't need those kinds of trappings if you have something to say worth reading.

Then maybe in my next review of a work of yours I can comment on the philosophical paucity of the story, or the lack of valid characterization, or the plotless structure, or the bad writing, or any one of a thousand other flaws which, apparently, you're not really so convinced three years and great care are enough to banish.

Yours constructively, JAMES R. NEWTON.

Albert Gechter, 1316 N.Francis Ave., Apt.6, Okla.City, OK 73106 (27 Aug '71)

Sometimes authors forget what they have already written or remember it incorrectly! Lin Carter should re-read The Flame of Iridar, pages 67-68, regarding the ancient Martian colonization of our own Earth. This by no means invalidates the independent origin of terrestrial humanity native to our own planet as a separate or distinct species, caused by parallel evolution (or by divine creation) of the First Man, whatever his name. It simply means that there may have occurred a certain amount of crossbreeding between Earthly and Martian humans in those long-ago eras of the past, providing that their genes and chromosomes were sufficiently similar to permit this, and they probably were! Some of us are, therefore, in all probability, of partly Martian ancestry, if this interpretation of prehistory is correct, and The Flame of Iridar seems to imply as much. If Lin Carter did not mean it that way, he ought to have meant it, because that is what I think he was saying at the time! (This is by no means a unique idea in science-fantasy fiction; it has been used before by other authors in other stories, and will likely appear elsewhere again. A typical example of the concept is Lords of Atlantis by Wallace West.) I reiterate: We need not assume that Adam & Eve were Martians, but we may well have had some Martian forebears!

John Clayton, Viscount Greystoke (Tarzan of the Apes), Greystoke Ranch, Republic of Kenya, East Africa (28 Aug '71)

I am listed as a member and my mailing-address is given (as shown correctly above) on the membership roster of the Burroughs Bibliophiles. Mr. Philip José Farmer may verify this by consulting Vernell Coriell about it. I have no difficulty getting mail sent to me there or at my club in London or at Greystoke Manor in England or at Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc. My African estate includes a ranch (cattle, sheep, horses, and other livestock), a plantation, several native villages, a wild-game preserve, and an extensive area of bush, rainforest, and savannahs, besides a river, lakes, and mountains.

It need hardly be stated that I did not die when my original biographer and good friend, Edgar Rice Burroughs, passed away; and I did not stop having adventures because he was no longer available to write about them. Various other people have written about me, sometimes with the permission of my literary agents, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc., and sometimes without it. Some of what they have said is true and some of it is not true.

Mr. Farmer infers that Fritz Leiber's novelization of the film-script Tarzan and the Valley of Gold must necessarily be completely false. It happens, however, to be essentially a true account of one of my more recent experiences. Leiber prefaced it with a bull-fight episode that never actually happened at all, and certain of the details of the narrative are not altogether correct, but mostly it is true. I, therefore, endorse it, even though Mr. Burroughs would have written it rather differently.

One should not suppose that everything about me in films, radio, television, and comics is incorrect or untrue, even though much of this apocryphal material is unreliable. Some of it is correct, sometimes.

Otherwise, Mr. Farmer's letter speaks for itself, and your readers may judge for themselves whether his remarks are valid or not. Thus far he has not contacted me personally about that book of his, The Private Life of Tarzan, and I do not know at this time whether or not he has secured authorization for it from my agents in Tarzana, California.

I usually give fair warning before I attack my opponents. Most often I say "Kreegah!" before I lay them low. As remarked before, I play fairly and fight fairly, by jungle law. Your readers are hereby advised that I did not approve of Mr. Farmer's books A Feast Unknown, Lord Tyger, and Lord of the Trees; and, The Mad Goblin. Doc Savage advises me that he was not consulted about them either. I will reserve judgment about The Private Life of Tarzan until I see it and read it, but I doubt that it will be very authentic. Mr. Farmer should be more careful in the future.

Sandra Miesel, 8744 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, IN 46240 (29 Aug '71)

Not surprisingly, the item which caught my attention in TWJ #77 was Alexis's review of The Broken Sword. I had recently done an analysis of the sources of this

novel for ENERGUMEN #8 and can testify to its remarkable fidelity to the sagas. Anderson reworked elements from Volsunga Saga and Hervarar Saga into a genuinely adult fantasy and studded it with bits of scaldic verse superior to William Morris's famous translations of Norse poetry. The re-editing so modestly described in the author's introduction to the Ballantine edition resulted in improving changes in very nearly every paragraph of The Broken Sword. Even readers familiar with the 1954 version ought to try the new edition.

The implacable unwinding of fate which provides the novel's plot is an exact recreation of pagan Scandinavian literature's major theme. Pick up Volsunga Saga sometime, friends, and notice all the gruesome incidents Anderson didn't include. But the Northern Heroic Tradition does more than relate the dooms of heroes--it praises their courage. As the heroine of The Broken Sword says: "None can escape his weird; but none other can take from him the heart wherewith he meets it."

Naturally the Vikings pictured the gods, giants, elves, trolls etc. in their own cultural image. Anderson gives them a few centuries' advantage over his late 9th-century human characters. The immortals had not developed beyond medieval feudalism despite their great endowments and time to experiment because they are inherently incapable of love, idealism, or transcendence. In the long run they are inferior to mortal men and will be supplanted by them.

Recalling George Barr's letters in TRUMPET when the illustrated version was running: the limitations of comix format necessitated making Imric short-haired and clean-shaven. Imric on the paperback cover does not match Imric in the text.

Yes, Dave Hulvey, after more than three years of careful research I can rightfully claim some expertise on Anderson's writing. But no specialized knowledge is necessary to note the original publication date of a re-issued old book or correctly comprehend climaxes. These were flaws in Ted Paul's review of Shield back in #75. I can't resist one more comment on that matter: Ted was so scornful that the heroine of Shield decided an interracial marriage was too fraught with problems. Yet in The Year of the Quiet Sun which he lavishly praised, the hero chooses not to court the girl who interests him because of the difficulties of interracial marriage. Why not the same sauce for goose and gander? (By the way, an illegal black-white marriage is depicted in Anderson's mystery, Perish by the Sword.) In case anyone else believes use of the descriptive term "quadroon" is prima facie evidence of racism, may I refer them to Charles Fontenay's "Pretty Quadroon" in IF, June, 1957.

And while I'm on the subject of Ted Pauls.... Point on his review of the fifth Nebula anthology: a pity that Professor McNelly's qualifications (and perhaps his identity?) escaped Ted. Ted's qualifications to comment on academic sf criticism similarly escape me. McNelly was found worthy for Silverberg's anthology The Mirror of Infinity and Clareson's Other Side of Realism. He teaches a course in sf, writes scholarly papers on it, and has been reading it since age six. Together with Blish and Aldiss he was one of the featured speakers at the 1970 Speculation Conference as amply reported in SPECULATION and TWJ. We didn't buy the fifth Nebula anthology but I did read McNelly's contribution. I took strong exception to his opinions on Rite of Passage (negative) and The Last Starship from Earth (positive). His "Qualifications" were no issue at all. The academic essay for the forthcoming sixth volume has been done by Professor Thomas Clareson at the request of editor Clifford Simak. I expect to be able to agree with more of the view expressed in it.

Hank Davis, Box 154, Loyall, KY 40854 (31 Aug '71)

. . . TWJ #77 -- Glad to see the final results of the short story poll, and hurrah for Michael T. Shoemaker for doing the hard work. But I have a complaint. It grieves me sorely to bring this up, since Michael referred to me (and 32 other people) as a "devoted expert", which did my ego no harm at all, but..."The Man Who Sold the Moon" does not belong on the list. I considered voting for it when I prepared my list, but found it too long. (Another story too long was Sturgeon's

"The (Widget), the (Wadget), and Boff".) I have done another word count on it, using the printing in The Past Through Tomorrow, and it is at least 46,000 words long (the limit set was 40,000).

Since there were only 33 people who sent in lists of pre-1940 sf stories, it would not be impossible to break the tie between "Twilight" and "Who Goes There?" Since I was one of the 33, I'll announce that my preference is for "Twilight". Thirty-two more to go.

Michael Shoemaker is not alone in being distressed by the appearance of Arthur C. Clarke's "The Star" on the all-time-best list. (It won a Hugo, did I hear someone say? Yes, so what else is new?) I've always been amazed by the popularity of that story which combines bad astronomy with worse theology. Apparently, people are easily impressed by "controversial" stories. I'm also upset to see Eric Frank Russell's "Allamagoosa" on the list. That one won a Hugo, too... why? When Robert Coulson conducted a poll of the best sf short stories in YANDRO in 1967, "Allamagoosa" made that list, too. Not Russell's excellent "Hobbyist" of "The Undecided" or "Metamorphosite" or "The Mechanical Mice" or even "Jay Score". They voted for "Allamagoosa", about as minor a story as Russell ever wrote. Gaaaah.

I wish that I had saved a newspaper item I saw a few months ago--I would send it to you for the "But That's...Mundane!" dept. It mentioned that the new Air Force bomber (proposed) would defend itself against anti-aircraft missiles and interceptors with a laser. ("Laser banks ready, Mr. Sulu?" "Yes, Cap'n." "Fire!")

Two corrections (minor ones) for Richard Delap. I think that The Last Hurrah of the Golden Horde was a regular Doubleday hardcover, rather than just a Book Club edition of the Avon paperback. And the title story in that collection is not "an addition to the Charteris acid-head series" as he says, but is an addition to the Jerry Cornelius series. I can understand his error; after a while, all the stories in the Moorcock NEW WORLDS start to look alike.

Disagreement with Delap and Blish -- "?" is too dialogue!

I've already said my piece about Ted Pauls' stodgy prose in the OUTWORLDS lettercol, so I won't belabor the matter here. I will confess bafflement with his statement that the anthology Alchemy & Academe is "Useless". Useless? If it were useful, then of what use would it be full? I mean, you can always use a book for a paperweight or a doorstop or killing roaches or throwing at bill collectors and the like. . . .

James Blish, Harpsden, (Henley), Oxon., United Kingdom (18 Sep '71)

A few footnotes to the reviews of The Day After Judgment:

James R. Newton confesses confusion over the publishing history of the trilogy of which Judgment is a sub-part. Let me add further to the confusion by pointing out that Vol. I, Doctor Mirabilis, was published by Dodd, Mead this year in the States, in a slightly revised edition of the 1964 British book. Actually I don't see what the publishing history has to do with the matter of the order in which the books were finally arranged. They are all now available and the reader can go through them in any preferred order, or not, as he chooses.

The theme of the trilogy is certainly not summed up in the few bits of verse Newton quotes. It is, however, indicated briefly in the Author's Afterword (and I went into it at much greater length in WARHOON 23).

And I protest that Satan's speech is anything but "free verse", as Newton alleges. It is Miltonic blank verse, and anyone who has ever tried to write a sustained passage in Miltonics will understand why I am protesting.

Dave Hulvey, Rt.1, Box 198, Harrisonburg, VA 22801 (24 Sep '71)

William Linden, I do write in English. In fact, that's also the way I read. But just because I'm prone to a bit of rhetorical flamboyance, don't lose your dictionary. My style is not meant to be the simplest possible. However, you're

not the only fan who's complained about my periodic flights of excess verbiage. So, although I'd hate to lose the unique feeling I have for surreal imagery, I also recognize than an LoC is not the most appropriate place for it. I have my own zine in which to practice with far-out literary methods, now. Thus, I'll attempt to be more concise and lucid, as well as concerned with a poetic turn of phrase. Your critique, though cliché-ridden and flippant, is basically sound.

However, in the realm of political ideas you have considerable maturing to do. Anyone who can take such a simplistic view of the American Left is, to put it mildly, out of touch with reality. Your loaded phrases and overemotional accusations are knee-jerk responses on a very shallow level, not reasoned argument of the Buckley-Kilpatrick variety. I can't agree with Buckley or Kilpatrick any more than I can with you, but they at least present a facade of rationality.

I have little faith in the traditional liberals, either. They sold their souls to the doctrine of intervention to appease your political forebears--the McCarthyites. They also tend to cop-out when a basic challenge to their ideals arises. However, some of my best friends are liberals. I think everyone should own one.

Sadly, the liberals aren't silent. They control the News Media. Not only do they refuse--and rightly so--to publish the frothing of right-wing nuts, but they suppress facts about the gradual dissolution of America into Amerika. Only the relatively low-circulation publications of Liberation News Service bring the facts to light. Freedom of the Press is a hollow phrase today, because the "good liberals" define their interests within the decadent structures of capitalism. Unfortunately, capitalism--at least American capitalism--breeds its own destruction with the by-products of its greediness: i.e., pollution, racism, sexism and fascism.

The liberals have been quick to disdain the militant left, and the peaceniks, simply because it's not profitable for them to give more than rhetorical support to a Cause. Liberals may sound like they are distant cousins of Abbie Hoffmans and Jane Fondas, but that's only when they carefully select their targets. The liberal outrage at the Southern redneck may be phrased more academically and possessed of the euphemisms of polite society instead of the coarse

gutter language of some militants, yet, essentially both factions feel the same. Rednecks are Bad.

You "mob of screaming savages" are probably the sons and daughters of John Q. Liberal! They haven't been trained in relevant revolutionary tactics, which, oddly enough, involve both the ballot and the bullet. A demonstration is a poor excuse for rational political action. Oh, occasionally a march of solidarity may be of use, but such marches tend to isloate the people from their constituents, not to mention the opportunities they give the police to take photographs for their endless "Red files". May Day, of course, proved the ultimate folly of the March.

Really, William, you should write Agnew speeches. Your excesses approximate his own to a frightening degree.

Am I for real? Well, that brings up a more basic question: What is reality? Tune into WLSD for the answer. Oh, I forgot, you don't believe in that drug nonsense, do you? Aw, shucks.... Seriously, we should have some common ground--no matter how little--for Meaningful Dialog.

Hmmmm. Alexis writes an interesting column. Are we capable of emotionally accepting his grim implications? It's a bit grey.

Ellison demolished Newton. I wonder if Newton had any inkling of a possible response of such ferocity? Style, we should note, is a matter of taste.

Dan Goodman, 1406 Leavenworth, San Francisco, CA 94109 (Undated)

TWJ #76: "When any old work containing a silly racial stereotype is reprinted . . . should we sneer or cheer that history has overtaken sf?" (Sandra Miesel)

An sf writer ought to be able to think rather than merely adopt the attitudes his culture has instilled in him. He ought to be sneered at for projecting today's prejudices into the future--not when his writing has proven outdated by events, but as soon as it appears in print.

An sf writer ought to have known better than to assume in the Fifties that American men would continue to wear their hair short over the next few decades. He ought to know better today than to assume that "rock" will still be around twenty years from now.

Stereotypes undergo strange changes. Where are the philo-semitic Moslems (as contrasted with intolerant Christians) who once inhabited popular works on Jewish history? What ever happened to the technologically incompetent Chinese? The racially tolerant British?

There is one class of sf in which time isn't needed to show up the writer's false assumptions: alternate-world stories in which the historical turning point was somewhere in the well-documented past. How many sf stories have there been in which Lee won at Gettysburg, and the Confederacy lived? People who know more than I do about the Civil War tell me that Gettysburg was not the turning point; that if Lee had won that battle, the South would still have lost. It looks like a number of sf writers have failed to do their research.

My favorite Horrible Example of an sf novel that was so poorly researched and thought out that it was due to be outdated early is Bug Jack Barron. (A lot was heard about that book a while back; no one has mentioned it lately.) Spinrad assumed that the radicals and bohemians of the future would follow the customs and rules and ways of thinking that were current when he wrote.

Bug Jack Barron was obsolete the day it was published--probably the day it was written. It was made obsolete by trends Spinrad overlooked--women's lib, the Whole Earth Catalog and the genre it created, very much et cetera.

Poul Anderson's "The Byworlder" does rather better in predicting the trends in American bohemianism and radicalism; for "The Byworlder" alone, I'm prepared to forgive him a good deal. I find it especially noteworthy because Anderson is a conservative (using the definition Ambrose Bierce included in The Devil's Dictionary).

Only a conservative would consider Dominic Flandry's beloved Terran Empire worth defending. My feeling is that Flandry ought to be joining some radical movement (altho presumably they would carry the sane taint as all other institutions), or going into the service of some promising warlord.

On Thomas Burnett Swann's definition of a good fanzine: "The best of which are professional, the least of which are brisk and spontaneous" is the best statement of what fanzine material ought to be that I've seen anywhere.

As to the rest of his definition: there are those who feel that a fanzine should not have any reviews; some who feel this way produce good fanzines. (I can usually do without reviews myself; but Sandra Miesel's are almost always enjoyable.) Some fans consider artwork not merely optional in a fanzine but essential--more important than written material. There have been good fanzines conposed entirely of letters.

"Balanced and organized?" Organized, yes. A readable fanzine can be produced by collating at random; but the zine I have in mind would have been better with more organization. A fanzine can be over-organized; but it will, in that case, probably be under-organized also (like a club meeting in which more attention is paid to the fine print in Robert's Rules than to getting on with the business of the meeting).

But balanced? I think there is no right balance for a fanzine. I've seen too many fanzines with reviews because the editor thought a fanzine ought to have reviews--not because he cared at all for reviews. Artwork because a fanzine is supposed to have artwork; controversy because a fanzine needs controversy--the list could be extended.

I usually consider artwork an annoying interruption of the written material in a genzine; but Tim Kirk's work is almost always worthwhile, and the samples here most definitely are. Kirk creates a world with each drawing; his work is superior to almost all the stuff that appears in prozines.

And Alexis Gilliland's cartoons are highly enjoyable; I particularly liked the one on page 79.

We Also Heard From:

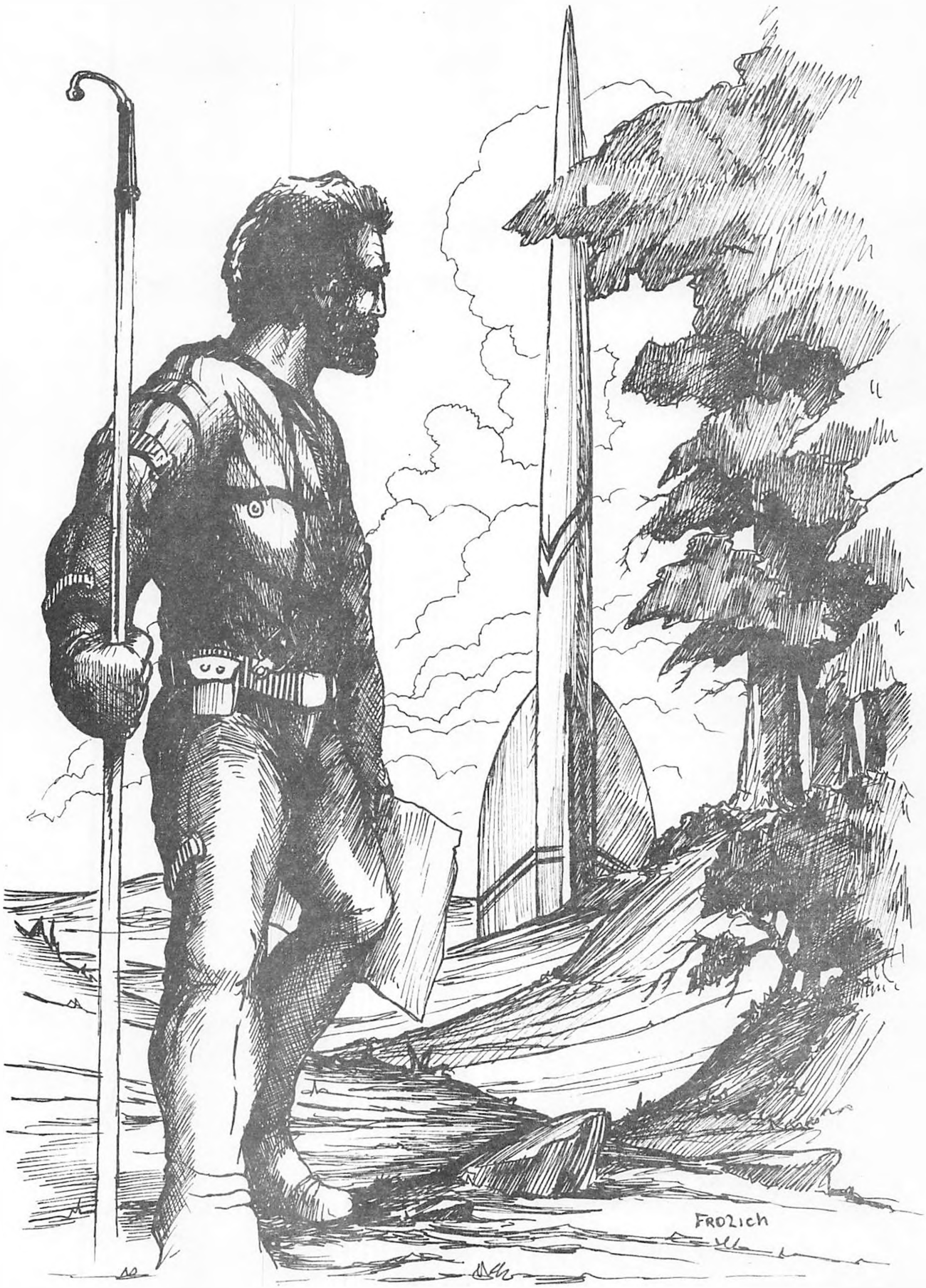
Bob Silverberg (17 Jul '71) -- "Your huge Disclave issue was certainly an impressive thing--the highlight for me being, of course, the Silverberg bibliography. Mark Owings did a magnificent job--incomplete, naturally (I couldn't prepare a complete one myself) but generally accurate and comprehensive at least for my domestically published sf. I noticed only three minor errors, balanced by one bit of info about a Swedish edition that I didn't have before. . . ."

James Ellis (17 Jul '71) -- ". . . /JWC's death/ is incredible! These men /Campbell & Derleth/, in my view, were the last of this field's giants--I refer to other than strictly storytellers. For what it's worth, here's my personal pantheon: Bob David, Hugo Gernsback, Farnsworth Wright, Derleth, Campbell, Sam Moskowitz. It is simply impossible to take in that SaM's the only one left. (Sam has a little way to go before he attains full parity with that glittering company, but I'm betting he'll make it....)"

Péter Kuczka (27 Jul '71) -- ". . . I agree with you fully in the idea that connections between fans of various nationalities is useful for SF. . . I have just posted to your address our first serious SF/F bibliography containing about 1000 titles on 160 pages. This is--to my opinion--about 20% of the whole Hungarian material. If anybody is interested in it, I am willing to send it in exchange for either professional or fan editions. . . I am interested in the first place in theoretical works, i.e. anything promoting this, so from publishers' lists of catalogues and bibliographies on essentially everything concerned with SF/F. Every field of SF/F films, TV, comics, music, fine arts, etc., is interesting for us, because we are very uninstructed. If necessary I could send also books published in Hungarian in exchange. . . ."

Hal Hal and Rick Brooks who sent short notes in Aug., which will appear in TWJ #79 as we have just run out of room in this issue....

* *


FROZICH