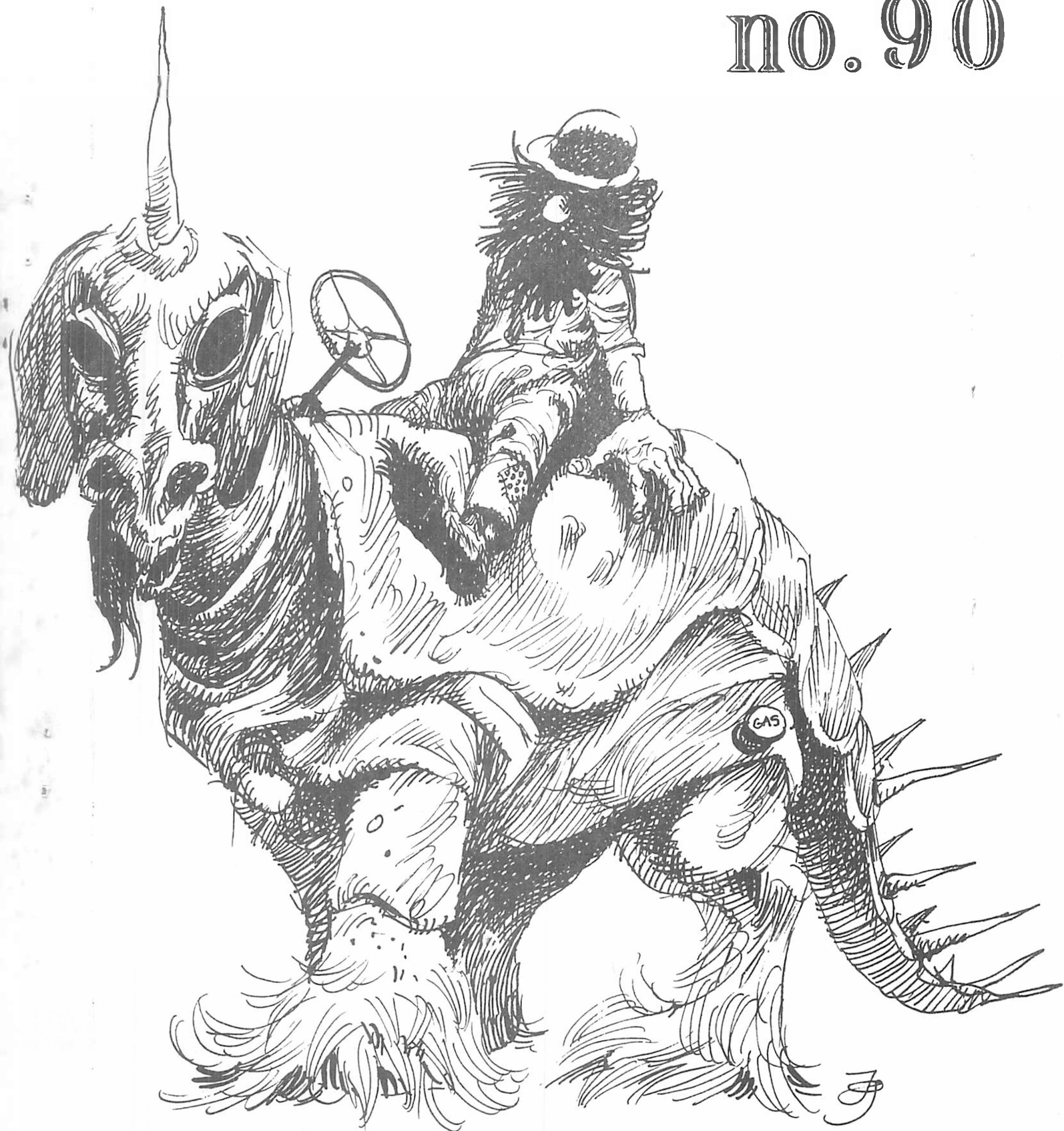


The SF & F Journal

no. 90



T H E S F & F J O U R N A L

Formerly THE WSFA JOURNAL - - - - - Issue Number 90
 Incorp. part of THE JOURNAL SUPPLEMENT (formerly SON OF THE WSFA JOURNAL)**
 Editor & Publisher: Don Miller - - - \$1.75 each, 3/\$6.00 - - - May, 1978

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Front Cover by Jack Gaughan (repr. from THE WSFA JOURNAL #64).

Back Cover by Steve Stiles (courtesy of Martin Wooster).

(Offset for both covers by Wheaton High School Print Shop.)

Supplements This Issue:

- 90-1 (10 pp.) -- "The Steady Stream" (Some Books & Zines Rec'd in 1977).
- 90-2 (10 pp.) -- "The Club Circuit" (ESFA Reports); "The Steady Stream" (More 1977 Proazines & Fanzines).
- 90-3 (10 pp.) -- "Fanzine Fricassee" (Fanzine Reviews, by Don Miller).
- 90-4 (10 pp.) -- "The Steady Stream" (Still More 1977 Items--Fanzines, Flyers, etc.); "The Clipjoint" (Review Extracts); "Odd's & Ends" (miscellany).

FLUX DE MOTS: Editorial Notes

Sorry for long delay in getting this issue out (it was--except for this page--run off in May '78), but illness and (cancer-related) surgery have kept us for the most part inactive since 5/78 (it's now 12/78). We've now recovered enough to get back to the grind, so--if our aged mimeo will hold up--things should be back to "normal" during 1979. (Except that we've combined THE GMS NEWSLETTER and THE GMS REVIEW into a single, monthly, 22-page THE GMS INFORMANT, and have gone back to a simpler subscription system--dropping the confusing Subscription Unit scheme; check enclosed flyers for info on current M-Press publications, and for your own subscription status.) Orders for books, back-issues, etc. were also delayed by our period of incapacity--they are going out in January '79. ## All local (D.C.-area news) is now in the monthly PRSFS NEWSLETTER (rates for SSAE). ## We hope the people whose material appears in this issue will continue to send us similar material for future issues; and we promise no more long delays in the future. (Note that some of the material in this issue--by Gilliland, J&C Goldfrank, Burns, Schweitzer, & Pauls--was recently returned to us after more than two years--casualties of our ill-fated attempt to get some help with this 'zine.)

THE SF&F JOURNAL is irregular (approx. 2-3 times per year in the future). Single copies (without Supplements) are \$1.75 U.S., \$2 elsewhere. Subs are 3/06 U.S., 3/07 elsewhere, and include Supplements. Contributors receive issue in which their material appears, or have issue added to sub, as appropriate. In Address Code on envelope, subs are shown by "W" followed by the # of the last issue on your sub; "X" means this is the last issue on your sub. -- DLM

A SHORT OVERVIEW OF THE LONG FUTURE

by Alexis A. Gilliland

The scientists and engineers, drat their hides, are taking over the territory scouted by us science-fictioners like the sod-busters took over from the cowboys. No mistake, cowboys have a lot more fun, but the sod-buster is a lot more systematic, and--often as not--is the one who really bends the environment out of shape.

The point is, mundane reality, courtesy of those same scientists and engineers, is taking on a bizarre and kinky quality that is far more reminiscent of Ron Goulart than, say, Arthur C. Clarke. Mundane reality, with a little help from Mother Nature, is turning downright weird.

Take, for example, Safeguard, our anti-ballistic missile system. It embodies an ultra-high capacity non-rotating radar--a mosaic, rather like a compound eye--together with the world's most complex computer complete with incredible software. It also has two kinds of interceptor missiles, the Sprint (for short range) having 100g acceleration. Unbelievably, it works, and it sits in the boonies of North Dakota guarding a gaggle of Minuteman missiles. It is an incredible complex of artifacts, daunting even the nasty scope of legend to imagine.

And, as a practical matter, what has been done with it? Why, it is a bargaining counter to be used in a protracted struggle for world domination with Russia. We won't build any more of these if you don't build any more of those. And they agree.

Meanwhile, the first prototype laser-mounting tank has been built, for evaluation under field conditions, and work on the space shuttle goes on despite economic difficulties. It is not hard to visualize the cost of putting stuff into orbit going down to, say, \$30 a pound. And the use of shuttles to put up an orbiting fort...for a mere 30 billion...armed with super lasers.

What will we get from the other side for not building another of those, do you imagine?

And the star ship, so beloved of all of fandom: the plans have been on the drawing board since the early '60's. A gigantic thing, the size of an apartment house, assembled in orbit and propelled by tiny atom bombs, a mere 3,000 of which would permit a round trip to Alpha Centauri in about 10 years. If we get hard up, we can build a fleet of them, and see what the Russians will give us to stop. (Updating the plans, of course.)

War, these days, is expensive in ways that boggle the mind and swamp the economy in unbelievable seas of red ink. Worse, we are locked into it, because the alternatives are (a) surrender or (b) fighting it out with what we have, neither of which are particularly attractive. In short, we have embarked on a scientific-technological competition which is ruinously expensive and utterly unwinnable in any permanent sense.

Of course, some of the stuff produced along the way will regenerate the sense of wonder in a 90-year-old gaffate. (And, in a sense, it is pure self-indulgence, because making weapons in what mankind does best of all.)

Parenthetically, I might remark that war is the result of a difference of opinion about one thing only: relative fighting strength. If Russia and Hungary agree about their relative strength, Hungary does what Russia says. But if Russia is mired in a war with China, Hungary is much stronger, relatively, and so enjoys

(Over)

A SHORT OVERVIEW OF THE LONG FUTURE (Continued) --

a period of temporary autonomy, since they also know the limits beyond which they cannot go. They defy the Russians with impunity on minor matters, about which the Russians are tolerant, albeit disgruntled. (Cheap Hunky chislers, say the Russians, wait till the war in China is over!)

Now, between the Soviet Union and the United States, the relationship is a bit different. The struggle is protracted, often through proxies (Israel for us, the Arabs for them), and both sides are very wary of a direct confrontation. One result is that we each lie a lot about what is going on. (Recently, Russia tried to buy a half-billion dollars worth of wheat and corn on the sly, after violating one of Nixon's treaty agreements to let our team of agricultural experts in to look at Russian crops. Ford stopped the sale, an act of hostility which Hungary could not have permitted itself. For internal reasons on our part, it should be added.)

Another result is that we are not free to coerce the Arabs, just as they are not free to coerce Western Europe. We are not happy, but we do not take the risk. Were we to announce tomorrow an orbiting fort armed with 30 billion lasers (surprise, surprise!) the price of oil might very well start to go down. Were they to do it, we might withdraw from all of Europe save, perhaps, England. A breakthrough is what both sides seek, using their various strategies.

The struggle is ongoing and protracted, but it is not indefinitely prolonged. An end will come one way or the other.

Let us consider two possible scenarios for an ending, both outside the frame of reference which we have been considering.

Due in part to the strains imposed by what used to be called the Cold War, we find that the raising of children has become a thankless task. The Economy--shorthand for the biosphere of the State--requires the labor of both men and women. Preferably with lots of training. Children, in short, are unskilled labor, even when they are willing to work. There is no demand for child labor. Worse, a child or children requires the care of a parent, drawing that parent away from the labor market, and thereby reducing the family's standard of living. Worse still, from the individual's point of view, is that there is no payoff whatsoever, at any time, from these inordinately expensive, difficult-to-raise, intractable and demanding children. From the individual's point of view, then, the psychic rewards of having children are all there is to offset the severe financial penalties and the equally psychic penalties for having these same children.

This pattern is institutionalized in our society. The State, through social security, takes spartan care of your old age. Your grown children...American grown children...are, and have always been, relatively indifferent to the well-being of their aged parents. The best you can expect in your feebleness is to be put into a classy nursing home.

Given (from another part of the science-fiction forest) our present-day contraceptive technology, it would be surprising if many people did not decide against having any children, since it is now possible to have sex...the classical inducement...without the little bastards.

In fact, the American birthrate has now dipped below the replacement level. The reason may be argued, but the drop is there. It is a fact. And it is the sum of many individual decisions.

One of the great themes in science fiction is: If This Goes On!

(Cont. next page)

THE CHINABERRY TREE: SUNDAY, FUNDAY, MONDAY, GRUNDY

by Gene Wolfe

I have been put in charge of the calendar. It is a noble responsibility, but not quite as nice as I thought it would be. No doubt Pope Gregory XIII could have told me, but I never thought to ask him. His number alone should have told me.

I brought it on myself by suggesting our company put out the calendar; what I had in mind mostly was nude shots of Diane Keaton. Let's not go into the embarrassing "camera dropping episode" (as it has become known around the office). Let's just say it didn't work out.

Instead, I was left with 365 numbers and 1000 enemies. Everyone hates us calendar composers. ("Twelve pages," I used to say to myself. "What can go wrong?" If I could talk to myself now as I was then, I wouldn't even speak to him.) My first idea was to put another Saturday (to be called Funday) on the south side of Sunday. Everyone has noticed that Sunday and Monday are incompatible, and I thought a buffer state might halt those lightning raids of Monday worries that come when one is checking out of the con hotel on Sunday afternoon. I even wrote one of those little paragraphs for dictionaries that tell how Funday is a corruption of the Ancient Geek Fhaa 'ndy, meaning "the day after Mhoo".

The Powers That Be objected. "What," they said (and in so many words, too) "will become of Funday's Child? Monday's Child is fair of face, Tuesday's Child is full of grace, Wednesday's Child is loving and giving and makes a good secretary if your wife doesn't see her, but what of Funday's Child? You will have to run a survey of thousands of children born on Funday, and since there isn't any Funday yet, the cost will be enormous."

My fan friends don't seem to understand my predicament either. Not long ago a fan came up to me on the street. I gave him a quarter, but instead of going away he said, "Why don't you make all the months start on Monday? Monday is month-day, and I'd be able to keep everything straight. All the months should end on Sunday, too."

I told him that nature (or as the agnostics call her, Nature) had tried to fix us up with a 28-day month by giving us a 28-day moon, but we have ruined her plan by turning it into a landing strip. Then I explained my own plan to coat the moon with silver iodide and print a 2000-mile high nude photo of you-know-who; it was very interesting, and I wish he had stayed to hear all of it.

Now I get letters. A lovely femme fanne in Dubuque asks why I bait con committees by labeling the Worldcon weekend Labor Day. Well, G.B., I tried Funday and you know what happened. Papa isn't very smart, but sooner or later he learns.

A crabby fan in Hartford writes to gripe about neos using the same calendar as BNF's. He points out that if the neo's calendars were offset a week he could get home from Cincinnati before they arrived. I've sent copies of his letter to SMOF's in Hagerstown and elsewhere, and I am happy to announce the decision. In the future, B.C., your New Year's Day will be January 8th.

More and more of these letters are coming in all the time, and I have taken steps to answer them, the first step being to drop them in a big box marked REPLY OCTOBER 1973. If you've written about the calendar, Dear Reader, you'll be hearing from me as soon as I get back from delivering my guest of honor speech in Minneapolis.

TENUOUS VISIONS

'Insubstantial ideas not worth building up for prozine sale)
by Donald Franson

1. Famous Last Words.

Professor Ivoribean turned to the computer terminal. "I need a lip reader who can understand Aramaic." The lights flashed and the buzzers buzzed, for a long time.

Ivoribean said to the puzzled Dr. Bighare, "I've finally succeeded in focusing the Time-Viewer on one of the great moments of religious history. But there is no sound, and I need that."

Dr. Bighare was enthusiastic, when Ivoribean explained. "No matter what their beliefs, everyone will be burning up with curiosity as I am. What were Jesus Christ's last words? Whether one believes in him as a son of God, or merely respects him as a noble teacher, it's important to know. 'It is finished,' according to St. John. 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,' according to St. Luke. 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' St. Mark and St. Matthew agree. But I, for one, cannot accept that such a strong personality broke down and accused his God of deserting him. That seems like an invention of his enemies."

"We'll soon know," said Ivoribean, "If I can come up with a translator."

The computer continued to buzz and flash. "Ask for two individuals," suggested Bighare. Immediately the answer came, and Ivoribean called up the persons designated, inviting them to come to the laboratory.

The scene on the Time-Viewer was almost as described in the Bible, minus the earthquakes and threatening sky, of course. In fact, it was hot and sunny, a typical Jerusalem April day. They watched the silent drama, moved by it, and curious too. Jesus spoke, the lip reader said the sounds and the Aramaic scholar, with difficulty, interpreted them. "I am thirsty. I thirst."

This was natural, and Bighare nodded. But to give up the fight, and lose his faith in his God--this did not ring true. Jesus was made of sterner stuff. Did he say a prayer, or the enigmatic "It is finished"?

It was late when Jesus finally opened his mouth again, and everyone watching the screen was transfixed. It was time. These were to be his last words. His lips moved, and the lip reader made sounds. The scholar couldn't understand the sounds, and they replayed the scene. She made the sounds again, more carefully, and he translated...

"The first words are, 'Thank God'."

Dr. Bighare smiled. He had been right. It was only logical that such a strong faith could not be shaken by mere weariness and torture. "Quick--the rest of it!"

More sounds from the lip reader, another replay, and another, and then the scholar brightened. Then, he suddenly laughed aloud.

"What did he say?" said Ivoribean.

"Yes, what were his last words?" cried Bighare.

The linguist watched the scene, forced himself to be serious. He sighed. "What would you say, after a long, hot, wearisome, painful afternoon of humiliation and suffering? His last words were, 'Thank God it's Friday.' Then he gave up the ghost."

FAIRIES FROM ANOTHER PLANET
(A List of Science Fiction & Fantasy Shows on Radio)

Compiled by Mary Groff

Adventures by Morse -- San Francisco detective and his assistant, who roamed around the world seeking new adventures and solving mysteries. The incidents often bordered on the supernatural, but usually had some logical explanation for any phenomenon. The show was produced in serial form for 30 minutes once per week. Major stories took ten chapters, with a three-part short thriller/horror adventure in between. Written by Carlton E. Morse. 1944.

The Adventures of Superman -- The stranger from another planet who could bend steel with his bare hands and change the course of a river to suit him whim. The show started in 1938 shortly after the comic-strip figure appeared. In his workaday life Superman appeared to the public as Clark Kent, a mild-mannered reporter for a big city newspaper. The final series finished in 1951.

The Adventures of Topper -- Based upon Cosmo Topper, the character created by Thorne Smith. Topper was haunted by two ghosts, and often was taken for being slightly mad and talking to himself, as no one else could see the ghost. First shown on June 7, 1945, and eventually became a TV program.

Armstrong of the SBI -- Armstrong was the Chief Investigator of the Scientific Investigation Bureau, and he featured in three 30-minute dramas each week. Each play was a complete story. The show ran from September 5, 1950 to June 28, 1951.

The Avenger -- The Avenger was biochemist Jim Brandon, who was able to pick up thought flashes and to make himself invisible--very useful in his fight against crime! He had a girl assistant and was widely feared by the Underworld. Series began in 1945.

The Black Castle -- Ran in 1943 and 1944, and was a 15-minute program devoted to stories of the weird, occult, and the terrifying. The announcer was Don Douglas, who also played all the parts in the short plays. The story started with church bells tolling in the distance, and the creepy voice of the host setting the scene.

Blackstone, The Magic Detective -- Mystery and trick show for children, often telling them how to perform and perfect some magic, and telling a story that was a case that Blackstone solved in the past with the aid of his magic. Ran in the late 1940's.

Chandu, The Magician -- Juvenile show that began in 1932 and ran until 1936. Frank Chandler, an American, was a mystic who had learned the secrets of the East and, by using his occult power and a crystal ball, was able to combat evil around the world. A second series ran from June 1948 until 1950.

The Cinnamon Bear -- This was a Christmas story in 26 parts that played before Christmas each year beginning in 1937. The show was for children and relied heavily upon a world of witches, pirates and dragons. The show started with a toy bear coming to life in the attic of the children's home.

The Croupier -- Each week the Croupier would spin a tale about people caught in a web of fate. Most of the tales bordered upon the supernatural. Ran for one season in 1949, with Vincent Price appearing in the opening segment.

(Over)

FAIRIES FROM ANOTHER PLANET (Continued) --

Dunninger, The Mentalist -- Magician and hypnotist who appeared weekly in a mind-reading show. Began in 1943 and ran for a year.

Escape -- This show had an irregular run from 1947 to 1954. Some of the plays were mystery or adventure and a few were horror or supernatural. Among the latter were "Leinengen vs the Ants" (about the horrors of being around man-eating ants), "Evening Primrose" (about a poet who found shelter in a department store and there faced unimaginable terrors), and "The Time Machine" (H.G. Wells' classic).

Exploring Tomorrow -- A not-very-successful science fiction show that played 1957-1958. The Guide to this was John W. Campbell, Jr., the late editor of ASTOUNDING/ANALOG magazine. He invited the listener to step with him into the amazing future.

The Hall of Fantasy -- Began in January, 1953 and written by Richard Thorne, who also played some of the parts. The story of man's struggle against unexplainable forces of evil, with the loser usually being the man. Vampires, werewolves and rotting corpses that moved were part of the ingredients, and there was always a nasty, shocking ending.

The Hermit's Cave -- Ran from 1940-43, and always started with a howling wind and a definite feeling of doom, gloom and terror. The Hermit welcomes his listeners, warning people with bad hearts not to listen. The plays usually concerned ghosts and other weird stories, and there was quite a lot of violence.

It Happened in 1955 -- Began in 1945, and was a 15-minute show illustrating the delights and remarkable achievements of a decade hence via a series of short plays.

The Land of the Lost -- First heard in 1943, with its final performance in 1948. The adventures of a brother and sister in a kingdom under the sea. Isabel Manning Howson wrote and narrated the stories, which concerned talking fishes, magic seaweed and enchanted pearly palaces. Prizes were given to the children who wrote the most interesting letters about the show.

Let's Pretend -- Began in 1929 and last heard in October, 1954. This show was for the very young and concerned fairies, goblins, witches, princesses, and animals that talked. There were dramatized versions of well-known fairy stories such as "Rumpelstiltskin" and "Cinderella".

Lights Out -- Ran periodically from 1935 to 1952, and was a horror and macabre program. The openings set the stage for a play of horror to follow, and the sound effects were sensational. A man turned inside out by a demonic fog, the eating of human flesh, bodies splattering against pavements, were all acted with the suitable sounds.

Mandrake, The Magician -- Ran from 1940 to 1942. A 15-minute serial show about Mandrake and his servant, who was a giant. They lived with many secrets in a house of mystery and battled evil with the help of magic. The lovely Princess Narda accompanied them on their travels and adventures.

Mercury Theatre of the Air -- This first came to the air in 1938, and was a play program featuring well-known and well-acted plays. It was on this show that Orson Welles performed in "The War of the Worlds", the H.G. Wells story of invaders from another planet, that caused an evening of panic in the United States when many people actually believed the country was being invaded by strange and horrible

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FAIRIES FROM ANOTHER PLANET (Continued) --

creatures. Part of the play was rewritten and the scene set in America. News Bulletins of the invasion kept interrupting the program until many people listening were not sure what was fact and what was fiction. The program established Welles as a star, and the play is now well-known in radio history. Nothing like it has ever occurred again. Probably the fact that Hitler was on the rampage had the nation extra nervous and jumpy at that time.

The Mysterious Traveler -- Ran from 1943 to 1952. The Mysterious Traveler always appeared riding on a train, and he narrated stories of horror and terror during the journey with his listeners. Often the stories ended at the apex of suspense, with the Traveler saying sadly that he was sorry that we had to get off, and he hoped that we would meet again soon. Robert Arthur and David Kogan wrote the stories.

Nightmare -- Ran for one season in 1953, and starred Peter Lorre who told, and acted in, stories of the macabre.

Omar, The Mystic -- First heard in 1935.

The Player -- A one-man theatre of creepy and weird plays starring Paul Frees, which was aired in the late 1940's.

Quiet, Please -- Ran from 1947 to 1949. Written by Willis Cooper, these were plays of an extraordinary horror. Articles and objects that are usually seen as pleasant and unfrightening came alive with thoughts and plans of their own. Flowers became malevolent and murderous, spiders grew to an enormous and threatening size. During the show menace was everywhere and in everything.

Robinson Crusoe, Jr. -- A boy's adventures on a mythical island, aired in 1934.

Space Patrol -- Ran from 1950 to 1955, featuring Buzz Corey, of the Space Patrol, and his unending attempt to bring about law and order amongst the planets.

Starr of Space -- Ran from 1953 to 1954. Twice a week Starr blasted out of Nova City Space Station in his rocket, for a program of adventures in the atmosphere, stratosphere and on the planets.

The Strange Dr. Weird -- On from 1944-1945. Dr. Weird, who lived next to the cemetery, told stories written by Robert Arthur that were grisly and supernatural.

Suspense -- Running from 1942 to 1956, this featured both regular mystery plays and horror/science fiction ones. Among the latter were Spier's "House in Cypress Canyon" (about a young couple who rented a house in a canyon that was frequented by a werewolf), "Donovan's Brain" (an SF story with Welles playing the lead), Lovecraft's "The Dunwich Horror", and stories of being buried alive, people being terrorized by horrible ghosts, and other evil situations.

Superstition -- A 30-minute fantasy show of the mid-1940's. Ralph Bell played The Voice of Superstition,

Tales of Tomorrow -- Began January 1, 1953 and ended April 9 of the same year. This was a science fiction thriller.

Tarzan -- First heard in 1932, with the series ending in 1953. The story of the man raised by apes, and created by Edgar Rice Burroughs. The first set of plays

(Over)

FAIRIES FROM ANOTHER PLANET (Continued) --

was taken from one of the Burroughs stories. The show ran periodically, with various actors, and always with enchantment, mystery, and violence in darkest Africa.

Think -- Performed in the early 1950's and featuring plays of fantasy, imagination and science fiction. The Voice of Think was Dave Ballard.

Thurston, The Magician -- First heard in 1932.

Tom Corbett, Space Cadet -- Ran during 1952, beginning on January 1 as a five-times-a-week juvenile space serial. Tom and his friends from the Space Academy rocketed around the universe involved with spies, criminals and pirates. The series ended in the fall, after being trimmed to twice a week.

Two Thousand Plus -- Started March 1950 and ran through 1951. A science fiction program that explored the years beyond 2000 A.D.

The Unexpected -- A 15-minute terror show of the late 1940's, which featured surprise endings brought about by twists of fate. The listener was reminded each show that there was some unknown destiny awaiting him.

The Witch's Tale -- Began May, 1931, and was one of radio's first horror programs. Tales about ancient curses, murder and the supernatural. Old Nancy, the ancient witch, told these stories. Final show was in 1938.

The Wizard of Oz -- First heard in 1933, with Dorothy played by Nancy Kelly; based upon the stories of L. Frank Baum.

X Minus One -- Ran from 1955 to 1975. An extension of Dimension X, which ended in 1951. Another anthology of science fiction stories, many of which came from GALAXY Magazine. Always started off with a countdown and a rocket being fired.

[Our thanks to Mary for compiling an interesting list (many of the shows thereon were completely new to us, and we have followed radio closely since the late 1930's). We'd like very much to see this list become a jumping-off point for a more extensive survey of SF/Fantasy on the radio, including checklists of titles (especially from anthology programs which included plays from several genres, such as Escape and Suspense, and particularly from the many drama anthologies which presented only occasional SF/Fantasy shows, such as The Columbia Workshop, Mercury Theatre of the Air, Lux Radio Theatre, and the like) for individual series (annotated wherever possible). And, of course, we welcome additions to and expansions upon information in Mary's list (such shows as The Black Hood, Buck Rogers in the 25th Century, The Shadow and some of the recent SF/Fantasy entries were omitted, e.g.; information on Dimension X could be elaborated on; and it would be useful if it could be determined whether such shows as The Black Museum and Starring Boris Karloff, to name just a couple, were solely mystery shows or whether they, too, crossed over into the realm of horror and the supernatural. ## We'd also very much like to see something similar done for TV shows (hint!). ## Re Mary's comments, we'd like to note that Quiet, Please is one of two radio shows we remember with particular fondness (the other being I Love a Mystery, another show which had enough involvement with fantasy and the supernatural to deserve some coverage on an expanded list). We have only one tape recording of a Quiet, Please episode, and are most anxious to obtain others (as well as a checklist of the series). ## Finally, we'd be most interested in any books and publications anyone can recommend on the subject of SF/Fantasy on radio. And we recommend to others membership in The Golden Radio Buffs of Maryland, Inc. (\$6/yr. from Gene Leitner, 3123 Wallford Dr., Apt.D, Baltimore, MD 21222.)

FANSTATIC AND FEEDBACK

Don D'Amassa, 19 Angell Dr., E. Providence, RI 02914

(18/3/77)

. . . The index to the SFEC was chiefly interesting for what it didn't say. Eliminating anthologies and anything published this year, I found only 13 books that have not subsequently appeared as U.S. paperbacks. One of these, Anywhen by Blish, will probably appear before too much longer.

Of the remaining twelve, several are understandable. Vanguard to Venus by Jeffery Castle is abysmally bad. The Hopkins Manuscript is not particularly good (it did appear in paperback in England). Fred Hoyle had two clunkers in Into Deepest Space and The Inferno, although I did find The Molecule Men fairly readable. L.P. Davies' Twilight Journey was fair, but very light, as was Frank O'Rourke's Instant Gold. The two old Charles Eric Maine books, The Man Who Could Not Sleep and The Isotope Man are more surprising; both were fairly good, and the latter was even made into a movie--The Atomic Man.

But the remaining three are the real surprises. Christopher Hodder-Williams is rather anti-science, which might explain the unpopularity of The Egg Shaped Thing. But Randall Garrett was writing some of his best work with Unwise Child, and it's amazing that no one in this country has ever reprinted Poul Anderson's Twilight World.

Avedon Carol's reference to Shulamith Firestone with regard to the relation between a mother and child seems rather inappropriate, considering that Firestone advocates the banning of natural childbirth and traditional child rearing in favor of artificial wombs and the creche system.

I didn't exactly stop writing the short reviews, I just got tied up with too many other projects, chiefly reviewing at length for DELAP'S F&SF REVIEW and Keith Justice (I launch after review copies), doing MYTHOLOGIES, and several non-fannish but time-consuming projects here at home. I'm actually about five months behind reading SF, believe it or not.

We believe it--we're a bit behind, too.... But we do hope you will be able to return to reviewing full blast before too much longer.... ## We've just parted with most of our "duplicate" SF pb's, but we seem to remember pb's of Twilight World and possibly Anywhen and The Man Who Could Not Sleep (the last two may have been British). Still, we had so many we are probably mixing those up with something else (probably just have duplicates of the SFEC editions....).--ed.7

László Lantos, President of the TIT Science Fiction Club, H-1113 Budapest, Boeskey ut 37, Hungary (1/7/77)

Our Club by means of this letter would like to take up the contacts with you. We hope that you already received our consignment consisting of fanzine when this letter is in your hands.

In the following part of this letter I would like to complete the informations about our Club which was sent to you in English. . .

The management of our Club: László Lantos, President; Agnes Hosszu, Secretary; János Kis and Gabor Péterfi, Vice Secretaries. In the name of Club only these leaders have the right to come to a decision.

Since 1970 our Club has been operating as a methody center which gives a helping hand to the amateur SF fan clubs of Hungary, and coordinates their work. We are helping to our fellow-clubs in the organizing of programmes, exhibitions and film-projections for them. On the SF-days we've organized a successful exhibition.

We represent the interests of our fellow-clubs both in Hungary and abroad. We have fellow-clubs in countryside and in Budapest.

Perhaps it is your interest why couldn't you listen nothing about the Hungarian amateur SF activity for a long time.

Since the EUROCON of Trieste the Hungarian amateur SF movement had lost its contact with the SF movement of the World. Judith Trethor our ex-secretary had tried to use the Hungarian SF Amateur movement for her own purposes and progress.

(Over)

FANSTATIC AND FEEDBACK (Continued) --

This, of course have caused a breaking in the progress of the amateur SF movement and we have lost a lot of our contacts with the abroad, because all fanzines and publications arrive to her address.

But she refused to have over these publications to the Club. Our ex-secretary has now no contact whatsoever with the SF movement. Please help us to renew our international relations.

Against the rumors a good deal of amateur SF clubs work in Hungary and they work rather well. Among others there are Clubs in Nyergesujfalu, Veszprém and in several places in Budapest.

The TIT Science Fiction Club at present has about 200 members. We have regular programmes on every Tuesday. Within the range of them are astronomical-astronautical, historical-sociological, musical and SF literary sections.

We have library with 800 books and fanzines. Both our members and the other clubs can regularly borrow books from our library. Because we have no foreign currencies we can only obtain publications if we change ours and our fellow-club's publication for foreign books, fanzines and similar printed matter. Thus we ask the clubs, publishers and Departments of Science Fiction of universities, and of course to you, to give their publications for change and send them regularly to us.

In the near future we'll after two-year silence our fanzine POZITRON and POZITRON-NEWSLETTER publication will be issued. These publications you receive will soon.

We hope that our contact will be durable and advantageous for all the party concerned. Please write us what is in your interest about the Hungarian SF activity.

Please reply as soon as possible.

All of you fanzine publishers and the like out there--this means you. ## We will be covering what the TIT club has sent us thus far this year in section Z of this issue; and we hope the fanzine reviews in this issue and in the accompanying THE JOURNAL SUPPLEMENT will be of use to the club in making further contacts.7

John Thiel, 30 N. 19th St., Lafayette, IN 47904

(undated)

Have received your SF&F NEWSLETTER . . . a back-issue, in which we reviewed one of John's fanzines7.

. . . I wonder if you would send me, since you seem to know of them, a list of science-fiction clubs you are aware of. I am trying to get in touch with them via my own organization, the Lafayette Interstellar Society, and send them issues of VOR-ZAP, our club publication, so that we can get issues of their own club publications. You might list our club, if you would, with me as "contact man", and mention that we publish a mag called VOR-ZAP--and also mention another club here in town, the Salvationists and Unearthly Phenomena Investigative Society, and their magazine, FREE-WHEELING FER-DE-LANCE; they are contactable via me also. And mention that we want to correspond with clubs. If that's not news, how do we have to make it? Believe me, I would be happy for any club addresses you would send us, for I haven't been able to find clubs listed anywhere, that respond, with the exception of ten rather undependable organizations, like the ones in Houston that publish THE PURPLE OBSCENITY. Addresses, addresses--to find out what they're doing.

I was about to say, strange, since you're connected with Washington, that you have fanzine reviews so outdated; then I saw the date on your own: May 1976. Maybe you yourselves are strange. Well, one thing about it, you reviewed PABLE LENNIS right on time. There's a mystery here, though, about why I am receiving it in August of 1977. Nothing much, just a mystery. . . .

The various mentions you requested have been made. Hope the addresses in this issue and the SUPPLEMENT help you; no time to prepare a separate list. Suggest you write to LASFS if you can get their current address; they published a list of clubs a while back, and were going to make it a continuing project--but have heard nothing from them since. ## As for the mystery--your copy was buried in a stack of extra copies of the issue, and just recently turned up (we do this once in a while....).7

(Cont. next page)

FANSTATIC AND FEEDBACK (Continued) --

Don Franson, 6543 Babcock Ave., North Hollywood, CA 91306

(17/6/77)

The Los Angeles HERALD-EXAMINER is publishing Star Wars as a serial. Part 5 is in the June 17th issue. I haven't seen any fiction in newspapers, much less science fiction, for a long time. I remember Deluge and A Fighting Man of Mars in 1931, and not much else since. I hope this starts a trend. This could create an expanded audience for science fiction. Credits say it's excerpted from the paperback. Comparison shows it's condensed. I wonder whether the author, the paperback editor, or the newspaper editor did the cutting.

... Here it is June and I'm just getting around to reading and commenting on the February and March SF&F JOURNAL, #'s 88 and 89. It seems only yesterday that I received them. As a matter of fact, it was yesterday. Don't fans realize that by sending out dated fanzines they are giving procrastinating commenters a head start? They can say, well, as long as this is a month old anyway....

Your larger zines were falling apart--use bigger staples. The envelope was almost falling apart too. This is a report, not a complaint. You'd do better to send the zines out one at a time, at least the larger ones. Does this cost much more?

Gene Wolfe mentions TV comedy laugh tracks. They irritate me when I notice them, and I lose interest in the humor, if any. Laugh tracks don't seem very logical in situation comedies where there is no audience. Printed-word writers are at a disadvantage. Maybe they should interlard their jokes with (haha) and their thrilling moments with (organ chord--tension!).

For a good definition of science fiction that really holds up try the old and simple "fantastic stories based on science". If they're not based on science, they're not science fiction, and if they're not fantastic they're not true "amazing stories".

Your listing of SF Book Club is useful, something I haven't seen before. I've never belonged, because I don't like the books-on-approval idea in general, but I have a few book club editions.

I suppose one can't stop people from presenting alternate opinions ad infinitum, but I weary of fandom's (and prodom's) perpetual criticism of critics. I believe a critic or reviewer who has taken the time to write up a review or column expressing his unique opinion should not be taken to task for it. Why not just say the reviews were good or lousy and explain why, without disagreeing with his opinions? Authors especially shouldn't argue with critics--they should take the undeserved blame along with the undeserved praise. An exception is Wertham's short and polite explanation of a couple of points the reviewer missed. (He sounds so sensible I'll have to read his book and find out what fanzines are.) But too much "reviews of reviews" are like apa's bane, "comments on comments".

Jim Goldfrank's article on collections and Martin Wooster's on "Best of" books are fine. I like the one-paragraph summary of the individual stories. I have the Seabury Quinn, and should get the Kuttner. I never cared for Cordwainer Smith.

Re C.L. Moore and "Shambleau". The review made me go and get the AVON FANTASY READER #7. (I don't have the 1933 WEIRD TALES--I only have a few WEIRD TALES, as I never liked it.) Sure enough, "Green Hills of Earth" is in there. And yes, Heinlein got the idea from there, for his famous story and song. The Kuttners and Heinlein were close friends in L.A. According to Moskowitz, in Seekers of Tomorrow, some lyrics (different from Heinlein's) appear in "Quest of the Star Stone" (WT, Nov.37). Northwest Smith was first conceived as a Western character. But I'm puzzled as to why the interplanetary trader, obviously patterned after Hawk Carso, retained the earthbound name. And I read "Shambleau" for the first time. I'm too squeamish to enjoy this sort of story, whether it's written by C.L. Moore or Harlan Ellison. I never liked WEIRD TALES for this reason--more goo than ghosts.

Well, I'm through with #88 and didn't do justice to it. There's a lot more.

On page TSJ-88/R-13 (looks like a Canadian zip code) "forward" should be "foreword". Tsk.

(Over)

FANSTATIC AND FEEDBACK (Continued) --

I appreciate the "Fanzine Fricassee" supplements. I'm making use of them for the New Fanzine Appreciation Society. I have this weird idea that some (if not most) fanzine editors will send fanzines on request even without advance cash payment, if the requestor promises to respond. I believe that those who send cash don't respond, simply because they have sent cash, and "I've paid for this--why should I bother to comment?"

What was I going to say about Jim Goldfrank's review of The Disciples of Cthulhu? It's yesterday's checkmark, and the thought has faded away. Let's start the controversy over again--how do you pronounce Cthulhu? I say "Storly"....

There's a lot more to #89, but I'm not going to go on. It's a fine fanzine. But again, why pile Pelion on Ossa?

[The WASHINGTON STAR also published a (very) condensed version of Star Wars; they have also published, in recent months, serialized condensations of a couple political thriller best-sellers. Outside of these, I can't remember seeing any fiction in the newspapers (depending upon one's point of view, of course) since the days of AMERICAN WEEKLY supplement to the Hearst newspapers.... ## It's surprising that it took so long for the magazines to reach you. They were mailed out in April.... We're going to have to start dating the magazines after they're run off, rather than when they're typed, as the running-off process is where we lose most of our time with our crippled mimeo.... ## Sorry about the small staples--we were experimenting a bit here on smaller staples with the smaller issues, but they were too small. As for mailing the 'zines together--in the case of #'s 88 and 89, as with 86 and 87, it was more of a case of there being one large issue in two parts than there being two separate, individual magazines. This is what happens when we take so long between issues.... But there is a substantial savings in mailing two issues together (30¢ per envelope in postage alone, plus the cost of the envelope, and, equally important to us, the savings in time by our only having to write the addresses once.... Time, even more so than money, is our greatest problem nowadays in getting all of our publications out on time--we seem to be doing a lot less, and it's taking us longer....). ## If you want any of the SFEC selections you see listed from time to time in SFI, let us know; one of our services is to obtain books from various book clubs for people who don't want to take out membership in said clubs. Our only condition is that all of our costs be prepaid by the person sending us an order. ## As far as responding to fanzines is concerned, the person who sends cash for a sample issue may very well respond--if he wants the next issue without having to send more cash.... We don't send out many free samples, mostly because we send out 50% of each print run free as it is (to contributors, publishers and authors whose work is reviewed or mentioned within, etc.), and can't really afford to add anything more to our overhead.... ## We pronounce it "Ka-thoo-loo" (rhymes with a sneeze), with accent on the "thoo". But we have no idea whether this is correct or not.... --ed.7

We Also Heard From:

Terry Bohman -- "I just received SFN20 and enjoyed the news & reviews. You've seen the TIME (May 30) blurb on Star Wars by now, so I'll not send you a copy. It's a shame TIME has never been able to take SF seriously, just an occasional patronizing chortle over 'sci-fi' or 'space fantasy'. There were things about Wizards that annoyed me (Good triumphing over Evil via a German Luger, for example), but in general, it was as you described it: fun, fascinating. Dick Geis' criticism of the fantasy element (he couldn't believe it!) was inane. And, oh, the evil sorcerer's name was Black Wolf, not Black Hawk, if I remember right. . ."

[The Wizards review you mention was by Jim Goldfrank, not us. ## We should note here we are including a couple of short notes re SFN (now SFI) here rather than in SFI. We have been debating whether to start including all letters in SFI rather than TSJ, since just about everyone now gets both 'zines and SFI comes out more frequently than TSJ. What do our readers think? (And our letter-writers?)]

(Cont. next page)

FANSTATIC AND FEEDBACK (Continued) --

Don Franson -- /Re SFN 207 " . . . I'm always surprised at the small attendance at ESFA meetings, as shown in the minutes you publish. They seem to have interesting programs and speakers, and the Sunday afternoon time should be ideal (but apparently isn't).

"THE SF&F NEWSLETTER is not really a news zine, as you say, it's more a review and announcement zine, so why not call it the SF&F REVIEWLETTER?

"I think it shouldn't try to be a news zine, except for news of books and other publications. There's no sense in copying from LOCUS, etc. The convention and club news should be retained, and your foreign contacts are valuable."

/We, too, have been much surprised at ESFA's small attendance, especially when one considers how interesting their meetings are. We have styled the meetings of our (relatively) new area club, the Potomac River Science Fiction Society, on ESFA in the sense that we try to have a program at most meetings, followed by an open discussion time in which we try to get all of our audience involved. This seemed to go over pretty well at first, since we were averaging around 30 per meeting (even though there were a lot of new faces each meeting), but attendance has fallen off sharply since we lost our regular meeting place at the Wheaton Library (budget cuts forced them to close the Library at 5 p.m. on Friday, our former meeting night--and the same was true of all of the other Montgomery County Libraries--so we had to meet at a new time and place). ## Thanks for your suggestions re SFN. As you will note, the title has been changed to THE SF&F INFORMATION, which is closer to what SFN actually was--an information 'zine rather than a news 'zine ("information" subsumes "news", anyway....). Issues should be larger (20-22 pages) from now on, and the frequency less (every 1-2 months), with contents focusing around book, film, TV and radio news and reviews, plus such con and overseas news as we get from time to time, and our coverage of ESFA minutes and other fannish events. The local news is being split off into a combined SF/Fantasy/Mystery/Western/Board Gaming local (250-mile radius from DC) newsletter. --ed.7

Dave & Su Bates -- " . . . THE SF&F JOURNAL #89 came in safe, along with FANZINE FRICASSEE #1 (SUPPLEMENT #201). As usual, were most fascinating and enjoyed by both of us. Trouble is, every issue costs us money, as we see some things reviewed that we have to send off for, but that is part of the pleasure.

"The review of NICKELODEON #2 amused me a bit....comments on the nudity photo illustrations. You have a point, but I don't care too much if there is or isn't in a publication as long as they are not pornographic. However, just the comments on nudity, yet the cover of this issue of JOURNAL has obvious male and female figures, jay-birding it, and happy with a few odd friends. There is even a little boy fully clothed, and being seduced by the sight of adult nudity and comix. (Even worse...comix...that spelling usually signifies underground publications, and since you must be adult to purchase the same, the nude adults must have supplied them.)

"And the girl studying a map of Washington, D.C. Well, Capitol Hill is either up to their old hi-jinx again, or they are actually looking for Baltimore. . . ."

Gil Gaier -- "May I wish you well on your JOURNAL PROJECT; if you get the kind of response I wish you, the future size of your carrier zine will have to be doubled. Be sure to include your participants' addresses. I'll send them a copy of GG 7/8 (part 2) which may stimulate their memories in re books. (In fact my PROJECT asks less of them. Maybe they should baby-up.) Anyway, LOTS OF SUCCESS!"

/Thanks, Gil. Unfortunately (but not unexpectedly), your note is the only response we have received so far...no one else has even mentioned the Project. But then, we expected this, as we are in some ways duplicating what you are doing only, as you noted, doing it in more depth. If we have time, we'll address the Project again on the next page; otherwise, there'll be an Editorial there which will briefly touch on the Project, among other things. --ed.7

Checklist: The Dennis Wheatley Library of the Occult (probably incomplete).

- #1. Dracula, by Bram Stoker.
- #2. The Werewolf of Paris, by Guy Endore.
- #3. Moonchild, by Aleister Crowley.
- #4. Studies in Occultism, by Helena Blavatsky.
- #5. Carnacki the Ghost-Finder, by William Hope Hodgson.
- #6. The Sorcery Club, by Elliott O'Donnell.
- #7. Harry Price: The Biography of a Ghost-Hunter, by Paul Tabori.
- #8. The Witch of Prague, by F. Marion Crawford.
- #9. Uncanny Tales I, Selected by Dennis Wheatley.
- #10. The Prisoner in the Opal, by A.E.W. Mason.
- #11. The Devil's Mistress, by J.W. Brodie-Innes.
- #12. You and Your Hand, by Cheiro.
- #13. Black Magic, by Marjorie Bowen.
- #14. Real Magic, by Philip Bonewits.
- #15. Faust, by Goethe.
- #16. Uncanny Tales 2, Selected by Dennis Wheatley.
- #17. The Gap in the Curtain, by John Buchan.
- #18. The Interpretation of Dreams, by Zolar.
- #19. Voodoo, by Alfred Metraux.
- #20. The Necromancers, by R.H. Benson.
- #21. Satanism and Witches, Selected by Dennis Wheatley.
- #22. The Winged Pharaoh, by Joan Grant.
- #23. Down There, by J.K. Huysmans.
- #24. The Monk, by Matthew Lewis.
- #25. Horror at Fontenay, by Alexandre Dumas.
- #26. The Hell-Fire Club, by Donald McCormick.
- #27. The Mighty Atom, by Marie Corelli.

We do not know if there were any titles issued after #27 (which came out in 1975); nor do we know if the Library is still publishing new titles. The latest we have seen is #27, priced at 45p U.K., \$1.40 Australia, \$1.40 New Zealand, & \$1.75 Canada. These are standard-sized paperback books, published by Sphere Books Ltd., 30/32 Gray's Inn Rd., London WC1X 8JK, U.K., and includes non-fiction as well as fiction titles. Quite a few more titles were planned at the time #27 was printed. (We'd be very grateful to anyone who could update the above list....) We have about 1/2-dozen titles, buying some on our 1974 trip to England, and the others recently at Crown Books.

Editor's Query: Cross-Genre Stories & Authors.

With our interests in other areas besides SF, we are always happy to hear of works in other genres which contain elements of SF or fantasy, and vice versa--and we know of quite a few others who would also be interested in such information. We would therefore very much like to get a section or column going in TSJ (and in TMN) dealing with crossovers in such fields as SF/mystery, SF/Western, and SF/Adventure. We'd like to see reviews of such works, checklists of authors and titles, and the like, including, if there is sufficient interest among our readers, coverage of the non-genre works of SF writers even when the non-genre work does not contain an SF element. (A few of the better-known SF authors who wrote extensively in the mystery and/or Western fields include Fredric Brown, Leigh Brackett, Anthony Boucher, Isaac Asimov, Theodore Sturgeon, Harlan Ellison, Murray Leinster/Will F. Jenkins, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Harry Harrison, Michael Moorcock, August Derleth, Chad Oliver, etc. And then there are L.P. Davies, John D. MacDonald, Peter Dickinson, John Dickson Carr, Manning Coles, Kendell Foster Crossen, & many others who have gone in the other direction....

SF & FANTASY ON THE SCREEN: Film & TV Reviews & Miscellany

King Kong (in Print), by Amnon Kabatchnik.

Mighty King Kong, the giant ape, has been whisked again from his prehistoric isle to the hustle-bustle of civilization--on the screen and in print. The fable of the Beauty and the Beast is back to haunt us.

Following the original presentation of King Kong in 1932, based on an idea by Edgar Wallace and Marian C. Cooper, the screen play was novelized by Dolos W. Lovelace.

In conjuncture with the new \$24-million movie version there is a deluge of new books on the topic.

Grosset & Dunlop rushed to issue numerous reprints of the Lovelace treatment, one in hard-cover (\$2.95), two paperback editions (\$1.95 each) containing stunning covers and new art work, and a children's "Picture Book of King Kong" (\$1.50). Also featured in the book stores across the country are The Making of King Kong by Orville Goldner and George E. Turner (A.S. Barnes, \$17.50), The Girl in the Hairy Paw edited by Ronald Gottesman and Harry Geduld (Avon, \$5.95) and The Creation of Dino De Laurentis' King Kong by Bruce Bahrenburg (Pocket Books, \$1.75).

The 1932 novel follows faithfully the original screen version. Naturally, it lacks the impact of the amazing visual effects created by master film makers Marian C. Cooper, Ernest B. Schoedsack and Willis H. O'Brien. But the author manages, in an economical, straightforward fashion, to tell an unusual adventure story, sprinkled with moments of terror, without straying away from the touching allegorical theme.

It starts in a low key, accelerates in pace and comfortably reaches its unforgettable climax. Thus we first meet the crew of the Wanderer, get an inkling of a pending sea voyage, witness the hiring of a beautiful but hungry girl by a hard-boiled movie director, share the growing uncertainties of a long and grueling trip, arrive on unknown Skull Island, encounter unfriendly natives and--in a succession of nightmarish sequences, filled with horror and sensuality--hold our breath as a gigantic gorilla, ruler of a lost empire of prehistoric monsters, destroys vehemently men and animals who invaded his kingdom, while attempting to establish a strange relationship, passionate yet tender, with the blonde waif.

Eventually, the gorilla is captured, brought to New York as the eighth wonder of the world, breaks loose, causes havoc and destruction, finds the girl with whom there is an instinctive link, climbs with her to the top of the Empire State Building, only to be toppled by deadly machine-gun fire. "As always, beauty killed the beast", mutters the movie director at the end.

The Making of King Kong is a handsome, large-format book, with breathtaking illustrations. However, the authors, with their zeal to cover every personality, fact and feat connected with the creation of the original film, have reduced the monumental effort into a dry, non-focused narrative.

Scattered throughout are many interesting bits of information (for example: Cooper's insistence that Kong's features will be fierce and menacing, assuring skeptics that "I'll have women crying over him before I am through, and the more brutal he is, the more they'll cry at the end"), anecdotes (like the one about the final, edited version containing thirteen reels, and the producer's presumed superstition as an excuse to shoot more footage) and keen observations (King Kong joins all other truly great hero-villains, who have in common the ability to

(Over)

SF & FANTASY ON THE SCREEN (Continued) --

menace and terrify, yet touch us by their aloneness, frustrated longings and foredoomed struggles--Hamlet, Long John Silver, Heathcliff, Quasimodo, The Invisible Man, Dr. Jekyll, The Golem, Frankenstein's Monster, the Vampire and the Werewolf), but they are practically hidden behind biographical sketches and technical details conveyed in a monotonous style.

The Creation of Dino De Laurentis' King Kong, too, is not an inspired literary effort. It is presented, more or less, in the form of a diary and is cluttered with excess data that should have been trimmed. The cover, with Kong on top of a skyscraper, holding a burning helicopter in his right hand and a miniature blonde in his left, is most impressive, but the selection of photographs and their arrangement within the text, is tentative and unimaginative. The book also suffers from an awed, god-like attitude towards the producer, which is not surprising in view of the fact that its copyright belongs to Dino De Laurentis Corporation.

Still, with all its failures, Bahrenburg's diary contains some illuminating tidbits about the behind-the-scenes of movie-making, and it captures the anxieties and multiple crises that befall a colossal project. While there is little doubt that the book is part of the global promotion campaign for the new Kong motion picture, the author managed to inject, between the lines, some poignant and cynical observations about Hollywood of the seventies.

In spite its title, The Girl in the Hairy Paw is a serious, non-sensational analytical treatment of the various aspects of King Kong. The editors assembled a series of excellent articles about the 1932 movie, its origin, concept, artistry and influence.

The editors' introduction deals with the motif of Beauty and the Beast through the ages, beginning with the Greek myth of Psyche and Eros, the folklore variations of the Babylonians and Romans, Shakespeare's comedic version in A Midsummer Night's Dream (when Titania is infatuated with the ass-headed Bottom), then the crystallization of the theme in Mme. Maris Leprince de Beaumont's version in 1757 (which provided the basis for Gretry's opera Zemire at Azor (1771) and Cocteau's film, La Belle et la Bete (1946)).

The editors continue with a fascinating analysis of the symbolic and erotic manifestations that surround the grotesque bonds between a beauty and her beast.

The introduction sets the tone for the rest of the selections. We learn through concise and informative articles the genesis of Kong, how the idea evolved in the minds of its creators, earlier literary and screen achievements that influenced the artistic processes, the successful opening during a national depression and the imitations that sprang up in all the mass-communication media.

Some of the original press reviews are reprinted in the book. The critics found various themes in King Kong--the tragedy of the beast who at the end of the fable fails to turn into the handsome prince; the rape of the environment by a technological society; the powerful, free-spirited black, victimized by hordes of white policemen.

Incorporated into the solemn points of view are some incongruities--pastiche, parodies, cartoons, caricatures, jokes, songs and posters--inspired by King Kong. The savage, yet chivalrous, ape has stimulated world culture at all levels and has been transformed into myth.

Adventure at the Cinema: Film Reviews & Commentary, by Don Ayres.

The adventure began on Thursday night, when I noticed I could make the triple feature at the World if I skipped dinner. Little did I guess that the next few days would turn into a grueling five-AIP-distributed-films fiasco: Joyride (which won't be treated here), Futureworld, Empire of the Ants, The Island of Dr. Moreau, and Tentacles.

Let's try it in the sequence in which I saw them.

(1) Futureworld is last year's sequel to MGM's Westworld, but it lacks the style of the parent film. As fans of the latter will recall, things had run amok in Delos, so the sequel deals with the effort to restore public confidence in the resort. Of course, the problem is that a Nosy Reporter (Peter Fonda) has gotten wind of Fishy Things going on--and he's right. Guess what? Key World Leaders Are Being Replaced by Delos Androids!

Of course, you could have guessed that in your sleep.

The final battles between the hero, heroine, and their incumbent substitutes are occasionally gripping, but the notion that any sort of telepathy is possible (I hope the novelist opted for the idea that we are sufficiently creatures of habit to make knowledge of probable tactics based on prior experience the androids' weapon). Having accepted this improbable telepathic ability, more intriguing possibilities offer themselves that the film offers us (e.g., Fonda's character, though afraid of heights, goes clambering through all manner of real and impromptu ladders, as does his android double; simple: while one is climbing, the other concentrates on the fear and the nausea and the falling....).

Since most of the action takes place in the passageways beneath the resort areas, industrial facilities form the bulk of the sets, making a certain amount of "realism" easy to obtain. Futureworld itself seems little more than a rocket, a bar, a few decidedly barren corridors, and a living quarters which is clearly out of its milieu; since nobody spends much time there, I suppose it's all right.

Of the actors, the most interesting was the Old-Timer Repairman, who knows where all the skeletons are buried (sorry, I've forgotten the actor's name) and helps the heroes. Photography, editing, and effects are serviceable, without being particularly outstanding--which is largely the story of the film.

I did save the music for last, however, since I enjoyed it so much; it may be the best part of the film. Unfortunately, I thought it better when it was used in Eastwood's The Eiger Sanction; the derivativeness is a bit heavy.

In sum: an eyeboiler, to be used when suffering from an OD of useful activity and just trying to keep the eyes occupied. Rating: \$1.75 (\$2.00 in a pinch).

(2) The Empire of the Ants is Bert Gordon's second resurrection of H.G. Wells' material in recent times (I reviewed The Food of the Gods in KARASS). Like its predecessor, Empire does Wells scant justice, but there are a couple of improvements in the story handling from the first film.

In the opening sequence, a narrator feeds us some gobbledygook about pheromones which will be misused later. Then we see the dumping of radioactive material off the Florida coast and the damaged cans floating ashore where ants feed on it (got stuck in in, in reality, where they probably perished) and mutate into the tradi-

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SF & FANTASY ON THE SCREEN (Continued) --

tional giant animals. At least, they have to, because the can is still visible on the shore when the first humans arrive.

The superficial pretense of the story is that Joan Collins is trying to sell swamp land that she doesn't intend to develop to a party of investors who came on a charter boat to see the land; she's bitchy enough that everyone's rooting for the ants to get her. Robert Lansing is the pragmatic captain of the charter boat; he will prove the anchor in the ensuing adversity.

The giant ants arrive on the scene soon enough and the yacht is destroyed, causing the people to attempt to reach a rowboat several miles away--many of them being killed in the process. About here, the opening becomes contradictory, as the survivors suddenly divine that the ants are herding them in a particular direction until they run into an old couple ~~in a telephone booth~~ behind a wire-enclosed farm on the edge of the swamp. This tips off the rest of the movie, though we might have figured it from the title. From here on out, it's a question of whether the heroes will defeat the menace themselves or go for the highway patrol (a la Don Siegel's The Invasion of the Body Snatchers).

The gear-shifting mentioned above comes about because the ants must suddenly be regarded as mutants in an evolutionary sense that is more Lamarckian than Darwinian (though this is true of most monster films); if the radioactive wastes caused the mutation, they can no longer be considered contemporaneous with the beginning of the film, but there must have been thousands of defective cans which have already floated ashore, while the ants at the beginning are of no consequence (though worker ants are sterile and have no effect on reproduction--the Lamarckianism is ridiculously blatant by this point). Later, we see pheromones used as a sort of will-enslavement, though they are not normally of this nature--at least not of the nature the film implies; we've all partaken of numerous pheromones without any such effect. Scientifically, this is theater-of-the-absurd and it hasn't a leg to stand on; the deception is primarily sexist, for it relies on our assumptions that there are two sexes, though this is not the case. Enormous demands are made on story logic; "scientific" credibility is nil.

Special effects are the things of interest here, and they take two forms: mattes of enlarged ants and over-sized mock-ups (almost always of the head only). The mattes are occasionally interesting, but rarely as interesting as those in Food of the Gods. Gordon had to solve the problem of a small object (ant) moving in and out of focus and (in the final mix) leaving the frame entirely, leaving constraint the only viable alternative. As best as I could tell in two viewings, constraint consisted of gluing the ants to the animation surface and/or laying a glass plate over them; the plate is clearly visible in a number of the mattes. The result is that the ants are too busy trying to free themselves to pose a credible menace; this becomes painfully evident when a fallen human threatened by ants is never attacked on-cue, but with much hem-and-hawing around by the ants until the mock-ups can arrive.

The mock-ups are embarrassingly un-antlike; however, once Gordon had committed himself to using them, they are used as effectively as possible, with much motion to detract from the unreality of the physical image, and generally fast cutting which focuses attention on the human figure in the scene rather than the mock-up. A raw deal, of which the best is made.

In the case of the "queen" ants in the "pheromone" scene (I think they were all workers, probably of a couple of different subspecies/species), what you saw

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were half-a-dozen of so ants being fried by the heat from the lights needed for the shot--the hell with pheromones, those babies are cooking! I await the protest of the SPCA.

Otherwise, the technical credits are okay. The surviving party (Lansing, Scott, Shoop, and Carson?) fare best of the actors, along with the local sheriff (Albert Salmi). I saved the music for last again, because this time it's Dana Kaproff who owes so much to John Williams, since he scored so much of it for Jaws (it's less derivative than Futureworld, though).

In sum: For scientific illiterates so far as the story goes; of moderate interest to FX enthusiasts. Otherwise, go see The Apartment or She Wore a Yellow Ribbon. Rating: \$1.25.

P.S.: Locally, the TIMES commented: "Grueling scenes of humans mauled by ants". The scenes are not grueling, grotesque, or even gauche except to the four-year-old mind.

(3) The Island of Dr. Moreau is, unfortunately, the high-water mark of the weekend. At least the production values are classy and the Wells original is not too badly revised, though other values derive from The Island of Lost Souls. The story-line is reasonable (Jaws is an example of a class production with a very shaky story-line; Star Wars is too, though to a lesser extent in regard to the story.)

The vivisectionist/anti-vivisectionist aspect that inspired the original story is naturally lost in this country, so we are largely left with matinee entertainment. Shipwrecked Michael York lands on an island where the infamous vivisectionist Moreau (Burt Lancaster) carries on his work of trying to convert beasts into men, only to submit York to the same experiments. I believe the good Dr. said, "the beast will out", but he should've if he didn't, since York returns to form to vindicate Moreau's theory. He deserved the posthumous satisfaction of seeing that he could no more make York a beast than he could successfully make the beasts men.

The pacing is nice, the editing is nice, the photography is nice, the acting is nice...were it not for the Wells origin, would I remember the movie at all? Lancaster is a good Moreau, if not so far gone as Laughton. Otherwise, I wonder if I would not like this movie better had it not the misfortune to be released the same year as Star Wars?

Rating: \$2.25-\$2.50.

(4) This brings us, inclosing that weekend, to Tentacles.

John Huston's shirt is white, his hair is silvered, and his skin is flesh-toned. I wanted to tell you the true colors, because you sure as hell won't get them from this film.

It's best described as a slum re-make of It Came From Beneath the Sea (don't they show that film in Italy?). The plot is a laugh-a-minute affair which, for all the marine shots, doesn't hold water and fails to find any central foci beyond the obvious one of "get the monster!". It is regrettable that such actors as John Huston, Shelly Winters, Henry Fonda, Claude Akins, and Bo Hopkins have to make their SF debut with this sort of dreck, but I guess it paid their bills; Hopkins is the only one with any appreciable screen-time, anyway.

Initially, Huston appears the focus as a reporter investigating some mysterious disappearances seemingly related to the laying of some subsurface radio cables.

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SF & FANTASY ON THE SCREEN (Continued) --

The unlawfully high frequency of transmission over these cables has attracted a giant octopus, which thereafter homes in on any radio frequency the writer finds convenient. Things culminate in an "attack" on a Youth Regatta which is so dreadfully executed that it isn't even laughable; though the octopus overturns every sailboat, it takes only one child (in a scene you already saw in Jaws). The creature seems to have a modest appetite....

Meanwhile, Huston has persuaded Bo Hopkins to come down to investigate and, in an underwater sequence, we see the finest conception in the whole film: a fish graveyard, with dozens of fish standing vertically, heads down toward the sand. "Why are they doing that?" my friend whispered. "Because they're tied down", I replied, declining to answer the unanswerable. There are also some good moments in the scenes where Hopkins' wife is killed, these being the only instances in the film where the monster and victim come together in a single frame. By the time the hand-puppet killer whales tear up the octopus, you're just glad it's over.

The biggest problem here is that (1) the script is not only inept--it insists on being inane; (2) the threat is never real, save for the sequence outlined above--the appearance of the octopus' eyes approaching the boy like some crocodile is ridiculous; (3) the color printing dates from 1865 or earlier; (4) it cost me three dollars; and (5) all of the above.

The muzak, incidentally, was of occasional interest, but very self-serving rather than complementing the film. Well, if the composer didn't give a damn about the film, maybe he had the right idea....

In sum: Catch the rerun of It Came From Beneath the Sea. This might play well about 4 a.m. at a con with the sound turned off and a good crew of ad-libbers supplying the dialogue. Rating: 25¢.

The Clipjoint: Review Extracts (from the Press).

Futureworld -- Gary Arnold (WASH. POST 26/7/76): "... a presentable but unimaginative sequel /to Westworld/, which suffers from the lack of a clever idea or two. . . Unlike Westworld, there's nothing shrewd or compelling behind the events in Futureworld, where the big mystery is just an old wheeze. . . The filmmakers . . . haven't done much to make either the unfolding or resolution of the mystery an exciting experience. As envisioned here, mortal combat with your own clone is more of a joke than a nightmare. . ."; Donia Mills (WASH. STAR 27/7/76): "... a science fiction flick designed to wow little kids, medium-sized kids, and big kids who aren't terribly particular about their science fiction. The movie uses billions of dollars worth of spectacular space hardware and special visual effects . . . to prop up about 35 cents' worth of plot. . ."; Penelope Gilliatt (NEW YORKER 30/8/76; don't know who sent this in (no name on it...)); more of a discussion than a review, this dwells on the future as seen thru the film, and concludes: "Futureworld is part of a cult of anti-intellectual right-wingery, nourishing chauvinism, veiling truths in jargon, and obscuring the real troubles ahead of us with infant legerdemain.").

The Island of Dr. Moreau -- Gary Arnold (WASH. POST 18/7/77): "... a undistinguished new movie version of the venerable H.G. Wells thriller. . . I can't recall the last horror picture which placed so much naive emphasis on performers in monster masks baring false fangs and crying, 'Grrrrr!'. . ."; Tom Dowling (STAR 19/7/77): "... for me at least the sleeper of the summer season, a movie from which I expected nothing, but a movie from which, on balance, I received a pleasantly well-made evening's entertainment. . . a handsomely-mounted production, adequately acted, scripted and directed. Above all, it's a movie that allows one to sense the protean imagina-

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SF & FANTASY ON THE SCREEN (Continued) --

tion of H.G. Wells once again. . . As story, science, vision, art and journalism, Dr. Moreau holds up pretty well, and aside from a mystifying failure of maneuver and intelligence in the end, so does the movie."

Nothing in our clipping files on Joyride, Empire of the Ants or Tentacles, so we'll fill the rest of this section with some of the older clippings in our files.

A Boy and His Dog -- Gary Arnold (WASH. POST 11/7/75): ". . . shoddy, puerile science-fiction parable. . . About 75 percent of the action takes place in near or semi-darkness. . . The material seems hopelessly shallow. . . I'm not sure if director L.Q. Jones has been betrayed by inadequate lighting or processing, but he's ended up with a film about predators that only nocturnal predators may be able to see. . . /the film/ mistakes juvenile facetiousness for wit and glorifies a juvenile concept of freedom. . ."; Mike Baron (BOSTON PHOENIX 21/10/75; sent in by David McGirr): ". . . the very essence of movies as escapism, and still very good science fiction. . . This is a funny story. . . The acting is all first-rate and the sets are most believable. This is a seamless picture."; Donia Mills (WASH. STAR 11/7/75): ". . . super-sardonic but badly underdeveloped adaptation of a Harlan Ellison story. . . The movie merely plays around at being bizarre, littered with concepts and systems half-explained or not elaborated on at all. . ."; R.S. (TIME 10/11/75): ". . . In its early going, this inexpensive little picture risks being absurd, yet compels respect for some witty writing and well-paced direction. . . one of the year's better chase adventures."; Stephen Schiff (BOSTON PHOENIX 5/10/76; sent in by McGirr): "A very macabre sci-fi comedy. . . Vividly imagined. . . but rather gaudy, this horrific vision of the future is marred by a gruesome ending played, in some miscalculation, for laughs." ((We note that both Washington reviewers gave heavy emphasis to the poor lighting (we omitted this from the Mills extract), but none of the out-of-town reviews said a word about it--and they all seemed to like it, while the local reviewers detested it. Did the out-of-town theaters get the same version as the one shown locally? --ed.))

Black Moon (French; in color; NEF release & production; written & dir. by Louis Malle, w/collab on script by Ghislain Uhry, Joyce Bunuel; 100 mins; Eng.-French Soundtracks; w/Cathryn Harrison, Therese Giehse, Alexandra Stewart, Joe Dallesandro) -- "Mask." (VARIETY 24/9/75; sent in by McGirr): "a strange tale of a future war between men and women as the background for a poetic fantasy strikingly photographed . . . No explanations are there. A meditation on war and those outside it brought into it, the place of people innature, a youthful psychological fantasy can all be inferred. But it is at first riviting, then goes astray but still leaves an effect long after the pic ends. . ."

Bug -- Tom Shales (WASH. POST 1/8/75): "Bug will not do for cockroaches what Jaws has done for sharks. It won't do much for anybody. . . /it/ may be the yecchiest thriller of the year, but it is hardly the most thrilling. . . reaches its climax midway through the film and then undergoes a metamorphosis from the bizarre to the ridiculous. . . A local film buff summed the picture up perfectly without even seeing it. He said, 'Bug? Ugh!'; Jay Cocks (TIME 15/9/75): "It would not be fair to say that those responsible for Bug are entirely without resource or a sense of novelty, however grotesque. They contrive, for example, to extend the limits of black humor by turning a scene of a woman being burned to death into a laugh sequence. That this is done inadvertently only increases the merriment. . ."; Donia Mills (WASH. STAR 5/8/77): ". . . People only go to movies like this one with one goal in mind: to be scared witless. From this point of view, Bug is a big bust, a picture so silly of premise and feeble of execution that it's bound to disappoint all but the most faint-hearted. . ."

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SF & FANTASY ON THE SCREEN (Continued) --

The Blue Bird -- Barbara Brown (THE BOSTON LEDGER 11/6/76; sent in by McGirr): "at best a children's movie, and an extravagant one at that. . . The Blue Bird fable is no less charming or believable than the Wizard of Oz but this movie sacrifices everything for gloss. Nothing can save it--not the star-studded cast or the lavish production. The script is too sentimental and riddled with cliches. The costumes are overly elaborate and the acting is indifferent. The chemistry is bad. A Russian fairy tale, which has no particular meaning for Americans is being poorly interpreted by an American director and, primarily, American actresses. . ."

The Cat People -- Stephen Schiff (POSTON PHOENIX 5/10/76; sent in by McGirr): "An intensely atmospheric horror film about a woman who believes she is under an ancient curse which will turn her into a panther if she is subjected to emotional strain. This was probably the first monster film which refused to show its monster, relying instead upon mood and suggestion. No longer as shocking as it may have seemed on its release in 1942, the film still builds suspensefully, and its approach will fascinate horror aficionados. . ."

Carrie -- Gary Arnold (WASH. POST 3/11/76): ". . . horror classic guaranteed to leave your nerve ends vibrating far into the night. . . the most astute, skillful and satisfying thriller crafted for the screen since Jaws. . . The technical work is alert, attractive and--when needed--downright scintillating. . . De Palma has really delivered; in the Babe Ruth tradition, he shows you where he's going to hit it and proceeds to hit it way, way out."; Dominique Paul Noth (MILWAUKEE JOURNAL 19/11/76; don't know who sent this in): ". . . a supernatural tale that sounds like the year's most obvious horror ploy and turns out to be among the year's best. . ."; Pauling Kael (NEW YORKER 22/11/76; no name on this one, either....): ". . . a terrifyingly lyrical thriller . . . a satiric homage to exploitation films. . ."; Vincent Canby (WASH. STAR 5/12/76): ". . . a supremely silly movie about nothing at all that's been so cannily and stylishly constructed that to object to it is to risk banishment to whatever passes for Siberia in New York's private screening rooms . . . may be the most boneingly unscary horror film ever made. . . Carrie is the work of a highly intelligent filmmaker fooling around, going nowhere, though with a certain amount of undeniable style that prompts favorable notices. For any one except the film buff, Carrie is a waste of time."

The Crazies -- J.C. (TIME, date unknown): ". . . The plot . . . is a graft off The Andromeda Strain. . . The performances, mostly by amateurs, with a sprinkling of peripheral professionals, suggest that Pittsburgh is no hotbed of undiscovered talent."

Dark Star -- Mike Baron (BOSTON PHOENIX 16/9/75; sent in by McGirr): ". . . a movie about boredom, about four men on the 10th year of a seemingly endless flight through space. . . The routine of life aboard ship, punctuated by tense silences and sudden outbursts of hostility, is presented as if the film were a college revue. The dialogue runs toward cheap laughs. . . Yet this is an endearing film, with many good ideas and some very funny situations. . . Otherwise, Dark Star suffers from a famished budget; many of the shipboard gadgets are recognizable household items. . . The special effects are homemade, and at no point is the audience likely to believe that anyone is in outer space. The ending is completely improbable, even within the context of the story. . ."; Jay Cocks (TIME 5/5/75): ". . . The film tries to be both a satire and a reasonably straightforward fantasy adventure, and does not really succeed at either. The script is too clumsy to be effective at mocking, and the movie's lunges at direct humor--like the dwindling supply of toilet paper--are jejune. Still, everything is done with respect for the science-fiction genre, and the best action scenes are as confoundingly enthralling as sequences in old Satur-

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day serials. The special effects . . . are lovingly rendered and spectacular within the modest means available. . . Dark Star has the clannish, jolly air of a family show even if, like all such undertakings, it needs to have much forgiven in the name of enterprise."

The Devil's Rain -- George McKinnon (BOSTON EVENING GLOBE 4/9/75; sent in by McGirr): ". . . the infernal details from works of the 15th Century master Hieronymus Bosch are the best things in The Devil's Rain . . . Once past the intriguing titles and into the action, the movie plummets towards the abyss until at the end the entire cast, literally, melts away like guttering tapers in wax-splattered Chianti flasks. . . The cuts and editing are so abrupt and amateurish that it is devilishly difficult to follow. . ."; Mike Baron (BOSTON PHOENIX 9/9/57; sent in by McGirr): ". . . The screenplay is too sketchy to permit proper story development. There is almost nothing of the everyday in this film, nothing commonplace with which the audience can identify, and therefore little basis for terror. . . The Devil's Rain relies on that oldest of guaranteed shudders, the hideous distortion of the good old familiar human face. . ."; Ross Jerome (THE REAL PAPER 24/9/75; sent in by McGirr): "Like pornography, the only thing The Devil's Rain has going for it is redeeming social value. Art, it ain't. Yet it almost succeeds in its sole quest to entertain. . . the true stars of this harmless vehicle are the effects, which are definitely special. . ."

Donkeyskin -- Donia Mills (WASH. STAR 16/8/75): "Bonafide fairy tales on film are such a rarity that moviegoers with a fondness for picturesque fluff should make it a point to see Donkeyskin, a charming 1970 fantasy by French director Jacques Demy . . . The story . . . is all about a beautiful princess (Catherine Deneuve) who flees the kingdom disguised in a donkeyskin because her newly widowed father (Jean Marais) wants to marry her and begat that male heir his cabinet advisors are clamoring for. . . While Donkeyskin is primarily designed as adult entertainment, its natural audience would seem to be children--the lower age limit defined as anybody old enough to read subtitles. . ."

Death Race 2000 -- Tom Shales (WASH. POST 11/7/75): ". . . one of the zippier little B pictures of the year . . . puts two current A pictures to shame. As a vision of the brutal future, it has a much keener edge than the ponderous Rollerball, and as the account of a ridiculous cross-country race, it leaves Bite the Bullet biting the dust. In addition, one is spared almost all pretensions of intellectuality. Death Race 2000 is the ruthless exploitation picture at its most efficient and primal. . . this is not a movie to think about very much. For one thing, it doesn't give you a chance. For another, it is designed primarily as a spectacle of kinetic titillation, and on that level, it's a foregone smash hit. . ."; ? : "Wildly campy satire edges out violence, surprisingly enough, in Roger Corman's low-budget futuristic flick about a cross-country road race in which drivers earn bonus points for bumping off pedestrians. . ."; Donia Mills (WASH. STAR 15/7/75): "The outlandish comic tone of Death Race 2000 . . . may come as a big surprise to audiences who expect it to be the straight blood-and-guts demolition derby it's cracked up to be . . . No silk purse, this one, but a tolerable sow's ear for a rainy day."

Doc Savage -- Gary Arnold (WASH. POST 17/7/75): ". . . has a genuine Saturday matinee kind of appeal. It's producer George Pal's most enjoyable adventure picture since The Time Machine . . . and it should provide family and/or juvenile audiences with a fairly good time. . . It's likable hokum, and a little more care and talent would make it more likable yet."; Donia Mills (WASH. STAR 18/7/75): ". . . I found the picture pretty bland stuff. . . the passage of time has stolen Doc's thunder in a way no mortal enemy ever could. . . dreadfully static direction that tends to

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SF & FANTASY ON THE SCREEN (Continued) --

land with the same klunky emphasis on every scene and utterance. . . Doc Savage isn't a bad picture, it's just poky. . . At best, Doc Savage offers some mild, campy amusement over the characters' square behavior and antiquated values. . .".

Don't Look Now -- Stephen Schiff (BOSTON PHOENIX 5/10/76; sent in by McGirr): "Nicholas Roeg's chiller about a couple staying in Venice, a pair of eerie sisters, and a murderous dwarf is sure to alter your sleep patterns; it's one of the most frightening films ever made. Roeg's dazzling editing, subtly repeated imagery, lightning quick cuts and sudden noises, and his ruddy, sometimes nauseating colors build a portrait of a menacing Venice that lingers. And the film's climax will remain imprinted upon your spinal column long after you leave the theatre. . .".

Embryo -- Don Shirley (WASH. POST 19/7/76): ". . . There are poetic possibilities in Jack W. Thomas' tale, but the script he wrote with Anita Dobhan, and Ralph Nelson's direction, ignore them. The future shock here is all shock, without much of a future. . .".

Escape to Witch Mountain -- Tom Shales (WASH. POST 25/3/75): ". . . gives children plenty of what they want from a movie . . . and that includes, conspicuously, repeated instances of kids making adults look like monkeys. . . definitely above-average Disney lark . . . if not an ideal movie, /the film is/ certainly an ideal outing"; Donia Mills (WASH. STAR 26/3/75): ". . . just another concoction of situation-comedy motifs and gimmicks that have worked before and are certain to work once more. . . Escape is much more silly than spooky. . .".

Förvandlingen (Metamorphosis) -- "Kell." (VARIETY 8/10/75; sent in by McGirr; Swedish; b&w & color; based on Kafka's short story; 88 min.; written & dir. by Ivo Dvorak; w/Peter Schidt, Ernst Gunther, Gunn Waalgren, Per Oscarsson): ". . . has some of the most urgent Kafka trademarks, i.e., lean outline, long shadows, quiet horror. . . but "Metamorphosis" as written by Kafka is the shortest of short stories and the feature film version does not avoid long dry stretches if only for sheer lack of human blood involved. . . What audiences should feel is not the horror of the family finding the monster in the young man's bed, but the horror felt within the beetle-man himself. The beautiful, but drily theoretical film just does not work that way and so gets to be a stylistic camera-dramatic dance around the theme rather than gripping drama. . .".

The Giant Spider Invasion ('75; Cinema Group 75 for TransCentury Pictures; dir. Kevin Brodie, Barbara Robano; story by Richard L. Huff; w/Barbara Hale, Steve Brodie, Leslie Parrish, etc.; 76 min.) -- Tom Shales (WASH. POST 29/11/75): ". . . a movie that requires more than the mere suspension of disbelief. Utter abandonment would be better. The giant spider of the title turns out to look exactly like a motorized parade float gone amok in the countryside. Made cheaply in Wisconsin and featuring lots of small, furry spiders who obviously mean no one any harm, Invasion blemishes its credentials as kiddie fare with a coven of characters given to gratuitous profanities and puerile expressions of lust for one another. It's ready-made for smallfry wisecracks . . . but the film reflects the low level to which children's movie junk has sunk."; Tom Milne (BFI MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN 3/77; sent in by Martin Morse Wooster): ". . . /The giant spider/ looks like something left over from a joke shop sale. More mileage was obviously to be had out of the real spiders, but apart from one genuinely edgy scene . . . the film chooses to bank on its risibly unconvincing monster. Getting somewhat bogged down in their attempts to provide a scientific explanation, Steve Brodie and Barbara Hale . . . opt for apocalypse now--echoed off and on by a tiresomely verbose hellfire preacher who happens to be conveniently at hand . . . Meanwhile the cast, plodding through 'psychological' subplots of supreme banality, all respond with stilted embarrassment.".

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS

1. The Two Hats of Karl Wagner, by Jim Goldfrank.

Karl has lifted himself into the category of prestigious publisher with but two books from his publishing house: Carcosa. Those books were Wellman's Worse Things Waiting and Price's Far Lands, Other Days. For the price, these books are of phenomenal size, with good illustration, good paper, and binding. It is hard to see how they could be published at a profit, considering what bargains they are. A volume of weird horror, Murgunstrumm and Others by Hugh B. Cave, is forthcoming at \$15.

Karl is also a swords-and-sorcery author, with at least one Robert Howard pastiche and three completely original books about his anti-hero, Kane. With a receipt for a copy of Murgunstrumm and Others came a note from Karl with thanks for my support of the good-beyond-words Worse Things Waiting, and saying: "I believe Jim (Ellis) also mentioned that you were not pleased with my Kane novels. I hope the present one Dark Crusade is more to your liking." What response can you make to a Nice Guy and Prestigious Publisher like that but to go out and buy a copy, and see if the new opus is more to your liking?

Dark Crusade, by Karl Edward Wagner (Warner Books, '76; 222 pp.; \$1.95).

Early in the history of his own world, Kane the "Mystic Swordsman" was cursed to immortality by a mad god, for fratricide. Three books portray him as torn between a death wish and centuries-old ennui, and an overwhelming instinct for survival. In Death Angel's Shadow (three short stories), he had crossed half the world, after a run-in with Sataki priests, to confront a werewolf, be hunted by religious fanatics, and escape the sexual overtures of a vampiress.

In Bloodstone he allied himself with an alien entity, each using the other to conquer the world. He destroyed it, but lost his bid for conquest at the same time. In Dark Crusade, Orted the outlaw is possessed by a fraction of the being known as Sataki. Orted raises mobs, and again the motif is world conquest. However, mobs don't win battles against organized armies. Orted and Kane use each other as did Bloodstone and Kane. Kane forges an army, "The Sword of Sataki", but the conquest is to be his, not Orted's. After a falling-out, Kane destroys Orted and Sataki and again loses his chance for conquest. Kane escapes Jarvo, a vengeful enemy, by entering the multidimensional lair of Yslsl to conquer, and exit where Death Angel's Shadow began.

Wagner's writing is gory and violent to the extreme. It is powerfully descriptive and moving. Wagner appeals to all the reader's senses. His descriptions of armed combat are particularly good. Dark Crusade gets a strong recommend to lovers of combat fantasy, despite its weakness....

And what is that? Kane is an anti-hero in a world dominated by lust: lust to kill, lust for power, lust for revenge, sexual lust. With one possible exception, no one in this entire world seems to possess a single redeeming virtue. (The exception is a young lady who wishes to keep the head she has been using as a kick-ball--it had belonged to her mother.)

Just like a horse opera, heroic fantasy needs Good Guys and Bad Guys. It needs a contrast between good and evil. It needs characters for which the reader can feel some empathy. These are not present in Dark Crusade, only the awesome quality of the writing.

(Over)

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

If Kane represents Karl Edward Wagner, then Karl may be limited to writing stories about himself. Or he may be able to continue the marked improvement his work showed from Bloodstone to Dark Crusade. He may be able to balance the world view, thus remedying the weakness of the Kane novels.

Give Dark Crusade a try for something new and powerful in the way of swords-and-sorcery. And then hope that Karl's far-from-inconsequential talents will next turn to heroic fantasy.

Addendum to the above: A copy of the preceding review was sent to Karl. He sent the following letter explaining the philosophy behind the Kane books:

Dear Jim,

25 May 1977

: Thanks for the xerox of your article, which reminded me that I still owed you a letter. Afraid my correspondence is rather slow. Between my own writing projects and Carcosa (in theory, a hobby), I'm forced to squeeze in friendly letters at odd moments.

Well, just a few quick comments, since you were nice enough to show me your fanzine piece.

First, a point of correction. There have been four Kane books published to date, not three. You understandably overlooked the first Kane novel, Darkness Weaves (Powell Publications: 1970). A fifth Kane book, a collection entitled Night Winds, was completed a few years back. Both Night Winds and Darkness Weaves are forthcoming from Warner Books and my British publisher, Coronet Books. A sixth Kane book, In the Wake of the Night, has been purchased by Warner, although I have not yet completed it.

As for the rest--well, I'm afraid that's a matter of taste and philosophy, and there's not much to be done there. You see, what you assume is a shortcoming is a deliberate approach. To my mind, the great failing of most heroic fantasy is that it is treated in terms of Good Guys and Bad Guys, Good vs. Evil. To me this is as corny and unrealistic as the old B-movie matinee westerns. There are no good guys or bad guys in life, no more than there are absolutes of good and evil. Kane is a reflection of reality in this regard.

Who are the good guys and the bad guys in Northern Ireland? In Viet Nam? Both sides are convinced that their cause is Right. For the child blown apart on his way to school, for the peasant whose village is bombed and strafed--the justice of the cause that has just murdered him is of no more consequence than whether his slayers preferred dogs to cats. The concepts of good and evil are totally relative. Dark Crusade is a study of the horror that results when one force seeks to impose its concepts upon others. The Wars of Religion (the Dark Crusade was suggested by this period in European history) were responsible for the most hideous atrocities--all performed for the purest and highest motives (ostensibly).

Well, not to argue over philosophical points. Just that I don't consider epic fantasy to be limited to light-hearted escapist fare. With Kane I'm deliberately proposing alternative concepts. If this

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approach is not to a reader's tastes, there are numerous "traditional" fantasy books he may read instead. I can't bear to read Thomas Burnett Swann or Tolkien. I don't argue the point. They are excellent writers. My tastes run to other writers; I read them instead. But thank you for your comments--and for the praise for Carcosa. I'm afraid Murgunstrumm is as grisly as Kane ever dared to be--but there are some heroes.

P.S. A minor point of information: Kane is the Biblical Cain--interpreted as a Promethian figure. Strictly speaking, he is a hero-villain (in the sense of the 18th-early 19th century Gothic novel) as opposed to an anti-hero.

Sincerely, Karl

The above letter was too well thought-out and informative to leave unshared with a wider audience. I asked for permission to print it and at the same time iterated both my praise and my basic disagreement. Karl's writing is powerful and moving. But as in the Kane books, (1) Unrelieved evil makes unrelieved tedium; it is the contrast that produces interest. (2) The reader reads heroic adventure for escape, and needs a character with some redeeming virtue with whom to empathize and join in the world of the author's creation. There ensued the following brief exchange of letters:

Dear Jim,

14 July 1977

Just back from Londonnd found your letter. Sure, go ahead and run my letter with your article if you wish. The British edition of Bloodstone is on the stands now, with Darkness Weaves to follow in February. Don't know when the Warner edition will be out, but you'll be able to read more of Kane sooner if you care to. Frankly, I'd suggest you read my non-series fantasy and avoid the problem with Kane. It is amusing to read a review in which the reviewer has so utterly missed the point as to proclaim a book's strong points to be failings, or to describe a carefully developed point or technique as "carelessness" on the author's part (A review in DELAP'S comes to mind). "There is no critic of your professional like your amateur."

Sincerely, Karl

Dear Karl,

24 July 1977

Many thanks for your postcard and your permission to print your letter.... While I may be a very amateur reviewer, I think that 30-plus years of reading the stuff gives me some basis for comparison and judgment. I really hope, however that I am out of step with your public, and that you sell a million of them! I look forward to reading your further work both as author and as publisher.

Wishing you the very best, Jim

I think Karl's writing was never in doubt. The reader owes it to himself to read Karl's works and form judgments about the philosophy embodied therein, and how that philosophy emerges as world-construction and characterization.

His publishing ventures, "in theory a hobby", are definitely value for money and deserve support by weird/horror/fantasy lovers. Live long and prosper, Karl!

IEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --2. The Last Parade: The Science Fiction Book Club/Ballantine "Best of" Series for 1977, by Martin Morse Wooster. (Part 1 of 2)

This is my third year of reviewing the SFEC "Best of" series for THE SF&F JOURNAL. I chose the SFEC-Ballantine "best of" series because I felt (and feel) that this series tries to be more representative than the other series--the Sphere Books editions edited by Angus Wells are designed for the collector and antiquarian (he rarely selects a story printed later than 1955), while Pocket Books prints the old, reliable warhorses, reprinting the tried and true. (I have, though, reviewed two of the Pocket Book editions here--the Damon Knight collection because it was selected by the SFEC [in TSJ #89], and the Poul Anderson collection because Anderson is a Favorite Author [later this issue].) Ballantine was the first publisher to enter the "best of" market (with The Best of Stanley G. Weinbaum back in August 1974), and tries to alternate between living and dead authors.

There are, though, requirements for having your stories collected in a "best of" volume. The most obvious requirement is that you must have had published a sizeable number of stories. A secondary requirement is that of age--from the authors reprinted, it seems that one must be fifty years old (more or less) to have one's work collected by Ballantine; Pocket Books lowers this to forty years, unless you are a hyper-prolific author such as Barry Malzberg.

The "best of" series have other purposes than those of making money for the author, the author's estate, and the publisher. There are too many writers of science fiction, inactive or dead, who have, somehow, receded in stature because their works have been passed over by anthologists and editors. "Best of" series help an author to regain his or her place of honor; to rejoin the parade of science fiction and enjoy the day of triumph; to postpone that ever-closer day when the last parade will pass them by.

a. Between Two Worlds: The Fiction of Fredric Brown.

The Best of Fredric Brown, ed. & with an Introduction by Robert Bloch (Double-day/Science Fiction Book Club, (c) 1976; hc; 280 pp.; \$2.49; dj by Richard V. Corben; Ballantine pb, '77; \$1.95; xvi / 315 pp.; cover by Van Dongen).

There are a great many fans and readers of science fiction who enjoy mysteries, and are even active in mystery fandom. Your editor publishes mystery as well as science fiction fanzines, and I read (and review) science fiction and mysteries in the ratio of three to two, to give but two examples. But how many writers achieved renown and popularity in both the SF and mystery worlds? I don't mean someone like Harlan Ellison, who may have written tales of suspense by the score, but made his reputation as a writer of fantastic tales; nor do I mean someone such as Louis Trimble, who wrote Ace Double SF, Ace Double mysteries, and Ace Double Westerns. When one eliminates the marginal cases, there remain two, and possibly three, authors who have written memorable SF as well as memorable mysteries. The first was Anthony Boucher; the second Fredric Brown; and the third is the editor of this book, Robert Bloch, if one allows for the fact that Bloch is primarily a supernatural writer who drifts into SF on one side, and suspense on the other, but who really writes in the vast, grey area between the two worlds.

Fredric Brown was born in 1907, and died in 1973. He began his writing career in the early Forties, while a proofreader for the MILWAUKEE JOURNAL. He

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

wrote, as these stories show, for all sorts of pulps: ASTOUNDING, WEIRD TALES, CAPTAIN FUTURE, not to mention the mystery pulps. He made his reputation around 1947-1948, with his Edgar-winning The Fabulous Clipjoint, the sequel Dead Ringer, and such well-received SF as What Mad Universe. In the Fifties, he moved to California, where he became one of Bloch's closest friends. In the Sixties, he wrote for the high-paying men's magazines; experimented with shorter forms; and ended his writing career in the mid-Sixties. Bloch's introduction, "A Brown Study", recounts all this, explaining Brown's method of writing (he would go on long bus trips, as the monotony aided his thinking), recommending his best works, and eulogizing a fellow writer--and a friend. Then we have 29 stories:

(1) "Arena" (ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION 6/44): Bob Carson was a scout in the forces of Earth, fighting the Outsiders in a long and devastating galactic war. That is, he was a scout--until he finds himself on an unknown planet, struggling against an Outsider in a battle that would determine the fates of two empires! This tough, exciting tale made both the Science Fiction Hall of Fame and, for those who worry about such things, Star Trek.

(2) "Imagine" (F&SF 5/55): It's easy to imagine monsters and spaceships--but imagination has its limits....

(3) "It Couldn't Happen" (PLAYBOY 10/63): Every time Lorenz Kane shot someone, the body vanished--so why didn't Queenie Quinn disappear like the others?

(4) "Recessional" (DUDE 3/60): The war was over, but the victor's defeat had just begun....

(5) "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" (F&SF 6/65; with Carl Onspaugh): Dooley Hanks, wandering clarinetist, is looking for The Sound, the ideal melody--but why would the perfect note surface in a small German town? This starts out well, and is quite interesting until the last few paragraphs, which are one of the endings you wish SF authors wouldn't write.

(6) "Puppet Show" (PLAYBOY 11/62): The aliens landed in a small border town in Arizona--but they weren't quite what they seemed....

(7) "Nightmare in Yellow" (DUDE 5/61): He wanted to murder his wife--but he shouldn't have chosen his birthday to do it....

(8) "Earthmen Bearing Gifts" (GALAXY 6/60): The last city on Mars, and the first atomic warhead from Earth.

(9) "Jaycee" (F&SF, '55): Twenty years ago there were no Jaycees--but now there are fifty million of them....

(10) "Pi in the Sky" (THRILLING WONDER STORIES W/45): Roger Phlutter, astronomical clerk, discovers one day that the stars are all coming together. The shifts in parallax are incredible--but the advertisers just blither on.... A mildly interesting story, but the characters seem quaint and archaic, and the Point (about the evils of advertising) may have seemed novel in 1945, but is rather ho-hum today.

(11) "Answer" (Angels and Spaceships, '54): The final computer; the story where the phrase "Now there is a God!" originated.

(Over)

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

(12) "The Geezenstacks" (WEIRD TALES 9/43): Aubrey Walters got a new set of dolls for her dollhouse--but did they foretell the future?

(13) "Hall of Mirrors" (GALAXY 12/53): Norman Hastings invented a time machine; could he live forever if the machine could only throw him forward 25 years at a time?

(14) "Knock" (THRILLING WONDER 12/48): What the last man on Earth saw when he answered the knock on his door.

(15) "Rebound" (Nightmares and Geezenstacks, '61): He had the power to cause death by yelling "Drop dead!" at a person--but he shouldn't have gone to Echo Hill....

(16) "Star Mouse" (PLANET STORIES 2/42): Mitkey the mouse is blasted into space--and returns with plans to make mice equal to men in every way.... This warm, touching, and lively story is PLANET STORIES at its best, if you can overcome the hard-to-understand dialect.

(17) "Abominable" (DUDE 3/60): Sir Chauncey Atherton goes to the Himalayas in search of the Abominable Snowman--and the lovely Lola Gabardi, who disappeared in search of the same beast.

(18) "Letter to a Phoenix" (ASF 8/49): He had his periods of sleeping and waking slowed so that he had 30-year naps, and seemed ageless; could he give a message to the civilization of today?

(19) "Not Yet the End" (CAPTAIN FUTURE W/41):-- The aliens had picked two Earthlings for judgment, and had found mankind wanting; but did the aliens pick humans?

(20) "Etaoin Shrdlu" (UNKNOWN 2/42): The Linotype seemed possessed, able to print unheard-of quantities of material--until it became sentient, and threatened to destroy the shop if its demands were not met.... A good, solid, UNKNOWN fantasy, although the ending may seem dumb to some readers.

(21) "Armageddon" (UNKNOWN 8/41): The devil disguised himself as a stage magician--so you shouldn't fool with his tricks....

(22) "Experiment" (GALAXY 2/54, as "Two Timer"): Could the professor destroy the universe merely by inventing a time machine?

(23) "The Short, Happy Lives of Eustace Weaver (I, II, III)" (ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE, '61): "When Eustace Weaver invented his time machine...he knew that he had the world by the tail on a downhill pull, as long as he kept his invention a secret."

(24) "Reconciliation" (Angels and Spaceships, '54): Blinding hate turns to binding love, all in 1½ pages; not SF.

(25) "Nothing Sirius" (CAPTAIN FUTURE Sp/44): The carnival troupers landed on the uninhabited planet to gain a fortune--only the planet was inhabited, by old friends.... A slightly clunky tale of the pulps, but still a great deal of fun.

(26) "Pattern" (Angels and Spaceships, '54): The invaders had landed, in huge clouds; what could be done to stop them?

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

(27) "The Yehudi Principle" (ASF 5/44): "The Yehudi Principle" explains that every odd event was caused by "the little man who wasn't there"--but sometimes he was there....

(28) "Come and Go Mad" (WEIRD TALES 7/49): George Vine--if he is George Vine--is sent to the local mental hospital to interview Dr. Randolph, psychiatrist, for his newspaper. When he arrives he learns that the interview was a trick--he was really sent for confinement, because he had a continuing delusion--if it was a delusion--that he was Napoleon, transported from the Italy of 1796 to the America of 1943. For Vine is part of a cosmic game, a game played by half-remembered ideas, "the brightly shining" and "the red and the black". The best story in the book, an excellent tale of menace and dread, and one of the finest horror stories I've read in the past year.

(29) "The End" (Nightmares and Goozensticks, '61): If time is a field, can it run backward?

Brown was one of the better writers in the field, and much of this work deserves its reprinting. The problem is that there are a great many short-short stories in this book, and this kind of story must, in essence, rely in gimmicks to work. Gimmick stories rarely work. Some of these stories have some of the finest endings I've ever read. Many have some of the worst endings I've ever read. The bad in this book thus cancels out the good; but there is still much in here worth reading. The Best of Fredric Brown, then, isn't one of the better "best of" volumes--the stories should have been longer, and fewer--but it does fall into that broad, but pleasurable, category of "good entertainment".

b. Starships Through the Twilight.

The Best of Edmond Hamilton, ed. and with an Introduction by Leigh Brackett; Afterword by Edmond Hamilton (Doubleday/SFEC, '77; 330 pp.; \$2.49; hb; run-of-the-mill dj by Don Maitz; pb edition by Ballantine, '77; \$1.95; xviii / 381 pp.; cover by Van Dongen).

"And Burnett suddenly knew the answer to his resentful wonder. He's calm because he's doing the job he's paid for. Dan's the pro, not me. All we writers who daydreamed and babbled about space, we were just amateurs, but now the real pros had come, the tanned, placid young men who don't babble about space but who go up and take hold of it....
(From "The Pro")

One of the games science fiction fans like to play is the one about who is the Doan of Science Fiction. For a long time, Murray Leinster--that late, great, Past Master, held the title; he began to publish in 1916, and his last stories saw print around late 1968 or early 1969, ending a writing career of approximately 52 years. Since his death in mid-1975, the title has remained open. Some have given the title to Lester del Rey, perhaps because of the old-fashioned SF and fantasy he and his wife publish at Ballantine; others give it to Jack Williamson, the pulpster-turned-professor, or to Clifford Simak, still a reliable one-a-year man. The title should have gone to Edmond Hamilton.

Hamilton had a writing career of 44 years, from 1926 to 1969. Born in 1904 in Youngstown, Ohio, he entered college at the early age of fourteen. After leaving college (at seventeen), Hamilton "bummed around" for a few years, then began his writing career. His first story was published in WEIRD TALES in 1926 and is included in this book. He was a WEIRD TALES writer for many years, writing

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

tales that expanded the SFnal sense of space and time; Hamilton was one of the first SF writers to discuss intergalactic matters. (These stories were collected by Ace in the mid-Sixties; titles include Outside the Universe, a WT serial from 1929.) Hamilton continued to be moderately prolific (by pulp standards) during the 1930's, selling mostly to WEIRD TALES and WONDER/THRILLING WONDER STORIES; Hamilton sold only five stories to ASTOUNDING, and three of those sales were to Harry Bates. In 1940 he married Leigh Brackett and began to write the CAPTAIN FUTURE series. He entered a new phase in his writing with the novel The City at World's End (1951) and the story "What's It Like Out There?" (1952); his writing was crisper, more hard-boiled and realistic, but still full of that sense-of-wonder. He continued writing until 1968; his last story seems to be "The Horror from the Magellanic", published in the May 1969 AMAZING. Hamilton then retired from writing, although two collections were published: What's It Like Out There? and Other Stories in 1974, and this book. He also edited the forthcoming The Best of Leigh Brackett. Hamilton died on the 28th of February, 1977, full of years and honors. (Hamilton and his wife were Guests-of-Honor at the 1964 Worldcon.)

This collection was edited by Leigh Brackett, Hamilton's wife for about 35 years. Brackett provides an introduction in her usual tough, but romantic, prose; then we have 21 stories:

(1) "The Monster-God of Mamurth" (WEIRD TALES 8/26): A forbidden city in the North African desert, an anonymous hero, a weird monster--and strange dimensional paradoxes....

(2) "The Man Who Evolved" (WONDER STORIES 4/31): Dr. John Pollard could advance man's evolution through cosmic-ray bombardment--but would the changes still make him human? The science is mostly rot, and the dialogue is hyper-corny, but it's at least readable, even entertaining--virtues many of the older stories lack.

(3) "A Conquest of Two Worlds" (WONDER STORIES 2/32): Crane, Halkett, and Burnham joined up on the first expedition to Mars, eager to help out in the conquest of space. But in order to conquer Mars and Jupiter, the Martians and Jovians have to be subdued--and the slaughter may prove too much for some.... This may be a pioneering story about the excesses of imperialism, but the points it makes may seem trivial these days, and the antiquated style makes the story comical and trite.

(4) "The Island of Unreason" (WONDER STORIES 5/33): Can Allen Mann leave the ordered, "reasonable" world and live in a state of nature, where force and strength dominate? This is a standard monster-movie plot, but without the monsters; too clunky to be enjoyable.

(5) "Thundering Worlds" (WEIRD TALES 3/34): When the sun began to die, humanity had to leave the solar system--so the leaders of the planets agreed to make their planets into rockets and look for a better star. But a star may seem like home--until another race wants to fight for it.... Here's an old-timey "sense-of-wonder" story, complete with near-parody names (Hurg of Venus) and cosmic battles; trashy, but still enjoyable, if you can accept the premise that the smaller planets are treated like little children by the leaders of the larger planets.

(6) "The Man Who Returned" (WEIRD TALES 2/35): John Woodford arose from a premature burial--but could he go home again?

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

(7) "The Accursed Galaxy" (ASF 7/35): Reporter Garry Adams was the first to discover "the meteorite"--only it wasn't a meteorite, just an incredible message from the stars.... The notion of an expanding universe must have been a novel idea in 1935, because we have a page of dullish lecture on the concept, but if you skip page 125 /in the SFEC edition/, you might enjoy this one.

(8) "In the World's Dusk" (WEIRD TALES 3/36): He was the last man on Earth--but he could use time travel to bring life out of the past....

(9) "Child of the Winds" (WEIRD TALES 5/36): An immense treasure was hidden in the Place of the Winds in Turkestan--and the winds would blow away any adventurer who would dare try to grab the loot.... Here's a BLUE BOOK-sort of adventure, sketchy in background but filled with fantastic concepts.

(10) "The Seeds from Outside" (WEIRD TALES 3/37): The seeds came from space--and the mature plant-things would destroy anything that prevented their return....

(11) "Fessenden's Worlds" (WEIRD TALES 4/37): That mad scientist Fessenden could create worlds in his basement--but could he control them?

(12) "Easy Money" (THRILLING WONDER STORIES 4/38): Slugger Martin grabbed the chance to make big bucks in a "dumb experiment"--until the matter-transmitter sent him to an alien planet, where rugged individualism was forever questioned....

(13) "He That Hath Wings" (WEIRD TALES 7/38): David Rand was born with a strange genetic defect--or rather, he could, if he could avoid the journalists, the politicians, and the hunters. Here is a story that tries to be touching, and often succeeds.

(14) "Exile" (SUPER SCIENCE STORIES 9/43): The science-fiction writer wrote stories about alien worlds--but which worlds did he consider alien?

(15) "Day of Judgment" (WEIRD TALES 9/46): The time-travellers were transported into the future, where man's best friend has become his worst enemy.

(16) "Alien Earth" (TWS 4/49): Life in the Laotian jungle can be boring--unless you use a drug that will slow down your body cycles enough so that one can learn the rhythm of the man-eating plants.... Draggy at times, this story becomes interesting only when the plants are introduced, as Hamilton seems to be more at home describing aliens than he is describing humans.

(17) "What's It Like Out There?" (TWS 12/52): He had to report the deaths of his fellow soldiers on the Second Mars Expedition--but he could still continue to claim they died for the heroic ideals of mankind--or could he? Here is a minor classic, penetrating and readable in its own right, but with considerable influence on other authors, Gordon Dickson in particular.

(18) "Requiem" (AMAZING 4/62): The earth--the dear, old, earth--was about to fall into the sun--but would a raucous chorus of commentators and hucksters give it a proper funeral? Here is the "New Hamilton", cosmic in its scope, realistic in its details.

(19) "After a Judgment Day" (FANTASTIC 12/63): The plague had wiped out most of Earth's population--could the few colonists on the moon save what was left of civilization?

(Over)

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

(20) "The Pro" (F&SF 10/64): The father was an Old Master of SF, the son was an astronaut--which one was the real pro?

(21) "Castaway" (The Man Who Called Himself Poe, '68): In which Edgar Allan Poe meets a woman who tries to tell him who he really is, using clues from his poetry as illustrations.

Hamilton was one of the leading space-opera writers, and this collection has many examples of this type of work. But there are many other kinds of fiction in here--old-style hard-SF, straight horror, lost-race stories, even a mad-scientist-story or two. All are pulp stories--the early ones are crude, unrefined, and entertaining in a junky way; the last four or five are quite refined, polished, sophisticated pulp. Those who can't stand pulp SF should pass this up. Those who like stories full of uppers, brimming with that old-timey sense of wonder and hopeful about man's future and destiny--look no further. If you can stomach the lectures and slipshod characterization and accept the fact that two-thirds of this book was originally published before 1940, you will enter, to coin a phrase, new worlds of thrills and adventure.

3. DAW and His Readers, by Jim Goldfrank.

Donald A. Wollheim probably publishes more science fiction and fantasy under his DAW mark than any other single publisher today. He seems to try to give the fan value for money: good entertaining reading, and a good page/dollar ratio. Shortly after his house opened, I heard him remark, "I publish basically what I like. If the fans agree with my taste, I'll be successful." In the past four or five years, he has reached and passed his 200th volume, so someone must be agreeing with him.

The DAW Science Fiction Reader, ed. Don Wollheim (DAW, '76; 207 pp.; \$1.50).

This is the 200th volume, and produced in celebration of the success of the series. A good part of this volume is fantasy, which may disappoint those who like their science fiction straight. Maybe the line between science fiction and fantasy has blurred. Perhaps this is a catchall for material that didn't fit elsewhere. For those who are not purists, that fact will be no handicap at all.

(1) "Fur Magic", by Andre Norton: This short novel fills just over half the volume. It is the kind of juvenile that won Norton esteem among adults. It is classifiable as science fiction only because it takes place in another world. Its premise: The psyche of a young man enters a world of Amerind legend where beavers, otters, minks, and eagles are People. Its writing shows knowledge of Indian magic and customs, and the ways of animals. It contains some beautiful nature description.

The young man shares the body of a beaver warrior and participates in critical events of that world. He returns to this world with a new maturity. This is an intensely believable fantasy and a darned good story.

(2) "Warrior", by Gordon Dickson: "It was a form of personal combat," said Ian. "And personal combat is my business." A gripping description of the use of Dorsai personal psychological weapons.

(3) "The Truce", by Tanith Lee: "A short shocker, of a truce between two races. To tell you more might ruin this excellent story for you.

(Cont. next page)

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

(4) "Wizard of Scorpio", by Alan Burt Akers (Kenneth Bulmer, according to Don D'Amassa's reliable sources): "Written especially for this volume", this 23-page story is episodic enough to have been extracted from the beginning of one of the novels of the Dray Prescott saga. It is recommended to those who like the saga.

(5) "The Martian El Dorado of Parker Wintley", by Lin Carter: This would have been a good story if published in one of the minor science fiction magazines of the early 1940's. It illustrates the perils of verbal indirectness. Here it can only be considered a space-filler.

(6) "The Day of the Butterflies", by Marion Z. Bradley: This fantasy shows reality as a point of view. Wouldn't it be nice to forsake a crowded, polluted New York City for a world much like Eden? Nothing special here.

(7) "Captain Fagan Died Alone", by Brian Stableford: Probably a good psychological story for those who like Stableford, but which left I (sic) confused and unsatisfied.

The first three stories make this volume a winner. If you like any of the others, consider it a bonus.

The Year's Best Fantasy Stories: 2, ed. Lin Carter (DAW, '76; 192 pp.; \$1.25):

The George Barr cover showing a warrior and dragon in yellows and greens is a beauty. What goodies lie within?

(1) "The Demoness", by Tanith Lee: Here is the story of a sexual vampire, who is more a force of nature than a reasoning being, but who can suffer. Well done.

(2) "The Night of the Unicorn", by Thomas Burnett Swann: Five pages of enchantment set in modern Yucatan. Its moral is a pagan version of "Blessed are the pure in heart:....".

(3) "Cry Wolf", by Pat McIntosh: This story is far weaker than the first about the warrior maid Thula that appeared in YBFS:1. It shows good writing but is almost entirely lacking in plot.

(4) "Under the Thumbs of the Gods", by Fritz Leiber: An extremely funny Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser story. Forgotten gods tantalize them in their search for love. "They have not even taken our names in vain," said Mog. "...it is time they suffered the divine displeasure!" Sacreligious to the gods of Nehwon; laughable for us.

(5) "The Guardian of the Vault", by Paul Spencer: This story combines the storytelling ability of Clark Ashton Smith with the background of his Poseidonis stories. It is a story he might have written had he chosen to write in straightforward modern language. Very good.

(6) "The Lamp from Atlantis", by L. Sprague de Camp: Sink me if the subject matter is not an outraged Atlantean diety in a contemporary setting. It's a pity that de Camp is semi-retired as a fiction writer.

(7) "Xiuhri", by Gary Myers: Darrell Schweitzer states that Lovecraft did not pastiche Dunsany, but used Dunsanian style to say what he had to say before he developed a style of his own. Myers has written a Dunsanian plot with Lovecraftian subject matter, and said absolutely nothing. Poor.

(Over)

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

(8) "The City in the Jewel", by Lin Carter: A story of the young Thongor. The styles of A. Merritt and Clark Ashton Smith are apparent here. Paul Spencer (see (5), above) shows us that it is possible to use old material and come up with a darned good story. Carter uses old material here and comes up with a dull thud. Carter should exercise as much care in selection of his own material as he does for that of others, or have the good sense as an editor to pass over his own work as an author. (See (10), below, for an exception.)

(9) "In 'Ygiroth", by Walter C. De Bill, Jr.: A par-for-the-course pastiche of the Dunsanian Lovecraft. Good after a fashion, but scarcely inspiring. To see this kind of work as it ought to be, find a copy of Lovecraft's magnificent Dream Quest of Unknown Kadath.

(10) "The Scroll of Morloc", by Clark Ashton Smith: This was written by Carter from Smith's notes. Presented without comment, it would be difficult to tell from one of Smith's own. The style is exact, and is a beautiful example of Smith's deliciously grisly humor.

(11) "Payment in Kind", by C.A. Cador: A well-written opus of a curse that passes from hand to hand. A tale of unloveable gods and equally unloveable worshippers.

(12) "Milord Sir Smith, The English Wizard", by Avram Davidson: A chapter from Davidson's book The Enquiries of Doctor Eszterhazy. While intricate, detailed, and affected in an arty style that is almost too much to bear, this nonetheless manages to be quite humorous as a tale of wizardly and bureaucratic fumbblings.

On balance, which is the way you must take or leave all anthologies, the good stories here outweigh the poor and so-so ones and make the whole anthology worth buying.

4. Blasts from the Past: Supplement, by Martin Morse Wooster.

In TSJ #89, I reviewed the three "best of" books published by the Science Fiction Book Club (in hardcover) and Ballantine or Pocket Books (in paperback). Here are three more "best of" books for 1976. The first is reviewed because Poul Anderson is a Favorite Author of this reviewer; the two Bester books are reviewed because they were published in an omnibus volume by the SFBC.

The Best of Poul Anderson, by Poul Anderson (Pocket Books, '76; pb; \$1.95; 287 pp.; cover by Mara McAfee).

Here is the latest collection by one of the most-loved (and most-published) SF writers. Poul Anderson has been a leading writer of SF since his first story, back in 1947. He is usually classified as an adventure writer, thrown in with Gordon Dickson, Keith Laumer, and Jerry Pournelle, but he has written every kind of SF, from sword-and-sorcery to the dystopian vision. A rationalist and a romantic, a man who can follow up the most fantastic sort of fantasy (A Midsummer Tempest) with the hardest of hard SF (Fire Time)--a writer who was regarded as the right hand of John W. Campbell (both in his writing style and his politics), but who could write The Byworlder and The Winter of the World--this is Poul Anderson, medievalist, astronomer, political speculator, and--above all--master entertainer.

(Cont. next page)

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

This book has an introduction by Barry Malzberg who, as usual, writes a slap-on-the-back introduction, "Recollecting Anderson", which praises Anderson without flattering him. (Malzberg is a better critic than he is a teller of tales; I would be quite interested in a volume of his prefaces and introductions.) Then we have nine stories--four short stories, three novelettes, and two novellas. Each story has an introduction by Anderson, exploring the ideas behind each tale. (I prefer this sort of introduction, by the way--autobiographical introductions can be quite boring, if mishandled.) The stories:

(1) "The Longest Voyage" (ASF, '60): The Company of Merchant Adventurers was heading west--towards riches, fame, and adventure. But one day their ship lands on a familiar island--familiar, that is, to all except the man from the stars. The starman promised wealth and glory if they repaired his ship--but it would mean the sudden (and shocking) transformation of the planet's culture....

(2) "The Barbarian" (F&SF, '56): A parody of the Conan stories, as Cronkheit the Barbarian thuds and blunders his way across the Sarmian Empire.

(3) "The Last of the Deliverers" (F&SF, '58): It was a libertarian/anarchical after-the-collapse-world--but there were still Capitalists and Communists who would try to mold the society in their own image....

(4) "My Object All Sublime" (GALAXY, '61): To make the punishment fit the crime, criminals in the future are sent to inhospitable periods of the past--but if they enjoy the society they've been exiled to, it isn't a punishment--is it?

(5) "Sam Hall" (ASF, '53): It's the near future, in an over-regulated, over-sanitized world, where citizens are controlled "for their own good". Yet there are rebels, undermining the old order and freeing people from suspicion and hatred. One member of the Records Office, Thornberg, decides to join the rebels, so he creates "Sam Hall", a phantom of the computer, who could strike anywhere--even if he didn't exist.... Here is a fine example of the libertarian side of Anderson's writing--fast-paced, moving, and inventive.

(6) "Kyrie" (The Farthest Reaches, '68): A confusing, jerky mélange of religion and adventure, beginning with a convent on the moon and ending with a mystical merging of a spaceship with a black hole.

(7) "The Fatal Fulfillment" (F&SF, '70): Here is a novella written for a Keith Laumer original anthology (Five Fates); Laumer wrote a prologue describing Douglas Bailey's trip to the Euthanasia Center, and Laumer, Anderson, Gordon Dickson, Harlan Ellison, and Frank Herbert wrote novelettes and novellas explaining what happened to Bailey. This story has Bailey emerging in a series of parallel worlds, where one political principle has formed the basis--the sole basis--of that culture. There are "fates", for example, where the supposed need for love forms the sub-structure of a society where psychiatrists control the society and practice "Kraft durch Freude"--Strength Through Joy--with androids that force themselves on "sick" people and try to "cure" them. The various sub-worlds are a bit unbelievable, but that's the point--Anderson wants to show the fallacies of idealists, and does it admirably. This story emphasizes the conservative side of Anderson--he likes libertarians and dislikes fanatics--but it is still fine entertainment, as the preaching doesn't get in the way of the storytelling.

(8) "Hiding Place" (ASF, '61): An adventure of Nicholas van Rijn, Merchant prince and leading member of the Polesotechnic League. In this story, van Rijn is on the run from his enemies, the Adderkops. He finds a spaceship to escape

(Over)

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

in, but the craft is a space zoo run by an alien race--and the aliens have put themselves in the cages with the other animals.... In the introduction to this story, Anderson damns the academics and praises storytelling; he doesn't need to condemn academe, as writing stories like this will redeem any sterile comments the academics have thrown at him.

(9) "The Sky People" (F&SF, '59): Here is a novella which, if not set in the same universe, certainly follows the same pattern as Anderson's recent Winter of the World. It's an after-the-collapse story, with civilization struggling to rebuild. There are conflicts, though--wars between advanced cultures and more primitive societies. Such a war is the centerpiece of this story, as the Sky People, advanced in science, battle the Spanol, advanced in the humanities and other non-scientific areas. Unfortunately, Anderson chose to end his book with a stinker of a story--it reads like a cross between a costume epic and a Victorian boy's book, very slow-paced and even dull in spots.

It's hard to say whether this collection really represents Poul Anderson's best work. What it represents, if anything, is Anderson's best unreprinted work; many of his stories have been anthologized to death. Still, here we have one Hugo-winner ("The Longest Voyage"), one Nebula finalist ("The Fatal Fulfillment"), and seven stories worth reading. Certainly "The Longest Voyage", "The Last of the Deliverers", "Sam Hall", and "The Fatal Fulfillment" rank with Anderson's best; "Hiding Place", "The Barbarian", and "My Object All Sublime" are minor, but good entertainment; only "Kyrie" and "The Sky People" are stinkers.

Although The Best of Poul Anderson is not really representative of Anderson's work (five of the nine stories were published between 1958 and 1961), it's still a good value and good entertainment. Recommended.

Starlight: The Great Short Fiction of Alfred Bester, by Alfred Bester (Doubleday/SFEC, '76; hb; 409 pp.; \$3.98; dj by Jack Worlhisser; pb by Berkley; '77; \$1.95; 452 pp.; cover not credited).

(a) The Light Fantastic (Berkley/Putnam, '76; in SFEC Omnibus, '76; 199 pp. in omnibus; also in Berkley pb omnibus in '77).

Here is the first in the two-volume "Best of Bester" set. Bester has written fairly long and highly entertaining introductions to each story; for "Fondly Fahrenheit", he has provided an afterword. This volume contains seven stories--five shorts, one novelette, and a novella from UNKNOWN; they are:

(1) "5,271,009" (F&SF, '54): When Solon Aquila, the world's most powerful man, finds that Jeffrey Halsyon has been drawing his portrait on dollar bills and calling him the "Faraway Fiend", he decides to do something about it. He manages to blast Halsyon into a series of fantasy worlds--the last man on Earth, the last fertile man, a prisoner bound against hopeless odds.... Here is a story displaying the pyrotechnical style that made Bester famous--witty, flashy, dynamic, moving, and powerful.

(2) "Ms. Found in a Champagne Bottle" (STATUS, '68): Slight piece about machines rising up against their masters and bumping off the Beautiful People, one by one.

(3) "Fondly Fahrenheit" (F&SF, '54): James Vandaleur and his android were partners in crime--he the criminal, the android only crimineous when the thermometer rose above 90° Fahrenheit. But Vandaleur is insane, and may teach the android the ways of wanton, malicious violence....

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

(4) "The Four-Hour Fugue" (ASF, '74): Blaise Skiaki was a perfume scientist--until he blanked out and committed weird and wanton murders.... This story starts out well, but ends inconclusively; it would have worked better as a novelette.

(5) "The Men Who Murdered Mohammed" (F&SF, '58): He invented a time machine to kill his wife--but did he have to murder all his wife's ancestors, too?

(6) "Disappearing Act" (STAR SF, '53): To escape from the over-perfected, over-regulated War For the American Dream, the prisoners escaped into the past--but a past full of anachronisms and contradictions, of mangled history and mangled men.... A highly entertaining historical romp, exposing clichés and stupidities with a deft and merciless hand.

(7) "Hell Is Forever" (UNKNOWN, '42): It's London during the War, and six depraved decadents are searching for new and tantalizing pleasures. A ploy designed to cause the murder of the most repulsive of the six backfires, as the fake spell works and a demon is summoned. The demon offers the remaining five the chance to create and control their own reality--five different realities, separate but equal. And so the five create worlds in their own images--but their images were not what they thought they would be....

Here is a splendid horror tale, rich in ideas and thrills. Bester complains in his introduction that it's too long, and in a sense he's right--it is too disjointed, and the ending seems too contrived. But the unrelenting action and the several neat plot twists carry the story merrily along. If only Bester would renounce his previous anti-fantasy bias and write some more like this one....

This is probably the best collection that I've read so far this year. Bester's comments are witty and entertaining, worthy gifts from a past and present master. Every one of the stories is worth reading--five are first-rate, and the two later works are still better than most of the SF put out this year. Recommended to one and all.

(b) Star Light, Star Bright (Berkley/Putnam, '76; \$7.95; in SFEC omnibus, '76; 204 pp. in omnibus; also in Berkley pb omnibus in '77).

This is the second and concluding volume in the Berkley/Putnam/SFEC "Best of Bester" series. It's the same sort of collection as the first volume: nine stories--eight shorts and a novelette, each with an introduction by Bester, explaining the origins and concepts in each story, along with sundry other things. This book differs from the first in the amount of non-fiction it contains--we have as "extras" an interview with Isaac Asimov and a long autobiographical essay.

(1) "Adam and No Eve" (ASF, '41): Could the Last Man on Earth refertilize the world if he couldn't find the Last Woman to help him?

(2) "Time is the Traitor" (F&SF, '53): John Strapp had the power to make Decisions--to predict and analyze complex patterns so as to be able to choose which path was the right one to take for any company or individual. He earned this power from the shock caused by the death of his girl friend--but if someone makes a simulacrum of the girl friend, will he be able to control Strapp?

(3) "Oddy and Id" (ASF, '50, as "The Devil's Invention"): Odysseus Gaul was fortune-prone, able to use good luck to whatever ends he desired--including conquering the universe.... This is a typical story from the Second Golden Age of SF, back when all the SF writers discovered Freud; it reads well, but is a bit too familiar to be as exciting as it was back then.

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

(4) "Hobson's Choice" (F&SF, '52): The time-travellers escaped into the future--but could they escape from the past?

(5) "Star Light, Star Bright" (F&SF, '53): The child geniuses made amazing discoveries for their own ends--a matter-transmitter for changing spinach into cake, teleportations for someone who is too fat to go to the store, robots to build toys... Another SF mystery, with many interesting ideas even if the plot is a bit familiar.

(6) "They Don't Make Life Like They Used To" (F&SF, '63): There were only two survivors from the war that wiped out America's population, and they were both crazy. She called herself "The Last Man on Earth" and left receipts for everything she took from the deserted stores; he wandered through the ruins, trying to find a TV that could pick up the signal from a TV station run by a (now dead) demented friend... This is a fast-moving and light-hearted story, which presents two characters you're not likely to forget.

(7) "Of Time and Third Avenue" (F&SF, '51): He found a 1990 World Almanac in 1950--could he use the statistics contained therein to make himself a fortune?

(8) "Isaac Asimov" (PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, '73): An interview with the Good Doctor, on the publication of Asimov's Guide to Science.

(9) "The Pi Man" (F&SF, '59; revised for this publication): Peter Marko sensed patterns, ordering and extrapolating them for his own ends--until force or forces unknown began to jam them.... This is the most "Besterish" story in the book, and can be recommended for someone who wants to find out what Bester's style at his most extravagant can be like.

(10) "Something Up There Likes Me" (Astounding, '73): It seemed an ordinary satellite--until the Orbiting Biological Observatory was blasted by electricity, and began to be sapient--and, with the help of other computers, to control the world.... This is the least Besterish story in the book, but a great deal of fun nonetheless.

(11) "My Affair With Science Fiction" (Hell's Cartographers, '75): A short biographical essay, describing Bester's beginnings in SF, his adventures with John W. Campbell, his discovery of English writers, notes on the origins of The Demolished Man and The Stars My Destination, and more. Richly revealing, although I wish Bester had included the epilogue included in Hells Cartographers describing his writing methods and style.

There you have it--the second best anthology I've read this year. (The best? The first volume in this series, The Light Fantastic.) The two-volume omnibus is a Best Buy (especially in paperback), and should provide hours of reading pleasure.

5. Rosny Revisited, by Jim Goldfrank.

Old and new paperback editions give us samples of the work of the French author J.H. Rosny aîné (the elder) (1856-1940). Joseph Henri Honoré Boëx originally collaborated with his brother under the Rosny pen-name, and was referred to as Rosny the elder when he wrote on his own after 1909. He drew on a wide knowledge of science for his non-fiction, and for his science- and other fiction. He was "one of the real pioneers of modern science fiction and particularly of the novel of lost races and primitive men". Biographical material is from the two paperbacks being reviewed.

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Quest of the Dawn Man (original title: The Giant Feline) (Ace, circa 1964; 156 pp.; 40¢; orig. American edition 1924).

This novel, like Ironcastle (see below), is not plot-directed. It depicts Aoun, son of Urus, and his companion Zouhr, last of the Men Without Shoulders, adventuring through the primitive world over a period of time. The novel's chief values are its nature description, and its depiction of primitive man, psychologically developing the characteristics which would one day take the name of civilization. The two meet strange men and beasts, fighting and slaying some, but also teaching humans cooperation instead of battle, and taming some of the beasts. The translated style (British--1924) is somewhat stilted, but the novel is well worth finding a copy of, or picking up if Ace reprints it.

Ironcastle, retold by Philip Jose Farmer (DAW, '76; \$1.25; 175 pp.; originally: The Astonishing Adventure of Hareton Ironcastle; Flammarion, '22).

This translation and retelling by Farmer is stylistically far superior to that of the previous translation, but the story and subject matter leave far more to be desired. Ironcastle, his daughter, nephew, and band of adventurers meet and battle with Earthly forms of plant and animal life that have been subjected to other-worldly influence, in a lost African valley. With no plot to speak of, the novel chronicles their doings over a period of time. The novel fails to achieve the level of excitement for which it aims, and the description of the fantastic nature of the place is neither beautiful nor convincing. Scan a copy for contents and style. Buy it if you like. This one is not an utter clunk, but neither is it very good.

6. Other Reviews.

a. Reviewer, David Bates:

The Official Guide to the Fantastics, by Michael Resnick (House of Collectables, '76; deluxe paperback; \$5.95; 212 illustrated pages).

Some of you already have this, and others have probably read some reviews--both pro and con--in regards to its merits. Well, the House of Collectables is one of those little rip-off presses, in that they publish books on coins, comics, curios, kitchen collectables and such, presenting each as a Bible of facts, with the prices they attach as the gospel. I am always hesitant with a book of this nature. I use the Overstreet Guide, not to pay too much attention to the prices, but because for the size of the book there are few omissions or errors, and each new volume tries to correct prior faults. All I object to is the prices listed, and some dealer with a hoary old fair-condition comic trying to get the top price as listed in the Guide. (I'm sure all of you have had the same experience.) Now we come to the Resnick Guide, and collectors of fantastic pulps will be having the same damn problem; however, this Guide does not have the grace of accuracy or completeness. It may be that this volume was intended as an introduction, but that still doesn't excuse the many omissions and outright errors it contains.

I also disagree with a number of statements it makes. For instance, on page 9 it is stated that AMAZING and FANTASTIC, except for the Burroughs issues, are relatively worthless. First of all, FANTASTIC did not exist at that time, bowing in the Summer of 1952; of course, Resnick should have said FANTASTIC ADVENTURES. The large-size issues bring a fair price, and have you ever tried to buy a cheap copy of the Shaver issues? That all-Shaver issue from Ziff-Davis is usually pretty steep. Resnick has made a serious blunder with Ziff-Davis publications,

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VIENS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

confusing reasonable availability with worthlessness. The actual fact is that Ray Palmer had built up the circulation tremendously. It doesn't matter whether or not you followed his policy, but his magazines sold, and sold well. There are still copies available. Besides the ERB issues and the Shaver issues, most issues with illustrations by J. Allen St. John are good for an extra buck.

On page 12, there is coverage of CAPTAIN FUTURE, and mention that Captain Future later appeared in STARTLING STORIES from 1945-1951, indexed elsewhere. Well, STARTLING STORIES is indexed, but with no mention of which issues are Captain Future issues.

On page 18, there is mention of SHEENA, but no listing of her also appearing in one issue of JUNGLE STORIES. There were four novels, apparently considered for a continuing sister publication to JUNGLE STORIES, but three of them were in the single issue of SHEENA, while the fourth was published as a lead novel in JUNGLE STORIES (while the Ki-Gor novel for that issue was little better than a short story). SHEENA is listed at a high price by Resnick, but the corresponding issue of JUNGLE STORIES, sharing both JUNGLE single characters, has a much lower evaluation. JUNGLE STORIES did last many years, but this one issue has the added fillup of both, and is not nearly as common as corresponding issues from the same year.

On page 19, TERRENCE X. O'LEARY'S WAR BIRDS is listed as being three issues, Vol. 1 No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3. As a continuation of the old air war magazine WAR BIRDS, the correct numbering should be Vol. 30 No. 84, No. 85, and No. 86.

On page 22, on FANTASTIC NOVELS, information under the two illustrations has been switched, and so makes an issue from the early 1940's worth \$3.00, while an issue from the second run is listed at more than three times that sum.

On page 24 Resnick states that WEIRD TALES never ran much science fiction and that THRILL BOOK was a fantasy publication. Again, this is garbage. In the early days WEIRD TALES published more science fiction than THRILL BOOK did fantasy. To put it into better perspective, THRILL BOOK lasted only 20 issues in 1919, and it was never designed as a fantasy publication--only about 50-50 at best, and that was rapidly reduced to almost nil. Some of this may have been the fault of H. Hersey, who sold tons of his own stuff to himself under a bewildering variety of pen-names, and who may not have had the full power of his convictions, if it had been towards a fantasy title. He needed a magazine that would sell, and was trying to reach an audience not yet fully developed. WEIRD TALES was a long-lasting--if always shaky--publication that appeared issue after issue, year after year. It was a total fantasy magazine in the broadest sense of the word, using fantasy, SF, horror, shock, reprinted classics, and stories that fit no definition, making it a truly unique magazine. Hamilton had many SF stories in WEIRD TALES--a whole series and the final Kaldar novels were published therein. I can't picture any deranged nut willing to pay \$1,000 for a copy of Vol. 1 No. 1 of THRILL BOOK, and only \$600 for the first issue of WEIRD TALES. Somebody, somewhere, has his crackers crumbled.

Also from page 24 is a quotation, "And so on to the pulps and digests that pioneered the Science Fiction and Fantasy field, long before the book publishers knew there was a field there at all." (The capitals are mine.) Until Hugo Gernsback there was no term Science Fiction, or actually Scientifiction, but there were a hell of a lot of books out--and major books--prior to the advent of THRILL BOOK, WEIRD TALES, or AMAZING STORIES. The prime set of the Oz books, by L. Frank Baum,

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had been published, as had his The Master Key. The Victor Appleton novels, usually based on SF concepts, were well established by World War I; these were by many authors using the Appleton pen-name, or house name. H. Rider Haggard was well represented in hardcover by 1919; A Plunge Into Space, by Robert Cromie, was printed in various editions from 1890 through 1910; The House on the Borderland, by William Hope Hodgson, was published in 1908, and The Night Land in 1912; Walter De la Mare's The Three Mulla-Mulgars was published before 1910, and by that same date Saki had established himself as England's premier writer of short fantasy; and you can go back to Mary Shelley, the Brontes, James Hogg, etc., but I have made my point. Book publications were from both the unknowns and the famous (e.g., John Jacob Astor's A Journey In Other Worlds), and were with us long before the digests, pulps, dime novels, or penny dreadfuls.

Resnick's magazine list includes AUTHENTIC SCIENCE FICTION (1951-1957), yet he has already stated that all overseas publications are omitted. The title is not even correct, as it started out as SCIENCE FICTION FORTNIGHTLY, became SCIENCE FICTION MONTHLY, and finally became AUTHENTIC with the 13th issue. Perhaps Resnick includes this because of its American sales, but if so, what about URANIA and LONDON MYSTERY, which had general news-stand distribution here in New England and up through Canada? (I mention one foreign-language magazine, and one English magazine, to fit either criterion.)

Page 30 lists values for DIME MYSTERY and mentions that it was combined with 10 STORY MYSTERY; fine, but there is no listing for the 10 STORY title.

Page 35 lists values for GALAXY, but none for its sister publication, GALAXY NOVELS.

Page 39 does not list the scarce pulp MIND MAGIC, or its last two issues as MY SELF; but MIND, INC. is listed.

To skip ahead a bit--on page 70 MARVEL TALES has a price set for the first four issues, which turn up often and are good collectable items, but the 5th issue, published in a different format, is listed as valued the same as the others, though it is quite rare in any condition. UNIQUE is not even listed. Neither is VORTEX of 1947, that odd semi-pro which contained Stan Mullen, among others, in its two-issue spread.

Page 72 lists many one-shots, but not such items as CHALLENGE FROM BEYOND, or Combozines, or the FANTASY REVIEW ANNUALS from the mid 1940's.

On page 131, in regards to Gorgon Press: Moonfoam and Sorceries had several copies alternately bound in some four different bindings. There were only a handful of these various alternate bindings. There was also a portfolio of Roy Hunt's artwork, the plates from Moonfoam, available separately. (Incidentally, under Arkham, neither THE ARKHAM COLLECTOR's 10 issues--most if not all of which are out of print--nor the long-unavailable hard-bound edition of those first 10 issues are listed.) To return to Gorgon Press, the issues that Stan Mullen published of GORGON, and of PRISM, are not listed in any category (these were fanzine classics, containing work by Gordon Kull, David H. Keller and Landall Bartlett, among others).

On page 132, Joseph Payne Brennan's Macabre has also produced a volume in the Lucius Loffing series, Casebook of Lucius Loffing, Macabre/Grant, 1973. Brennan also published many issues of a semi-pro, MACABRE; why no cross-reference?

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

There are several other sections in this Guide, such as the one on paperbacks, but the omissions there would take an article twice as long as this one to cover. I will mention one: Robert A. Heinlein has only one paperback listed--Orphans of the Sky. Now, if Resnick is talking of the Signet edition, that is worth about what he lists, but it is only from 1965. Is this one more error, where Resnick actually means Universe (one-half of Orphans)? If so, he's talking about a Dell 10-Cent Edition, published in 1951, and extremely hard to find in any condition, as it was the only 10-Cent Edition that was science fiction.

This Guide does have pretty illustrations, but I wouldn't want to spend six bucks for a handful of pictures when I can't trust the information in the book. Some of the fault may well lie with the editor, for Resnick's Guide had to be edited by someone, and the parent publisher is not into pulps, or anything except making a buck with volumes such as these, to judge by the other volumes it lists. Okay, you have to make money to survive in the field. Mr. Resnick wrote this for the pay involved, and all authors do, or most do; I can't find fault with that. I can find fault with the slipshod methods used in preparing this book. There is no reason for the glaring omissions and incredible errors, except turning this turkey out overnight to make a buck. If it were by someone outside the field, you could say, "Well, what the hell does he know?" But how can you account for it when it is written by one of the field's own? I find it even harder to excuse the errors when they are covered by standard reference volumes most fan collectors will either own already or will have access to.

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b. Reviewer, Su Bates:

The Maker of Universes, by Philip Jose Farmer (Ace reissue, pb).

As is noted on the cover, The Maker of Universes is the first in Farmer's Tier-World series, first published in 1965 and now (June, 1977) extending through some four additional titles. In all honesty, it is a remarkably bad book; I find it impossible to care for any of Farmer's puppets as they climb, gash and storm their way from the bottom-most Tier-World to the top, à la the Tower of Babel, to beard the villainous Lord in his super-scientific den. There is no sense of inner reality in any of the worlds, and no inner logic to any of the actions. Wolff, the central character of this particular volume, arrives at the lowest world, Okeanos, starts regaining his youth, strength and virility, and--when he thinks he's young enough--starts wandering off on a vendetta against the Lord of this world for no specified reason (possibly a combination of boredom and perfection?). Farmer tries to eke out the plot with a few reasons thrown in as afterthoughts, but it is far too little, too late.

Considering Farmer's general reputation, perhaps I should follow this up by saying that my exasperation is due to my sense of the magnificent concepts he has used without developing, but that is by no means the heart of this matter. The concepts Farmer keeps dragging in by their heels, then abandoning with no regard to reason or plot-line, have already been fully developed, on a magnificently living scale, by C.S. Lewis; to judge specifically from The Maker of Universes, Farmer's Tier-World series is nothing more or less than a pastiche of Lewis' Narnia books, with a touch of Perelandra tossed in for a slightly more adult tone. Of course, Farmer uses his crew of mermaids, fauns, centaurs and etceteras as witness for the book's science-fiction content--all of these creatures are originally humans hijacked off the earth throughout various stages of history to be recreated and recombined into ersatz monsters. There's a harpy named Podarge, for example--half-woman, half-eagle, and all insane--who only lives to destroy the Lord; she liked

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

it better when she was fully human. I find it mildly interesting that of all the hybrids Podarge is the only one who holds a grudge against the Lord about her physical condition. But she has to, you see, first because she's insane, and second because it's important to what passes for the plot.

No, Farmer does not develop the concepts: the alternate-universe, the ports-of-entry, the living mythologies, the juxtaposition of different times, the ziggurat-worlds--all are there and he does not do a damn thing with them! Worse, The Maker of Universes itself, as a book, does not really exist; what is presented reads like a comic-book precis of a first draft. Unassimilated gobbets of general information dangle throughout the book as unconnected paragraphs. Equally bad are the connected paragraphs:

Angrily, the Yidshe said, "I did not say I would quit you! I will not, at least not yet...The Lord is omnipotent, yet his holy horn has been in your hands and those of the gworl, and the Lord has done nothing. Perhaps---"

Wolff replied that he did not have time to wait for him to make up his mind. The horn must be recovered now, while there was the opportunity. And Chryseis must be freed at the first chance...

(pp. 190-191)

This sort of private notation about where a conversation should come in, and the points it should cover, does not belong in a finished work, especially when the technique is used to fill up 256 pages.

If you are looking for a world where it really does seem probable that a whole other universe can be found by opening the right type of doorway, then reread The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe. Or if you want a port-of-entry symbol from one world to another, specifically a mystical silver horn, then reread Prince Caspian. Or if you want a world where mythologies, beauty, humor, love and death all coexist, and are all necessary and real, then reread the rest of the Narnia series, and follow it up with Lewis' interplanetary trilogy and the Screwtape Letters. Farmer's only contribution stands as an attempt to totally negate Lewis' inner universe, and I am not all that eager to speculate over his possible reasons for doing it.

c. Reviewer, W. Ritchie Benedict:

Charisma, by Michael Coney (Pan Books, Ltd., Cavaye Place, London SW10 9PG, UK; '77; 220 pp.; \$1.75; 1st pub. in '75 by Victor Gollancz, Ltd.).

The idea of parallel worlds in science fiction is not a new theme. I can think of half-a-dozen notable examples offhand, the more prominent being Poul Anderson's Midsummer Tempest, John Brunner's Times Without Number, Pavane, The Man In the High Castle, Bring the Jubilee, A More Perfect Union, The Whenabouts of Burr, and so forth. Some theoretical physicists have even suggested, as incredible as it may sound, that there could be an actual basis for such an idea in reality, although it is far from being proven. More of the plots to date have involved whole histories that have gone a different way, but this new novel from Pan is totally unique in that it revolves around ordinary people in a fishing village in Britain. It also combines a number of forms; it is a murder mystery, a love story, a psychological drama, and a science-fiction tale all rolled into one.

(Over)

IEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

The story begins prosaically enough, with John Maine, the manager of a hotel, having problems with his boss. He meets a strange girl named Susanna who is working on a research project involving parallel worlds, run by a scientist with a surly disposition--one Stratton by name. Apparently one can only travel into a parallel world where his counterpart is already dead. When Maine sees that his counterpart in that other world has already died, he becomes concerned not only about his own immediate future, but also with surviving a murder charge in this world when his boss turns up dead. To add to his problems, he must again try to locate Susanna in some other alternate, as she has died not only in the original world but also in the duplicate. Dogging his heels relentlessly in all of the worlds is Detective Bascus, who is determined to put Maine in jail for the murder of his boss, which seems to have happened in all of the alternates. At this point, I will cease to describe what happens, as it would take too long to detail, and would spoil the story. Suffice it to say that poor Maine hardly knows whether he is coming or going, loses two fingertips to the time-field, and is constantly on the run.

I must say that I was extremely impressed by this novel by Michael Coney, as the complexities of the time-travel and/or alternate-world book are difficult to handle for any SF writer, let alone one who is fairly new to the field. I found all of the characters, even those of minor importance, to be solidly three-dimensional in personality, as well as being fourth-dimensional in scope. The author has given a few new wrinkles to the parallel-world idea by having the alternate lines converge, then diverge again. Interestingly, Michael Coney was a hotel manager himself for a time in the West Indies, before taking up residence in British Columbia, where he lives at present. He was born in England, which accounts for the British flavor of the novel. There is a slight but subtle shift in atmosphere from the bucolic calm of the opening pages to high tension at the end. It builds well, in other words. The love scenes are convincing, and not merely thrown in for a two-minute distraction as in some SF books. For some peculiar reason, Detective Bascus kept reminding me of mystery writer John Dickson Carr's Dr. Fell--but only superficially, as he has a distinctive character all his own. It is a good book to give to someone who has never read an alternate-world novel. This type of SF, of course, does not necessarily appeal to everyone, even in the field, but it is an excellent example of the genre. Hopefully, some American publishing house may pick it up, as it would be a contender for a Hugo award, if it were to appear in the United States.

It appears that the only American company that turns out SF paperbacks in as great a number as does Pan in Britain is Del Rey/Ballantine. And, I will say that Pan does appear to turn out more of a higher literary standard than anyone else. It is a shame that many American SF fans are unaware of a number of high-quality SF novels and anthologies which never appear in the U.S.--or even Canada, for that matter.

At any rate, I would give this novel a four-star rating, as a science-fiction fan of long standing.

d. Reviewer, Stan Burns:

The Chalk Giants, by Keith Roberts (Berkley/Putnam, '75; \$6.95).

My acquaintance with Keith Roberts' fiction is very brief. A series of short stories appeared in hardback in 1968 under the title Pavane, and dealt with a strange, wonderful alternate England, contemporary with our own world but still in

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

the age of steam trains--a world where the Spanish Armada won and a Roman Catholic Queen sits on the throne. I loved it, not only for the high quality of the fiction, but with a deep love of shared interest. When I was young, and my family was very poor, my father used to take me down to the station at night to watch the steam locomotives arrive. I was small, and those huge engines would shake the ground with their passage, gushing out steam in deep, indulgent belches that would cause me to hug my father's knees in terror and excitement. Pavane touched some of those remembered feelings. It shared with me some of that lost wonder....

The second time I encountered Roberts was in a novel titled The Inner Wheel. While this series of connected stories was not as effective as Pavane, the first section, dealing with the maturation of a young female telepath, is one of the finest treatments of ESP I have encountered in modern SF.

I was looking forward to his latest novel. I was, to some extent, disappointed. Like his two previous novels, this one is composed of a set of five related stories. At least I assume the first story, "Monkey and Pru and Sal", is connected to the final four. It doesn't share anything but the remotest background with them; the post-holocaust civilization in this book is only fully developed in the other stories. This story is basically a mood piece, and I've read far too many stories like it for it to do anything except fade quickly into oblivion. "The God House" deals with a young girl, coming of age, and dreaming of being accepted into the "God House" as the wife of the fertility God--and her despair and flight when she discovers that the "God" is in reality the High Priest of the fertility cult. The writing is better than average, as is the characterization, but the theme was handled much better in the first section of The Inner Wheel. This story just doesn't contain the power that the other successfully invoked.

"The Beautiful One" tells of the religion this girl creates after returning from her flight. She chooses a handsome young man as her lover--the fertility God incarnate on Earth--to whom the High Priest reacts with jealousy, plotting and bringing about his downfall. Again, the story is well handled, but this time there are enough unique elements added to make it stand out from previous stories. The society isn't as well sketched as it could be, but the characterization, especially the "beautiful one" and how he takes advantage of his position to enhance his own power and prestige, is well done.

"Rand, Rat and the Dancing Man" is the most powerful story in the book. A king of the seafaring people begins a journey of self-imposed exile from his kingdom. Searching for a peaceful solution to disputes with his neighbors, he conceded to their demands. Naturally they took this as a sign of weakness, resulting in their attack on his kingdom, and his feelings of guilt for the massive loss of life in the war that followed. He sets out on a voyage to discover the meaning behind the impact of violence on the shoals of good intentions. The characterization, background detail (specifically the sailing ships--Roberts seems to be at his best describing some mechanical thing that fascinates him), plotting, and overall good writing make this a powerful story of doubt, guilt, and the search for meaning in a world filled with hate and thoughtless violence. Don Keller remarked that he thought this story too short, that it should be enlarged to novel length. I agree. There is enough room to expand this into an excellent novel, in which the characters could be more fully developed from implied sketches into full, finely detailed drawings.

"Usk the Jokeman" tells of the plotting of a court clown, because his ancestors were once rulers of the kingdom he now serves, against the rightful King. This

(Over)

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

leads to the murder of the King's wife and son at the hands of a neighboring kingdom, causing the scholarly King to completely destroy his neighbors. While the theme of this story is as strong as that of the preceding one, the characterization isn't as strongly developed, making the situation, tragic in the story, seem a trifle silly. There isn't quite enough depth to the characters, as they are presented, to make the situation seem completely real,

Roberts is at his best when he engages in the creation of societies unique in modern SF (i.e., Pavane), such as the seafarers depicted in the last two stories in the book. He is less successful when dealing with material that has been worked and overworked previously, as in the village/fertility sections, and the corny final sections of The Inner Wheel. When he works within his own limits, and ignores the conventions of the field, he produces outstanding stories. Watering down "Rand, Rat and . . ." with a happy ending destroys much of the impact the story could produce with a more realistic tragic outcome; causing the female telepath to join minds with her "brothers" in the first section of The Inner Wheel rather than act out the tragic implications of her powers cheats the reader of the rightful insight such events would produce into the essential solitude of the human spirit.

The present novel is at times extremely effective, but at other times it floats self-indulgently becalmed in the waters of hackwork plotting and overworked conventions. It is good, but not great--or at least not up to the standards of excellence that I would expect Roberts to strive for. Recommended.

c. Reviewer, Jim Goldfrank:

Science Fiction of the 30's, ed. Damon Knight (Bobbs-Merrill & SFEC; '75; 464 pp.).

Good characterization, good description, and solid, well-developed concepts will make a 40-year-old story enjoyable to the reader of today. A story that is too topical, or too much tied to the spirit of the times, will only be of historical interest. It ages in a way that a timeless story will not. This collection contains both aged and ageless stories. The aged stories can be recognized by the repetition of similar themes, as the following summaries will show.

(1) "Out Around Rigel", by Robert H. Wilson: An inventor from the once-habitable Moon invents star flight. He and his companion run into time-contraction at light-speed. On the companion's return, the Moon is as we know it today. The idea of the magnificent invention by the single inventor leading to a wonderful adventure is a theme that permeates this anthology. Dealing with cohesive societies seems to have been a thing of the 1940's.

(2) "The Fifth Dimensional Catapult", by Murray Leinster: A magnificent invention hurls a scientist and his daughter into an inimical alternate world. The bright young scientist must improvise the means to rescue them while fending off the old scientist's traitorous assistant and his Chicago gangster master.

(3) "Into the Meteorite Orbit", by Frank T. Kelly: A scientist develops a limitless source of power, and a space ship. A young ne'er-do-well takes it out and must be rescued. (His characters are shallow; his characterization is null; he seems typical of all the other characters in the first five stories in that respect.) All this, while fighting off the power barons who want the power source to retain their grasp on the world. The idea of the ultra-rich and powerful keeping everyone else in subjection and being generally responsible for the lamentable state of things must have been common in the '30's, if these stories are any indication.

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

(4) "The Battery of Hate", by John W. Campbell Jr.: Another cheap power device. The inventor spends most of his time fending off a magnate and his gangster henchmen. With the magnate disposed of, the inventor will slowly and carefully make his power source available to the world so as not to cause further economic upheaval.

(5) "The Wall", by Howard W. Graham, Ph.D.: A sorcerer's apprentice-like scientist's vertical and circular force field divides Manhattan Island at 42nd Street. After much disaster, the field is destroyed. The sorcerer and his apprentice remain undetected in the doing and undoing of the field. A warning against science unleashed.

(6) "The Lost Language", by David H. Keller, M.D.: A fable in which a bright young boy speaks and writes only an archaic tongue and cannot or will not adapt to modern language. He will be cared for by his sister who loves him.

(7) "The Last Men", by Frank Belknap Long, Jr.: Men are nurtured and grown by intelligent insects, who also collect and preserve the better specimens. A young man recaptures the "lost glory of his race" in an act of defiance that leads to his death. A good mood piece.

(8) "The Other", by Howard W. Graham, Ph.D.: A lady, but not Terran-human, is thawed from the block of ice that has imprisoned her since prehistoric times. Her hand-held disintegrator destroys a good part of New York just for starters, and the story makes it clear that she has only begun.

(9) "The Mad Moon", by Stanley G. Weinbaum: The first really good story in the book. The moon of Jupiter, Io, and its flora and fauna spring to 3-D life with some humor. The conventional story of boy-protects-girl-from-great-danger-and-wins-her takes a back seat to "world as hero".

(10) "Davey Jones' Ambassador", by Raymond Z. Gallun: Another winner. A graphic and conceptually brilliant account of "first contact" between a man and intelligent life at the ocean floor.

(11) "Alas, All Thinking", by Harry Bates: A visit to the far future where all but the human brain is vestigial, and that is degenerate. A warning against the importance of intellect to the exclusion of all other mental and physical human qualities.

(12) "The Time Decelerator", by A. Macfayden, Jr.: Another magnificent invention sends a man into the future, to return with proof of his visit.

(13) "The Council of Drones", by W.K. Sonneman: A man has his ego switched with a queen bee and uses his human intelligence to further bee purposes. Informative about bees, but dull, windy, and pedantic.

(14) "Seeker of Tomorrow", by Eric Frank Russell & Leslie T. Johnson: Earth is dead, civilization exists on Venus. A time-traveler from the present is found by a Venusian expedition to Earth. He tells his story, giving tongue-in-cheek views of different epochs in our future. Like: (a) There are no more nations, just the "White" (European) and "Yellow" (Asian) worlds being busy exterminating each other while the insignificant "Brown" (African) world stands by; (b) A Utopian world of moving roads where machines create plenty for all; the people spend their time creating handicrafts for each other's collections. The time-traveller, now on Venus, will continue his search for another time-traveller of his own era with whom he has been leap-frogging in time.

(Over)

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

(15) "Hyperpilosity", by L. Sprague de Camp: Here de Camp logically extrapolates the social consequences of everybody growing thick coats of body hair, and it's all for fun. Great.

(16) "Pitecanthropus Rejectus", by Manly Wade Wellman: The ape Congo is brought to intelligence, speech, and the use of his hands by biological engineering. Neither ape nor man, he knows himself a freak and hates his creator, who thinks only of the profits. Well written.

(17) "The Merman", by L. Sprague de Camp: A minor humorous piece about a man whose lung-adapting gas, accidentally breathed, forces him to live temporarily in a fish tank.

(18) "The Day Is Done", by Lester del Rey: Short, beautifully poignant. The last Neanderthal lives under the patronizing kindness of the Cro Magnon, and the cruelty of the Cro Magnon children. He loses his will to live.

In Science Fiction of the 30's Damon Knight prefaces the beginning, middle, and end of the period with short, informative essays. Each story has one of its original illos, all adequate, none great. Knight states, "many of the forgotten stories of the thirties are neglected gems", but he has come up with a mixed bag. There are ageless gems, true, but the majority of stories in this volume are dated clunkers. This book poses the usual problem of an anthology: Is the reader wise to buy a book that is largely composed of clunkers, for the gems within it?

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f. Reviewers, Jim & Catherine Goldfrank:

The Master Key, by L. Frank Baum (introduction by Donald & Douglas Greene; Hyperion Press, '74; recently re-released by Dover Publications, '77; both pb).

It was with some anticipation that this unabashed "Oz" fan sat down to read The Master Key. He expected to read refreshing humor, combined with insight and inventiveness. He found a mixed bag of the above qualities combined with dated attitudes and pompous ignorance.

The tale is of the boy electrician, Rob Joslyn, who through getting his wires thoroughly crossed, sets up what we might call a resonance that summons the Demon, or guiding spirit of electricity. Three gifts are to be bestowed upon Rob during each of three weeks, so that he may demonstrate the wonders of electricity to his fellows. The first week brings energy pills, equivalent to a day's nourishment (but not as good as Momma's cooking), a levitator good for aerial travel, and an electrical stunner. Rob's first week's adventures bring him into contact with cannibals and pirates. The second week's gifts include a force field which repels objects according to the speed with which they approach him, a pair of spectacles which reveals the character of the person being viewed, and a small TV screen good for looking anywhere in the world (a palantier, yet).

During the evening he found that an "important event" was Madame Bernhardt's production of a new play, and Rob followed it from beginning to end with great enjoyment, although he began to feel a bit guilty at not having purchased a ticket. "But it's a crowded house, anyway," he reflected, "and I'm not taking up a reserved seat or keeping anyone else from seeing the show. So where's the harm? Yet it seems to me that if these Records get to be common, as the Demon wishes, people will all stay at home and see the shows, and the poor actors 'll starve to death."

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

The second week includes a visit to King Eddy VII, a president of France, and an encounter between Turks and Tatars in the mysterious East. Rob declines the third week's gifts and returns the others, saying, "I'm not wise enough. Nor is the majority of mankind wise enough to use such inventions as yours unselfishly for the good of the world."

The humor of Master Key resides in Baum's ability to see things with a fresh, childlike point of view. The inventiveness that went into the conception of the gifts surely qualifies this tale as science fiction. Insight must also receive a high rating; the moral is clear: humanity will damage itself if its technological ability outpaces its social maturity.

Now let us examine what is wrong with The Master Key. Unlike the "Oz" series, it is badly dated. This arises less from the contemporary references, than from the attitudes expressed which have fallen behind the times. Rob's mother knew that "she would be wise to bear her cross with fortitude" on the subject of her boy's electrical experiments. Baum did not know much about the benighted races of the world, and these emerge as caricatures like the cannibal chief: "

"No see white man many times. Come in bigboats. White men. all bad. Make kill with bang-sticks. We kill white man with club. Then we eat white man. Dead white man good. Live white man bad!"

Contrast that with the well-spoken Otter in Haggard's somewhat contemporaneous People of the Mist. Or, "Rob was able to observe closely the country of the Chinese, with its . . . ancient but crude civilization." Crude, I suppose, if one forgets one of the world's great religions, beautiful ceramics, astronomy, and gunpowder....

The Demon, Rob, and Rob's parents turn out to be moralistic and preachy. Rob is a young American WASP gentleman thoroughly conscious of his superiority:

The President of France touched a bell and gave an order to his servant. Then he turned to Rob and said, wonderingly:

"You are a boy!"

"That's true, Mr. President," was the answer; "but an American boy, you must remember. That makes a big difference, I assure you."

The purchaser of this book can look forward to an excellent introduction to Baum and his work, followed by a period piece of interest only as such to today's grownup, but scarcely to today's sophisticated, and less patient, child. (A review by one of today's children who doesn't agree with her father follows.)

Reviewer Profile: A contrasting point of view of The Master Key was written by Catherine Goldfrank, who is almost 12. She picked the book up and reviewed it on her own initiative. She has read and enjoyed Baum's "Oz" books and Lewis' "Narnia" series. Preferring fantasy to science fiction, she has read Morrissey's Star Brat and Nail Down the Stars in the latter genre. She reads voraciously the mainstream literature typical of her age. Besides being a good student, she is an accomplished ballerina, songstress, and chief biscuit-maker for her household.

The Review:

I like this book. But in some places it is rather preachy. In this book there are two main characters. The first character is Rob, a witty boy of about 13 who is rather snotty at times, but a nice kid despite this fact. The second is the Demon of Electricity, who I don't think much of because he is too preachy.

(Over)

VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

The story is about Rob, who loves to fool with electricity. One day he gets his wires mixed up and strikes the Master Key. Then a demon (not in the sense of a demon from hell, but a good demon) appears to do his bidding. The Demon gives Rob six gifts, which he uses to go many places and do many things.

The reason I liked this book is because of the witty ways of Rob, and the funny things that happened.

I would not recommend this book to most kids my age, because I don't think it's their type, but I know some would like it.

g. Reviewer, Den Miller:

Two by Poul Anderson:

Operation Chaos (Doubleday, '71; \$5.95; 232 pp.; parts orig. in F&SF as follows: "Operation Afreet" (9/56), "Operation Salamander" (1/57), "Operation Incubus" (10/59), "Operation Changeling" (5-6/69)).

During World War II, Captain Steven Matuchek is teamed with Captain Virginia Graylock to penetrate the lines of the invading enemy and neutralize their secret weapon. Steve is a werewolf and Ginny a witch; the enemy is the Saracen Caliphate, who have taken over much of Midgard and are slowly being driven back at all points--in this case, in the western U.S.; and the secret weapon is an afreet, who--once loosed from its bottle--is virtually invincible.

When the war is over, the two Captains are demobbed, and eventually end up at the same university--Ginny as an instructor, and Steve to continue his engineering studies. There they save the world from a Salamander (a fire elemental) loosed by a student prankster. Then they marry, and honeymoon on the Sonora coast, where they overcome the sinister incubus which dwells in a nearby deserted castle.

Steve and Ginny have a daughter. On her third birthday, she is left in the care of Ginny's familiar, a black cat named Svartalf, while her parents disperse a mob led by a powerful new religious movement, the Johannine Church, which has been besieging the plant where Steve works. When they return, they find the cat critically wounded and the child gone--an homunculus in its place. A demon has taken the child to Hell, leaving the changeling in its place to satisfy the conservation-of-matter law.

After a visit to the seat of the Johannine movement where Steve learns that the Johnnies draw their power from the Low Continuum, and that it was a curse spoken in anger by a Johannine teller at the factory riot which had brought the demon which took the child, he and Ginny decide to go to Hell to reclaim their daughter. But since the space/time continuum which is Hell is governed by different natural laws, they need help from someone who is expert in non-Euclidean geometry to guide them, so they attempt to enlist the aid of Heaven. In response, Steve is joined (in the same body) by the animus of the long-dead mathematician Nikolai Lobachevsky, and Svartalf is joined by mathematician James Bolyai.

Steve/Nikolai, Ginny, and Svartalf/Bolyai arrive in Hell at a point in space/time before the child's arrival; they travel to the spot where the demon and the child are due to appear, and there do battle with various Hellish forces. They rescue the child, defeat the minions of the Adversary, and return to Midgard.

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

In order to provide a framework in which to place the separate stories which make up this novel, Anderson has Steve attempting a cross-continuum "broadcast" to other times and places, to warn them to be on guard against the Adversary, narrating his and Ginny's adventures to illustrate this warning. (Once during each adventure, Steve comes into contact with the Adversary--who is unable to intervene directly in the various conflicts created by his agents, because to do so would provoke a counter-intervention by his much more powerful opposite number.) This introduces an almost evangelical note into the book which is at odds with the otherwise excellent interplay between the natural and the supernatural.

The book's great strength is in its setting. The story takes place in an alternate world, split off from our own at the beginning of the 20th Century, and governed by the rules of magic. Poul uses these rules so logically, and works them in so casually, that before the reader is very far into the book, Anderson's world is as familiar and believable to the reader as his own. Flying broomsticks instead of cars, mass transportation via flying carpets, Petrological warfare, weather-making Kachinas, self-lighting cigarettes, spells which make dishes wash themselves, battling disease by sticking pins in models of bacteria or by using the Evil Eye on germs through a microscope...elementals, demons, para-normal forces of all kinds...all this and much more becomes as normal to the reader as their counterparts in our own world.

A fascinating and delightful book, and a world I was sorry to leave when the book ended.

Rating -- 2. (Ratings on scale of 1-9, best to worst.)

Tau Zero (Doubleday, '70; short version in GALAXY 6 & 7/67, as "To Outlive Eternity"; 208 pp., dj by Anita Siegel).

In a not-too-distant future, the starship Leonora Christine embarks on an interstellar colonizing flight. Her multinational cargo of 50 are all specialists, carefully chosen to give the new colony maximum chance for survival.

The trip starts smoothly--the starship lifts from her orbit around Earth, propelled by ions produced by her thermonuclear generators. She spirals out of her orbit until she reaches the proper speed, at which time the Bussard unit--the technological marvel which makes interstellar travel practicable--is fit into place, and the star-drive is activated.

Using electromagnetism to direct the hydrogen from surrounding space into its maw, the Bussard engine drives the ship by compressing the hydrogen and propelling it out to the rear, where it burns in a thermonuclear blaze of starlike intensity. With this powerful drive, the ship is able to maintain a continuous acceleration of one gravity--and the faster she goes, the more hydrogen she takes in, and the greater the Bussard reaction. Theoretically, this could go on indefinitely, as long as there is matter left in the universe for the drive to consume....

As acceleration continues, light-speed is approached, and time-dilation increases. The closer the ship's velocity comes to the velocity of light, the closer the ship's tau factor comes to zero. (Tau is simply an expression of the ratio of the ship's velocity to light-speed.) The Leonora Christine's flight plan called for her to reach her ultimate velocity after about a year, to travel across interstellar space for 31 years, and to spend her final year in deceleration. It was estimated that her maximum tau, at the midpoint of her journey, would be about 0.015. And all this time, the gap between elapsed time on board the ship and elapsed time for the rest of the world is increasing....

(Over)

VIENS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

After she has been travelling for about three years, the rest of the universe has aged 10 years. It is at this point in her journey that disaster strikes, as the Leonora Christine strikes a small nebula--and the decelerator portion of the Bussard engine is wrecked. The ship can not slow down--it's crew must choose between immediate death, or going on forever--constantly accelerating, with its mass increasing, its tau decreasing, and the universe around it aging faster and faster....

So begins the second stage of the space voyage of the Leonora Christine--to the end of the universe, and beyond....

This was an intriguing book--the most enjoyable I've read by Anderson to date, and one of the best SF stories I've read in a long time. The characters are not especially noteworthy; it is the powerful concepts, the magnificence of Anderson's vision and the poetry in his writing which carry this novel along. I've read many books which reach beyond the end of the universe, but this is far and away the most plausible--and the most stimulating--of the lot.

Highly recommended.

Rating -- 1.

Two by Clifford D. Simak:

Cemetery World (G.P. Putnam's Sons, '73; orig. serialized in ANALOG, 11/72-1/73; 191 pp.; \$5.95; dj by Vincent Di Fate; later reissued as Berkley pb).

In a far-distant future Earth has been ravaged by war, and reclaimed by Off-world humans as a gigantic burial-ground for those who can afford the cost of shipping the remains of their loved ones back for burial. The Cemetery is being run by a powerful and corrupt corporation, Mother Earth, Inc. There are still scattered groups of humans living in the non-Cemetery portion of the planet, but they are an unorganized, simple, somewhat primitive and sometimes savage people, allowed to remain where they are only because the Cemetery hasn't gotten around to using their parts of the planet yet.

To this Earth of the future come artist Fletcher Carson, his ancient and powerful robot friend Elmer, and their rather stupid "composer" machine Bronco; they hope to create a "composition" about Earth (a "composition" being a total art form that includes music, the written and spoken word, sculpture, painting, and song). Immediately upon his arrival Fletcher gets off on the wrong foot with the Manager of the Cemetery's North American Division, and shortly thereafter his party is joined by Cynthia Lansing, who is seeking a treasure-trove of artifacts from Earth's far-distant past.

The quartet flee into the non-Cemetery portion of the planet, where they go from one crisis to another, before they achieve their ultimate destiny. They are harassed and pursued by the Cemetery, which sets a pack of powerful steel wolves on their trail, and also by a bunch of grave-robbing ghouls. They pick up some allies along the way--the mysterious Census-Taker, a group of Shades for whom one Ramsey O'Gillcuddy is the chief spokesman, a friendly metal wolf, and even a pair of lumbering but powerful War Machines left over from the war 10,000 years ago. And they even do a bit of time-travelling, both back into the past and forward into the future.

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

Simak's novels remind me of Sibelius' symphonies. They are both chock full of engaging concepts, which build up great expectations in the reader/listener, but end in an understated manner which leaves the reader/listener unsatisfied. ("Don't get me wrong--Sibelius is one of my favorite composers, and Simak is among my favorite SF writers; I always look forward to both with eager anticipation, and both are experiences I would not want to miss.) Cemetery World, more than any other Simak book I've read to date, is guilty of this. Right up to the very end all of the loose threads are still hanging--and new ones are still being developed. Then, suddenly, Simak ties everything up in a neat package and drops it into the lap of the reader. The trouble is, he does so so abruptly that the reader is still drifting along on the moods and ideas created by Simak during the course of the novel, and it is not only a bit of a shock for him to realize that the story's ended, but also a disappointment. There were a good many scenes yet unacted, parts of the story yet unfulfilled, which we'll now never get to read (such as the scene in the District Manager's office when our heroes return....). It's almost like Simak suddenly got tired of his novel (or ran out of the allotted space), and decided to end it right where it stood....

Rating -- 3.

A Choice of Gods (Berkley Medallion #03415; \$1.25; 6/77, orig. '72 by Putnam's; 176 pp.; cover not credited).

One day, most of mankind suddenly disappeared from Earth, leaving behind only a few scattered groups of humans (including a small tribe of American Indians) and all of Earth's robots. The few humans (excepting the Indians) adopted as many of the robots as possible, to use as servants, but the vast majority of the robots were left to fend for themselves, without any humans to serve, and, therefore, without a purpose in "life".

As the centuries passed, the Indians, who had rejected the white man's machines entirely and returned to the ways of the ancestors, became more and more as one with the land. Most of the others, without the pressures and barriers of technology and without the worries of impending death and disease (at the time of the disappearance, the survivors had been mysteriously endowed with 3-5,000-year lifespans and exceedingly good health), developed hitherto-unsuspected mental abilities, including the ability to teleport themselves to the stars. The robots who had been left to wander the planet sought their own destinies--some undertook the study of religion in search of the Truth, while most of them became involved in the Project--a mysterious undertaking which was to have profound effects on Earth.

Then, after more than 5,000 years, a star-traveller brought disturbing news--the long-lost people of Earth have rediscovered their home-planet, and are preparing to return--bringing with them their old, technological, profit-oriented cancerous culture of which Earth had so strangely been cleansed millennia before.

Needless to say, the new Earthmen did not welcome the return of the old--only what could a handful of beings in a purely agricultural society do against three planets of beings with a technology sufficiently advanced for them to be able to travel among the stars? And what, if anything, did the mysterious "Principle" found near the center of the galaxy have to do with the disappearance--and return--of Earth's people?

I have yet to read a Simak story I didn't enjoy. He brings a mythic quality to his writing, with a warmth and skill which enable him to render an alien, or a machine, as real and as believable as any of the humans in his novels. In A Choice

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

of Gods he uses extracts from a journal to describe and fill in Earth's history between the time of the disappearance and events of the present day, and this tends to slow down the flow of the novel considerably. However, the depth of his writing--his strong characterizations and his philosophical and psychological insights--as well as his skillful plotting and his interesting and well-developed background--more than compensate for the sluggish pace.

Rating -- 3.

h. Reviewer, Ted Pauls:

Downward to the Earth, by Robert Silverberg (Doubleday; SFBC Edition).

Book reviewers, like people in any field of endeavor whose thing is judgment, like to believe that they are objective commentators. Of course, true and total objectivity is a state impossible of achievement, and reviewers, no less than any other individuals, have their individual complexes of attitudes, prejudices, preconceptions and predilections through which judgment is filtered. Moreover, there is a kind of subjectivity which comes to bear in literary criticism almost universally, and is separate and distinct from the individual biases of each reviewer. It is a sort of relativity principle of judgment: an author's latest work tends to be evaluated very much in the light of his previous books or stories. In a given case, this process may operate either to the great advantage or extreme detriment of the writer. If an author writes a book substantially better than his three previously published novels, it is likely to receive critical raves; while at the same time, a novel of precisely equal "objective" merit by an author who has written better will probably receive unfavorable reviews. This relativity isn't fair--ideally, every book should be judged on its intrinsic merits--but it is a fact of life.

This kind of relativity is clearly the major factor in my considering Robert Silverberg's Downward to the Earth a disappointing novel. Had this exact same book, word for word, appeared under the name of, say, Robert Sheckley or Keith Laumer, I would most probably be raving about it at this moment. It is not in any sense a poor novel; it is, indeed, better than anything thus far written by either Sheckley or Laumer. However, Downward to the Earth was written by Robert Silverberg, and the last three Silverberg novels I read were Nightwings, To Live Again and The Man in the Maze. The novel currently at hand is simply not of the same calibre as those three, and it suffers by the inevitable comparison.

To begin with, Downward to the Earth is something of a gimmick novel, which in itself is surprising for the Silverberg of today; I had supposed him to have permanently moved beyond gimmick stories. Moreover, and more important, the gimmick is fairly obvious. Perhaps this is because of the unfortunate coincidence of this reviewer having read James Tiptree's "Your Haploid Heart", which features essentially the same gimmick, only a few weeks prior to reading the Silverberg novel, but I believe that the gimmick would have been apparent early on even if I hadn't been thus prepared for it. It simply isn't that original. As with allgimmick stories in which the reader guesses the gimmick fairly early, one reads this novel with a growing sense of impatient annoyance that the hero is too stupid to catch on to what is obvious.

Beyond this, there are technical failings in Downward to the Earth. It is an uneven novel, technically, containing some segments in which the writing is taut, polished and controlled to the best dramatic effect, and others where it is simply

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left to drift--I got the impression that Silverberg had simply stopped caring for as much as four or five pages at a time on several occasions. Characterization, always Silverberg's most troublesome area, is not at all impressive here; none of the characters is a truly sharply defined individual.

On the opposite side of the ledger, there is some crisp dialogue, a number of scenes are vividly portrayed and memorable (e.g., Gundersen's discovery of the two parasitized humans in the dilapidated sector station, the nildoror dances, and Gundersen's trek to the mountain), the alien-world background is skillfully created, and the change of tense in Chapter 16 is highly effective. These good points far outweigh the bad.

Downward to the Earth, then, is a good novel, well worth reading, but it falls short of achieving the level of excellence Silverberg has recently established, and I can't avoid the nagging feeling that Bob wrote it rather hurriedly while he had a more important project on his mind.

i. Reviewer, Darrell Schweitzer: (repr. CONCERT, 5/75, w/permission)

Deathbird Stories, by Harlan Ellison (Harper & Row, '75; 334 pp.; \$8.95).

Harlan Ellison has no doubt been called a lot of things in his time, but a successor to H.P. Lovecraft is not one of them. However, I am perfectly serious. There's a first time for everything.

You see, H.P. Lovecraft was the first modern horror-story writer. He realized that the old ghosts and goblins no longer moved people, so he invented a whole new array of macrocosmic unspeakables drawn from contemporary science and a post-Copernican worldview (which has still not filtered down into most of our literature). Lovecraft, so to speak, turned the whole universe into a haunted house. Now Ellison takes this evolution one step further and brings it back to Earth. His basic premise is that as the old gods and demons die through disbelief there must arise a new mythology which better describes the present human condition. Hence there must be a god of smog, a god of the automobile, a god of urban fear, etc. As times change, so do the things that go bump in the night.

The problem with all this is that Ellison's stories do not hang together as a coherent whole the way Lovecraft's did. A mythology should give a complete symbolic picture of the universe, and here we have only bits and snatches. But some of these flare into brilliance. For example, there is "The Whimper of Whipped Dogs", which suggests with scenes of vivid, convincing horror that senseless deaths like the Kitty Genovese murder are a kind of ritual sacrifice to a malign god of the city. And also there's "The Deathbird", a genuine myth, a poetic inversion of Genesis in which the snake is mankind's benefactor, and the end of the world rather than its beginning is depicted. There are several explorations of American obsessions, such as money and gambling in "Pretty Maggie Moneyeyes" (about a haunted slot machine) and the automobile in "Along the Scenic Route", in which future motorists in armored cars shoot it out along the highways. In this last story Ellison tends toward heavyhandedness by naming his duelist William Bonney, which was Billy the Kid's real name.

There are some genuinely bad stories present, too. "At the Mouse Circus" is pseudo-profound, the product of an author occasionally addicted to stylistic tricks and ambiguity for their own sakes, with meaninglessness as the result. And also present is "Bleeding Stones", which is merely an invective against the Jesus Movement. (Religion is one of Ellison's pet hates.) It isn't even a story in the

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

traditional sense, lacking as it does plot and character development. All that happens is gargoyles on a cathedral come alive because of chemicals in the air, and tear a bunch of Jesus People to ribbons. The writing is filled with white-hot Ellison fury, but no insight is provided, no reason given. The piece is like an obscenity. When you call someone a motherfucker you aren't telling anything about him--you're just expressing your feeling towards him. A writer's job is to give more than just feelings. This is certainly the worst thing Ellison has written since his very early days. The very fact that he included it in a book of usually good, occasionally excellent, and unquestionably important stories simply shows that he doesn't know how to edit himself.

Despite such blunders Deathbird Stories is highly recommended.

j. Reviewer, Martin Morse Wooster:

The Year's Best Horror Stories: Series III, ed. Richard Davis (DAW Books 7/75; 173 pp.; \$1.25; cover by Michael Whelan).

"An icebox packed with terror goodies!" exclaims the back cover, whose author should be put in cold storage. We don't have an icebox here, but a book of horror stories. Several things have happened to this series since its last number: Christopher Lee has stopped writing introductions for it; there is no prior English publication (maybe they know something we don't?); and Davis has included five new stories, stating: "... this can only increase the chances for new writers in this genre to appear in print." Let's see how well they do.

(1) "The Whimper of Whipped Dogs", by Harlan Ellison (GALLERY/Bad Moon Rising, '73): The Edgar-winning story about Beth O'Neill, sheltered Bommington graduate, who discovers the truth about life in New York. Essentially moralistic and mystic, the tale is saved by the force of Ellison's writing and the shock of Ellison advocating Social Darwinism.

(2) "The Man in the Underpass", by J. Ramsey Campbell: Memorable heights of fear are reached in this tale about a strange drawing in a London underpass and the things done to children because of it.

(3) "S.F.", by T.E.D. Klein: Here SF stands for selective forgetfulness, as citizens in 2039 use machines to erase portions of their memories to enjoy favorite television programs or books many times. The story is SF, and fairly good as SF, but as a horror tale the "terrifying" ending becomes banal and unsatisfying.

(4) "Uncle Vlad", by Clive Sinclair (TRANSATLANTIC REVIEW, '73): That old Transylvanian family we love so well turns out to have descendants who catch butterflies, eat well, and engage in biting remarks with young women.

(5) "Judas Story", by Brian M. Stableford: Jack Queen King, famous rock star, turns out to possess an audience in more ways than one. Stableford is a good writer, and given time I'm sure he'll write some fine horror tales, because in this one once one figures out what rock group Stableford is writing about, the tale becomes just another cheap gimmick yarn.

(6) "The House of Cthulhu", by Brian Lumley (WHISPERS, '73): Zar-thule the Conqueror and his piratical crew land upon the House of Cthulhu and are summarily blasted by His Loathly Lord, Cthulhu himself, who can't seem to chew with his mouth closed.

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- (7) "Satanesque", by Allan Weiss (FANTASY AND TERROR, '74): Incredibly bad sludge about a hideous statue which comes to life in a small town, with predictable results.
- (8) "Burger Creature", by Steve Chapman (Orbit 12, '72): An excellent tale about a poor little creature, with hamburgers for muscle and ketchup for blood, who only wanted to help out around the fast-food store where he lived.
- (9) "Wake Up Dead", by Tim Stout: Kellin, director of psychiatry at an insane asylum, invents a "dream projector" and tests it out on a mass murderer. It's mad-scientist schlock updated into mad-psychiatrist schlock, with the inevitable results ("Oh, God! You've turned it up to full power!"); fun, but only mildly terrifying.
- (10) "Forget-Me-Not", by Bernard Taylor: Sandra, a New Yorker, rents a room where another mass murderer killed his victims in a spectacularly gory fashion. A good, moving yarn, topped off with the use of wallpaper (or the lack of it) as a device to incite fear.
- (11) "Halloween Story", by Gregor Fitz Gerald (BALTHUS, '73): It turns out the Halloween tricksters decide to treat themselves to the contents of one lady's house--right down to eating the house!
- (12) "Bid, Wide, Wonderful World", by Charles E. Fritch (F&SF, '68): How to create a nightmare and how to end one.
- (13) "The Taste of Your Love", by Eddy C. Bortin (from De Achtjaarlikse God, '71): The best story in the book, about a vampire who makes love by chewing women's necks ...until he meets a woman who needs love more than he.

The stories are mostly unmemorable; if one measures them on an "ice-water index" (Does the story make your blood turn to ice water?), I'd say two made my blood freeze, about three or four acted like air-conditioning, another three or four had no effect, and the rest made the blood boil. If this book is really a "year's best", then horror was in a bad state that year. But a "year's best" anthology should stick to one particular year, instead of roaming around from 1968 to 1975 as this volume does. Lack of prior English publication may have had something to do with it; DAW brought the English volume of 1973, covering the 1972 selections, out in 1974. Davis has thus had to combine 1973 and 1974 in one volume. Another deficiency that Davis should correct is the lack of any reports on horror movies or horror novels of the past year; if Delap can sell his "Year's Best" review to F&SF, maybe he can sell his movie wrapups to Davis? (That is, if he can take another version of Dracula's Castle on Horror Heights....)

Unless you're really a horror junkie, I'd recommend saving your money on this one. But damn it, I want the series to continue, too! Hopefully next year American writers will know that Davis is buying horror stories and he'll get some new and better stuff from both sides of the Atlantic. Oh, yes, and some advice to DAW--throw out that tongue-in-cheek blurb writer who disgraced the covers of this volume. "TERROR TIME is here again"...aaagh!

7. Review Extracts.

Reviewer, Michael Moorcock:

(NEW STATESMAN 15/4/77; sent in by M.M. Worster): Science Fiction at Large, ed. Peter Nicholls (Gollancz, £5.95; subtitled, "A collection of essays by various hands, about the interface between Science Fiction and Reality"; "... I like almost all

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VIEWS, REVIEWS, & ARCHIMEDEAN SPIRALS (Continued) --

the contributors to the book and I feel embarrassed for them; they should have known better than to have taken part in this sorry symposium. The three 'scientists' roped in (the book reprints a series of lectures delivered in 1975 at the ICA) are Edward de Bono, John Taylor and Alvin Toffler, who are all quite as boring and only superficially less confused than the majority of the writers. Ursula K. Le Guin's piece is possibly the most hypocritical, Harry Harrison's the most specific about his own work, Philip K. Dick's the most lunatic, Thomas M. Disch's the most disappointing (since he's by far the best writer represented), Robert Sheckley's is the most bland (although blandness is what links many of them), John Brunner's the most admirable and rational . . . and Alan Garner's the most honest. . . Peter Nicholls is the most confused. . ."; Moorcock's piece is mostly an essay, rather than a review, bemoaning the "tiresome exploitation" by those writers who as "critics, compilers of old magazine covers, lecturers, writers of histories--are all conspiring to encourage the stultification and self-consciousness so many of them already mourn"; he goes on: "It will pass; the sf genre will maintain its adherents, like the mystery, the western and the romance, but it already has little claim to be anything more than routine escapist fiction whose main attraction is in the familiarity of its tropes. The sooner the best writers refuse to identify themselves with the fraternity . . . the sooner they can be treated as individual writers of merit--as such writers used to be treated before what Alan Garner calls the 'shoddy neologism' (sf) was coined for the convenience of timid publishers and overworked literary editors").

Reviewer, J.G. Ballard:

(NEW STATESMAN 15/4/77; sent in by Wooster): Travelling Towards Epsilon: an Anthology of French Science Fiction, ed. Maxim Jakubowski (New English Library, £4.95; ". . . With the possible exception of Japan, nowhere is sf now more popular than in France, and Maxim Jakubowski's anthology of French science fiction is one of the most interesting collections I have read. Free on the one hand from any need to trick out their narratives unnecessarily, thanks to the long French tradition of experimental writing, and on the other from the less happy effects of the polarisation between old and new waves that divided British and American sf ten years ago, the French writers seem refreshingly eclectic. . ."; The Martian Inca, by Ian Watson (Gollancz, £3.95; ". . . the third novel by Ian Watson, . . . the only British sf writer of ideas. . . Like Bernard Wolfe, he writes a heady, zest-filled prose that whips up a froth of speculation about anthropology and linguistics, topology, structuralism and astro-physics--in fact, after reading Watson's novels one has the first dazed impression that there is virtually nothing that they aren't about. The Martian Inca follows Watson's practice of bringing together in a complex metaphor two apparently unrelated ideas. . . /in it/ A huge vision unfolds of the transformation of man and his universe, subsumed within some kind of transcendental geometry. Unremittingly inventive, the novel contains superb descriptive writing within a ceaseless flow of ideas"); Man Plus, by Frederik Pohl (Gollancz, £3.75; ". . . There has always been a strong organic and surrealist element in Pohl's fiction, a sense of reality suddenly skewing sideways into some visceral nightmare, nowhere better shown than in his brilliant new novel Man Plus. An obsession with man/machine runs through much of Pohl's fiction, and this novel is the story of an astronaut modified in every conceivable way to survive in the harsh conditions of the Martian surface. . . What is so compelling and unsettling about Pohl's vision is that he reveals it to us from within the mind of the astronaut, so that we feel these extensions to sight and touch, thought and movement, and the whole deformed and fluctuating world he perceives, are completely normal. . . all the way to the startling denouement, one is carried along by the total rationality of Pohl's narrative. Without doubt, his best novel since The Space Merchants.

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CUTE SMALL FUZZY BIPED...