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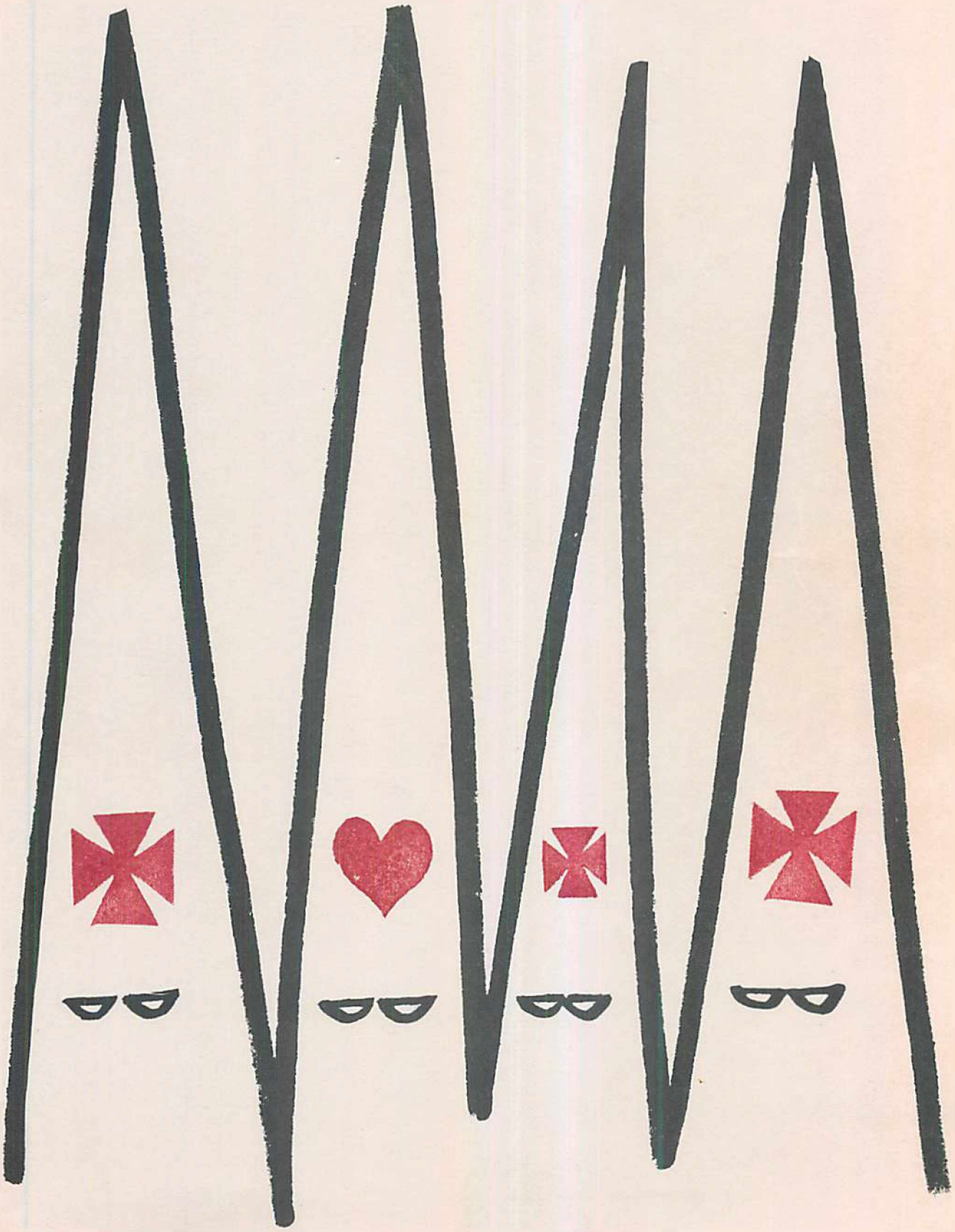

WARHOON

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A murmur of discontent about Wrhn's mailing comment section has reached my ears. The murmur arrived in the form of a letter from FMBusby, whose sword has been crossed a number of times in that department. I can't blame him for being mildly annoyed at the situation created by Wrhn's general circulation; a situation that recurs in every case where an apazine is distributed to even one non-apan. Buz protests:

"...this business of conducting my side of an argument before 35 people while you put your side of it before 200. It is not a tenable position (with you or with anyone else); it's the same deal that caused a number of FAPAns to withhold comment from Gemzine entirely." And goes on to quote a suggestion from his RETRO in the current mailing: "'Matter of fact, why not delete the MCs from the nonSAPS copies? Several fans do this already, going so far in some cases (the dirty dogs) as to run the same general material through several apas, appending the appropriate MCs as needed. So it would be no radical innovation at all.'"

As I've indicated above, the by-stander who over-hears only one side of a discussion is a logical result of exchanges between publications. The mailing list of each editor will contain names that aren't on both. The best that can be hoped for is that anyone interested enough in a discussion will track down the opposing viewpoint or barring so great an interest will be civilized enough to withold judgment if the presentation of one side is incomplete. I trust that anyone who has read material about me in another fanzine hasn't jumped to any conclusion that could only be reached by hearing my side of the matter -- aside from that everyone is entitled to his own opinion on a subject. Anyone who jumps to cnnclusions about someone on the basis of a one-sided presentation is operating outside the bounds of fairness. As an example of civilized conduct in this context I would cite Bob Coulson's refusal to comment at length (in YANDRO 107) on the White-Moskowitz hassel after receiving AXE #18's ambiguous notice that there had been "further developments".

But, citing ideals is hardly a reply to the present problem. I wasn't aware that the answer some FAPAns had for it was to withhold comment from GEMZINE. It seemed to me that a number of FAPA review columns stopped reviewing her magazine around the time of l'affair Willis, when it became apparent that (a) Mrs Carr rarely listened to what anyone had to say anyway (as evidenced by her replies to things that were never said) and (b) she was deliberately misinterpreting even humor for her own bitter ends. My feeling that it was her tactics rather than circulation that brought this on was circumstantially borne out by the continued reviewing of other widely circulated FAPAzines. Of course, GMC continued to comment on the magazines that ignored her and the problem wasn't solved until she slipped and fell on an administrative stalagmite.

Unless there's an overwhelming outcry from both the SAPS and non-SAPS readers for its Abolition, I'd rather not solve the problem of disproportionate readerships by separating the column from the magazine. Wrhn, as it's now constituted, functions as an organic whole. By that, I mean it has reached a point of stabilization that greatly simplifies the production of an issue -- even under adverse conditions like lack of interest or inclination. The pattern of editorial, contributions, letters, and mailing comments provides neat sections and recurrent problems that the experiences of 8 issues have given easy solutions. The mailing comments also give the magazine an organic unity by closing the magazine as it opens -- with an editorial section. And lastly I've deluded myself that I'm producing for SAPS a well-rounded publication the enjoyment of which is dependent on its interrelated parts. Perhaps it would be no "radical innovation at all" to delete the mailing comments from the non-SAPS copies, as far as apadom is concerned, but as far as my attitude towards the magazine is concerned it would be. I don't consider "Dissonant Discourse" as a jettisonable section of dubious interest to the rest of the readers and a section to which the subject of SAPS is confined. And if many other people had considered it so Wrhn couldn't have amassed its present circulation. I do not claim this egoboo as rebuttal to FMBusby but only to make clear the generaic indispensability of the department for myself and for Wrhn: a five line comment on POOR RICHARD's ALMANAC in #7 resulted in articles from Gregg Calkins and Proctor Scott and a train of contact that brought "The Harp That Once Or Twice" to these pages. And a casual mention last issue that I was currently engaged in protracted negotiations to get someone whose initials are JB to see "La Dolce Vita" set the entire Blish household into a tizzy (a small automobile made in West Phalia during the twenties) that only man down after (1) non-movie-going Jim Blish had seen the film twice (2) Virginia Blish had seen it three times (3) the Blish's were involved in complex investigation over a particular pronoun that's spoken in French, dubbed in Italian and apparently not given in the subtitles and complicated by the fact that the soundtrack is slightly out of synch (as non-movie-going-Jim said: "Oy") (4) and Virginia had prepared and offered to Wrhn an essay on it running to 14 pages in its present draft. Clearly Wrhn's mailing comments are a force not to be tampered with.

But where does that leave FMBusby? There's a possible solution which doesn't involve dismantling the magazine, and which I'd find workable, but I'm not sure what the other members will think of it: that is, for members to request space in Wrhn's letter column to cover the matters in which they feel put-upon. That this solution is workable can be attested by both FM&Elinor Busby. Buz sent in a fine letter commenting on the first Harp installment, which he would have used in his own SAPSzine but which appeared here, and Elinor sent a letter which I was forced to cut, but managed to include the controversial sections dealing with Wrhn-Fendenizen comment. Wrhn's letter column has been and will continue to be open to fellow SAPS who, along with myself, want to make fools of themselves before 200 people. However in matters not brought up by my mailing comments your letters will be as open to editing as anyone else's -- after all, I don't want to publish the whole mailing! The current letter column features Vic Ryan, who didn't expect to be represented in the mailing and very kindly sent along his comments in this form.

Your replies are all welcome here.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

I am now available for consultation on the finest points of the last Presidential campaign. I can tell you what obscure scurrility escaped Nixon's lips on a trip to Alaska or what rash promise Kennedy made in Maine. The source of my confidence is two books which a friend on the Subcommittee of the Subcommittee on Communications of the Committee on Commerce of the United States Senate (if you can follow that one you're

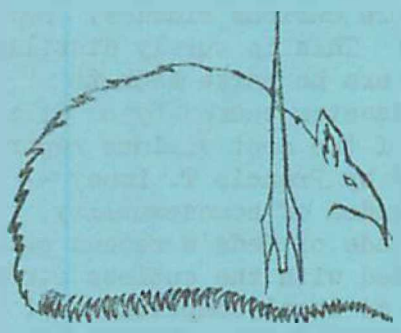
ready to take the oath of office) has just sent me. The books, one for each candidate, contain "everything which Senator John F Kennedy and Vice President Richard M. Nixon said and wrote during the Presidential campaign of 1960." Future reports, now in preparation, will contain the texts of the debates and the statements of the two vice-presidential candidates. Each volumn is, of course, packed with type as only a government report or an issue of Wrhn can be and runs to well over 1300 pages (another similarity) -- the Kennedy report is slightly longer than Nixon's. Each has an extensive index of over 100 pages. The Kennedy book is $3,75 and the Nixon $3.50 from the U.S Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. or free if you are a lucky beneficiary of the welfare state.

THE LOVES OF YESTERYEAR

Hell hath no fury like an apa scorned.

If I needed more justification for that statement than the scarred beauties Christine Moskowitz and GMCarr, I might collect a brief from the FAPA mailing comments on OPEN SEASON ON MONSTERS. I might if the intent of this inquest were to restate some elimentary principles of group psychology rather than to heal broken valentines in the halls of the apas. My role is more that of Mr. Anthony than Marc Anthony; I want to resurrect Caesar, not bury him.

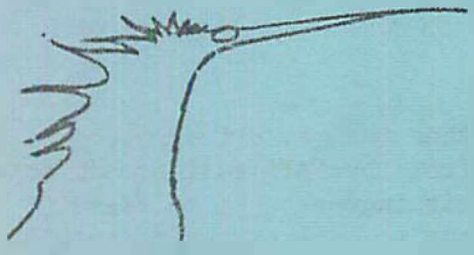
The bill of estrangement at hand is the continued disenchantment between one Redd Boggs and the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. My motive in attempting to excise this cancer is, as usual, a selfish one. Terry Carr, dispenser of lovely lines and deadly barbs, stated the case as aptly as anyone when he bet that most "waiting-listers would rather you were still in FAPA when they get in". If Redd does leave, and he's set himself a deadline of four mailings to make up his mind, I don't expect to get into FAPA until long after he has been completely forgotten, but I hardly look forward to finding an organization where one's voice echos. This may seem an odd stance from an admittedly selfish waiting-lister, but I have no wish to see FAPA's value as a respected audience reduced by so conspicuous an absence.



In order to diminish by 64 members my problems in this essayed reconciliation and perhaps help eliminate some of the commotion mentioned in the first paragraph, I suggest that the fault is not on FAPA's shelves but may rather be the effects of Redd's attemps to rationalize a fifteenth year itch. If this is the trouble, the problem of reviving ardor could be solved by a one-year exile to N'APA...but what N'APA would do with the influx of 64 members is beyond me. Essentially I feel that most of Redd's rationalizations against FAPA are just that and perhaps the product of too much ruminating through the fannish albums: the bloom may have faded from FAPA's cheeks since the time she was plied with SKYHOOK, but the voice is sweeter than ever for those who can see beyond the wrinkles.

When I first saw Redd's OPEN SEASON ON MONSTERS (the monster in this case being the FAPA constitution), I didn't recognize it for what it surely is: the disgruntlement of the man who, after 40 years, suddenly discovers that his wife has a great wart on the end of her nose. Perhaps the wart had grown a bit in the ensuing years but the core of it was there from the inception. In this publication, Redd offered an 18 word surgery designed to replace the functions of the present constitution: "The official editor, elected by the 65 members, sends out quarterly mailings containing material published by the members." "All else is pure distilled

piffle", Redd claimed. But Redd is not an unfair man. Surely, even with the wart, the present FAPA is preferable to a fragile group that no members ever leave short of death (because there are no activity requirements), that no waiting listers ever enter (if there is a waiting list), and no mailings are ever sent out (because there are no requirements for dues). Even a slightly bemused lover like Boggs would flee the alabaster touch of such a body. So you see, Redd, old FAPA in her worn gingham may be the most serviceable mate after all. But surely she's not incompatible on this count: when I first read OPEN SEASON ON MONSTERS I experienced some surprise that Boggs would find distasteful a document whose aim, with a minimum of arbitrariness, is reasonable regulation of the activities of 65 fans. Surely it was the same desire for consistency, fairness, regularity, standardization, and simplification (within



the limits of countless contingency -- given the varities of fans and language) that inspired both the belabored constitution and the GAFIA PRESS STYLE BOOK. After only seven days searching through the file Cabinets, I found my copy of the Gafia Press leaflet and battled my way through the perils of its winding labyrinth. Here we have a guide for the activity of one (1) person. A guide that runs a length of 14 typed pages or 7 pages of elete (I must confess) text. Doubtless this style book is of great use to the person it was designed for; resolving as it does literally thousands of editorial make-up decisions. But I'm puzzeled that the inspiration of sanity that produced it lacks affection for a much shorter attempt (the FAPA constitution runs 4 pages in pica) to introduce essential regularity into the activities of 65 people. The desire for regulation is the same. Granted that the discussions revolving around the consitution are often a pain (I get so many of the FAPAzines that I sometimes think I'm a member and occasionally absent mindedly check the FANTASY AMATEUR to see when my activity is due; forgive me) and in many cases only of interest to the member whose membership is at stake and the waiting-listers, but there's no reason one has to force himself to read about them. We don't have to listen to our wives conversations with the milkman (for the best of reasons); for instance. All FAPA's goodies arn't in the FANTASY AMATEUR.

THE NEHWON REVIEW, Redd's latest FAPAzine, contains more curious riddles. Redd complains that "The air is loaded with chatter and knives." This is surely distilled piffle coming from an old sword swallower like Boggs. And era he harks back to nostalgically when "Burbee and Laney rescued us from the disaster caused by a 'dilatory and malfeasant' administration in 1947" was marked by one of the most vicious reports in all fandom, Burbee's "Half-Length Article" and dominated by Francis T. Laney -- a time not only of knives, but poisoned envelope flaps, innuendos of homosexuality, molotov cocktails, and thumbscrews. And mention should be made of Redd's recent praise for KIPPLE #19 ("a great issue...volcanic"), which was filled with the cutlass strokes of Ted White, Dick Lupoff and Marion Bradley and overtones of legal complications! It's unfair to lecture your wife for characteristics you don't count as faults in other women.

Most of Redd's other remarks are of a similar nature. He says, "if mailing comments were frowned upon, people would have to be creative again" -- as though it's impossible to produce creative mailing comments; a proposition Redd and Bob Leman and many others have disproved. (In this context, since he cites that period as one of rosey glow, his remark, in the Autumn 1949 SKY HOOK, has a strange contrast: "'Who gives a damn about year-old FAPA reviews?' wonders Alpaugh. I, for one, enjoy FAPA reviews that're far older than one year, whether or not I've got the mailing reviewed.")

One might wonder what fair young outlet has caught Redd's eye. As creative a fan as Boggs has to have an outlet for his activity and if not FAPA, what more glorious

creature? Well, there seems to be a corresponding rise in his estimation of general fandom: Redd wrote in Wrhn #12: "We live, indeed, in the best of all possible fandoms; never before have there been so many eager and talented fans and so many top-quality and engrossing fanzines. The best fans and the best fanzines of the past have never been surpassed (though sometimes equalled) but never before has there been such a bumper crop." Of course, we have DISCORD, a fine publication, and an occasional column or letter in a miscellaneous fanzine and it might be a mistake to point out that these last two appearances are made on scenes that can't compare with a HORIZONS or VINEGAR WORM. This attempt at reinvigoration may be a mistake, ultimately, because a final parting may lift those last obligations to FAPA and leave Redd with the free spirit to re-establish SKYHOOK. It may or it may not for FAPA has long served as the final link with fandom for fans pushing off into the great unknown.

Given Redd's enthusiasm for non-apadom it may not serve so in this case. But it augers ill that the approaching separation is based on misunderstanding. Perhaps the problem is as simple and as irremediable as Redd's fatigue with the notion of having his fanac distributed, and buried, with that of 64 other people.

HOMEWORK

I generally dislike giving you readers an advance peek into the portfolio of material that's scheduled for future issues, but it may be warrented in this case. Tentatively scheduled for number 15 is a long essay on "La Dolce Vita" by Virginia Blish. I qualify that forecast because, for all I know, the deros may discover the Blish's secluded Pennsylvannia mansion before the next issue goes to press. But barring unnatural calamities the class may expect to be confronted with some questions re that movie next session. I suggest then that everyone who hasn't seen the film do so at the earliest opportunity. I honestly can't imagine any less painless homework and to reveal how bonna my fides are I'll admit that I might very well have written this paragraph without Virginia's inspiration. I've been pestering all my friends to see it and that doesn't let fandom out: James Blish, who usually casts a venomous eye on film products and a man whom only an idiot would recommend a movie to, returned "absolutely overwhelmed." A last discription: it does for movies what the novel of ideas does for fiction and all packaged in the most vivid visual entertainment possible.

MEMOIRS OF AN INCOMPLETE FAN

Even to me there seems to be something inordinately pretentious about a fan who hasn't done anything attempting to set down his memoirs. Certainly my fannish history contains nothing that hints that these annals could perform as anything more than an insomniac's salvation. The temptatinn to paint this chronicle with glorious adventures and fannish triumph's is great, but stifled by an inspiration of candor. In subject matter, then, these pages should not interrupt the smooth flow of trivialities that have distinguished these editorials on many occasions. It will soon become apparent that I'm up to my old alchemy: coating marshmallows with gilt. Certainly if so vast an audience could hold still for 5 pages aimed at ("devoted" seems too inaccurate) so patently rediculous a subject as the John Birch Society the time is ripe to embalm a topic which actually interests me: me.

PART ONE: BACK TO BARSOOM

It would seem a blunder to confess it to the two of you who have continued on to this paragraph, but the consideration that finally impells the start of this project is my poor memory. Oh there have been bits and pieces in the past that seem to contradict that statement, but they were revelations that were only surprising because

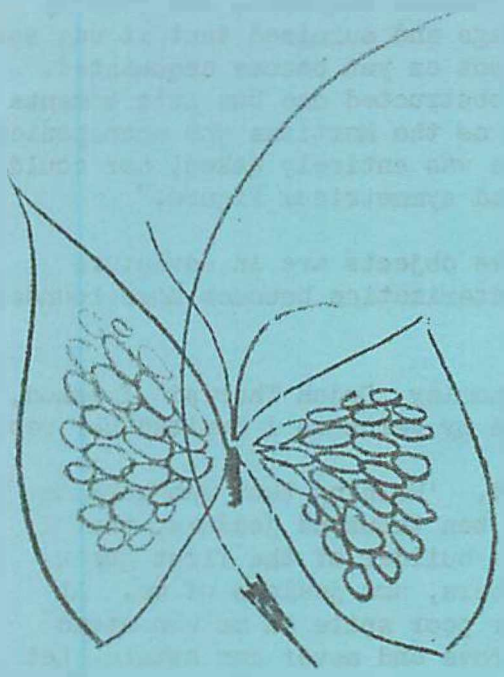
of their obscurity -- they were the products of vague recollections and the rewards of the instincts of a pack rat with patience (a virtue acquired, I mark to this day, before I'd turned five when lost in the woods I mounted a great rock and philosophically waited for the people I knew must be looking for me -- they never found me). Unfortunately, no one was writing about me 10 years ago in the microcosm so there arn't any worm eaten fanzines from which to extract the skeleton. Of course in 10 years there will be this worm eaten issue and the pack rat who reads this then will know I am speaking to him: his thanks will be the final answer to your curses.

The flying contraption that bore me home to Vermont this Christmas also had on board a time machine which was to act as the final evidence that this article must be written now if it is ever to be. The week before, if you'd chanced to pass 110 Bank St at a late hour, you would have found strange cackling spilling into the street from one of the apartments. Unfurling your umbrella and waiting in the downpour you might have devined its source. Your editor had discovered an old file of carbon copies of letters he'd written while teething on THE NATIONAL FANTASY FAN and bed-wetting in the International Science Fiction Correspondent's Club. But the mood of hilarity passed and I realized none too happily that this frantic character had once inhabited my body. I'd have explained all of this if you'd been standing down in the street; just as I'm explaining that the airplane that rushed me home also carried a copy of "A Princess of Mars" by Edgar Rice Burroughs. It was to be the longest flight I've ever taken.

The airplane and the book have strange parallels in this reminiscence: the one carried me back to the physical world of the mental delinquent I'd discovered in my old letters; the other carried me back to his dream world. The physical world of those years was a small one and not too greatly changed in its externals from its present condition. In 1948, when I was aged 13, it was furnished with a country school which is now boarded up and grown chapped and miniature, with a library whose towering stacks are now easily conquered, with forbidden books of pornography in that library which are now only the innocent nudes of great artists, with a bedroom in which I always had a full bookcase and whose ceiling was once decorated with colored paper circles in a large representation of the solar system complete to the proper number of identical small white moons. But the dream world is of course no longer there. Perhaps it was the simplicity of the setting of that world that amazes me most. It doesn't seem possible that this room contained such dreams and that they seemed so grand. This was where Lord Graystock told me of the delicious white grub, where Rog Phillips introduced me to Willis' most fabulous pun and where I first battled for my life in the arena of Warhoon with John Carter.

"A Princess of Mars" served for me as the anteroom to science-fiction. I was completely enthralled by it and beside myself with excitement when I realized that all those bosomy covered magazines in the bus depot were of a similar type. (My god, it has been so long since I carried a science-fiction magazine in public that I've forgotten what it's like to be furtive about it!) But unfortunately the science-fiction available wasn't as Startling or as Amazing or as Thrilling as the adventure I found on Mars. So I went back to the Burroughs collection and the entrance to science-fiction was widened and decorated with fresh pelts and barbaric jewels. It became a fabulous anteroom to a dingy gambling parlor. No science-fiction could match the romanticism of Barsoom. But alas, the pelts were improperly cured and the treasure long ago sacked. The dreams of a night when I sped soundlessly and instantly across a great void are gone.

To read "A Princess of Mars" this Christmas was but the work of an afternoon. It must have been one of the first books I ever read because I distinctly recall the complexity of the style and the slow pace at which I read the book. Had I the wit



to keep a diary then I might have noted (though such an allusion was completely beyond me) that "it was as difficult as 'Finnegans Wake'". I haven't stopped to check this impression, but I still have the distinct idea that both "A Princess of Mars" and "Tarzan of the Apes" are better written than any of the books that followed them in their series. Perhaps in this connection "better written" is an ackward phrase: what I mean to suggest is that each of these first two books seems to have been executed with much more care and deliberation than their followers. Perhaps its merely that each of them contain practically all the inspiration that was to be visited on their series and if I was as tireless as John Carter in chasing Dejah Thoris across the sands of Mars, I soon became mildly distressed that someone else wasn't.

I can remember originally being impressed by the stateliness of the book's prose:

"To me, Dejah Thoris was all that was perfect; all that was virtuous and beautiful and noble and good. I believed that from the bottom of my heart, from the depth of my soul on that night in Korad as I sat cross-legged upon my silks while the nearer noon of Barsoom raced through the western sky toward the horizon, and lighted up the gold and marble, and jeweled mosaics of my world-old chamber, and I believe it today as I sit at my desk in the little study overlooking the Hudson. Twenty years have intervened; for ten of them I lived and fought for Dejah Thoris and her people, and for ten I have lived upon her memory."

This is one of the lovlier passages and it's certainly good enough to appear in THE NEW YORKER -- after one of their articles. The most impressive thing about it now is the range of that second sentence and, in keeping with adventure fiction of its type, the grandure of the setting at the expense of what is being remembered. If one were a suspicious soul at the age of 13, one might have wondered,if one didn't know better, that John Carter's yearnings were for those lovingly -- and more completely -- described ornamentation.

John Carter was, of course, the embodiment of all that was noble and good. A nephew describes him in the forward:

"He seemed always to be laughing; and he entered into the sports of the children with the same hearty good fellowship he displayed toward those pastimes in which the men and women of his own age indulged; or he would sit for an hour at a time entertaining my old grandmother with stories of his strange, wild life in all parts of the world. We all loved him, and our slaves fairly worshipped the ground he trod."

But John Carter's own testimony contains a less comforting story for those who can read between its lines. With the defeat of the Confederacy, John Carter found himself "Masterless, penniless, and with my only means of livelihood, fighting, gone" and musing "I am not prone to sensitiveness, and the following of a sense of duty, wherever it may lead, has always been akind of fetish with me throughout my life; which may account for the honors bestowed upon me by three republics and the decorations and friendships of an old and powerful emperor and several lesser kings, in whose service my sword has been red many a time." Later we learn some compromising things about his eyesight which makes his luck, at the very least, amazing: "The creature

was considerably less than half as tall as the green Martian warriors, and from my balcony I could see that it walked erect upon two legs and surmised that it was some new and strange Martian monstrosity with which I had not as yet become acquainted." We might think this description of Dejah Thoris an obstructed one but it's moments later revealed that "She was as destitute of clothes as the Martians who accompanied her; indeed, save for her highly wrought ornaments she was entirely naked, nor could any apparel have enhanced the beauty of her perfect and symmetrical figure."

Dejah Thoris is as fulsomely described as all love objects are in adventure fiction. It's only with her own words that the characterization becomes more rounded in the most betraying passage of the book:

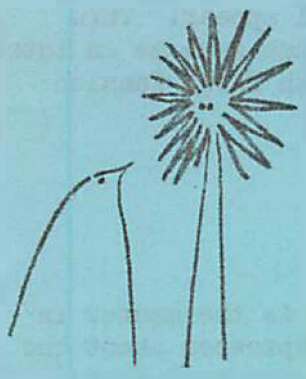
"'Have they ever subjected you to cruelty and ignominy, Dejah Thoris?' I asked, feeling the hot blood of my fighting ancestors leap in my veins as I awaited her reply.'

"'Only in little ways, John Carter,' she answered, 'Nothing that can harm me outside my pride. They know that I am the daughter of ten thousand jeddaks, that I trace my ancestry straight back without a break to the builder of the first great waterway, and they, who do not even know their own mothers, are jealous of me. At heart they hate their horrid fates, and so wreak their poor spite on me who stand for everything they have not, and for all they most crave and never can attain. Let us pity them, my chieftain, for even though we die at their hnds we can afford them pity, since we are greater than they and they know it.'"

Breeding always tells, if you arn't careful, but Dejah Thoris lives to lay her egg and dispense her pity over the entire planet.

Burroughs' descriptions (even with the help of John Carter) of Dejah Thoris are many and varied and continually flattering but poor Edgar could barely keep up with Dejah's self-revealing outbursts: Mystified for the reason Miss Thoris has been cold shouldering him (it not having occured to John that his story would have been 1/3 shorter if she hadn't) he is told:"'She says you have angered her, and that is all she will say, except that she is the daughter of a jed and the granddaughter of a jeddak and she has been humiliated by a creature who could not polish the teeth of her grandmother's sorak." Our hero is thrown into momentary dispondency at this revelation but "then my saving sense of humor came to my rescue, and laughing I turned into my silks and furs and slept upon the moon-haunted ground the sleep of a tired and healty fighting man."

While John sleeps the sleep of a tired and healty fighting man upon the moon-haunted ground, it might be well to consider his fading giggles. Since humor is one of John Carter's distinctive characteristics,and occasions for hilarity are often mentioned, there are, oddly, no attempts at describing a humorous scene. The humor of the Tharks, the tribe of green men John Carter fell among upon his arrival, is explicitly described as sadistic and several occasions of their merriments, such as the brutal beatings of women, etc, are illustrated. However enjoyable one may find these passages there still seems to be no genuine depiction of an amusing situation. But aside from the plot, Burroughs himself manages to insert a mot here and there: "In one respect at least the Martians are a happy people; they have no lawyers." At another place I was jolted to read: "they had by this time discovered that I was alone and I was pursued with imprecations,arrows, and rifle balls. ...it is difficult to aim anything but imprecations accurately by moonlight".



The book is copyright 1917 and perhaps it's possible to reconstruct some of the romantic elements of its time, if not Burroughs himself, from it. Certainly a girl of breeding must have been considered a prize for Dejah Thoris is forever reminding us that she is the"daughter of Mors Kajak, son of Tardos Mors"; the Martian equivalent of a blue book. A heavy premium must have been placed on bravery for its own sake: John Carter often soliloquizes about "the god of /his/vocation" (Mars). Sailing must have been a popular pastime of the esteemed classes for the airships of Barsoom are patterned after yachts rather than that relatively new invention the aeroplane. The temptation to think of them as Buck Rogers style spaceships is great but the description is inhibiting: they read like nothing more than a great floating regatta! and even at top speed seem capable of only excruciating flight. They float slowly, like great swans, "long, low, and gray painted...each carried a strange banner swung from stem to stern above the upper works" -- an odd superstructure for a craft powered by an anti-gravity principle. But at any rate, pennants wave, as well as social registers, and John Carter, a white man, proudly carries his burden.

What must have been the chapter enjoyed most then, if the evidence of this fanzine is any indication, and which proved to be one of them this time, was "Chained in Warhoon". At first I was bedazzeled at reading a book that mentions this magazine so often until my ship righted itself and I realized that the top of practically every page of this publication carries egoboo for Burroughs. The glossary at the back of Thuvia, Maid of Mars" defines Warhoon as "A community of green men; enemy of Thark" but as the title of this chapter implies it was also the nameof a city -- an ancient conquered city from which the fierce green men took their name. The book doesn't really contain a great deal in it about the citizens of Warhoon; (they were merely one of the many tribes of green men who roamed the surface of Mars) so its hold on my imagination, though potent, derived from little. Since the men of Warhoon differed little from the Tharks their enchantment was mostly in their name and perhaps from their less explicit description they derived an air of mystery that married well with their wild adventurous nature. When I fist discovered fandom I knew that if I ever published a fanzine, it's name would be Warhoon in memory of these fierce spirits.

The sparks struck off this old flint are few and rapidly cooling, but their light is sufficient to reveal that my interest in it now is largely cerebral and/or nostalgic. Gone are the pale glows and the twin-shadows of a moon-lit Martian night and the glamor of barbaric panoply. Gone is a man worth emulating; he now seems a bloodthirsty ego-maniac. Away too is a woman worth loving; replaced by a self-conscious debutante. I suppose it was a mistake to plunge back into this world experienced by someone else and this may have been an unseemly invasion of privacy. It may be an error for the simple reason that life is meant to be lived -- not relived -- and the only sure thing we can expect is change. The person who is writing this will probably be as unknowable when the writer reads it in ten years as the boy he now vaguely recalls is to him. I fully intend to leave Tarzan peacefully sleeping in his tree-top.

"A Princess of Mars" is the first part of a trilogy; the first two books of which end as cliff hangers. It was a couple of years before I found the second of the three books and all during that maddening time, as my fingers turned blue with the effort, I was in doubt as to the fate of Dejah Thoris and a planet whose atmosphere factories had been left in crisis. These memoirs may prove to have the same inter-

minable quality for I have no idea when the next installment will appear. This chapter was devoted to the most significant literary influence that gave me an interest in fandom and science fiction. The second movement will deal with first fannish confrontations and the Chicago convention of 1952.

Perhaps.

YESTERDAY'S PROPHETS

"Something else that impresses me quite forcibly these days is the manner in which fans are failing to live up to the convictions they have expressed about the danger of a prompt end to civilization. I am among them, and as far as I know Ackerman is the only possible exception. He has admitted, via FANTASY REVIEW, that his fears that The Bomb may fall have caused him to take a particular kind of job, and to try to have as much fun as possible in the time allotted. All the rest of us, however, are not actually so worried or very short-sighted; one or the other. Only 18 months ago I was dead serious in my plan to try to buy some land in Montana or the Dakotas, store a couple of months' supply of food there, and attempt to reach safety there in case another war should come. I still think it's a wise thing to do, but I haven't noticed myself doing it. Is there anyone in the audience who can truthfully say that he's changed his way of life because of conviction that a great war may soon destroy this civilization?"

--Harry Warner in HORIZONS, March '47

GIVE ME LIBERTY OR A NICE WARM CELL

I've been searching through my file of I.F.STONE'S WEEKLY looking for an item I wanted to serve as an afterthought to Bob Tucker's article, in Wrhn #12, on the Declaration of Independence poll. It seems that a student answered an essay question in a bar examination with a faithful rendition of the sentiments expressed in the first part of the quote from the Declaration. The result was that he was called before the examining board and asked whether or not he was a communist. He refused to answer on the grounds of two constitutional amendments and was refused entrance to the bar. I'm relating this from memory and am not sure whether the case is going to more supreme courts, but it indicates, at the very least, that anyone who feared he might be hauled before one of our committees and thereby achieve a degree of notoriety, however slight, had some grounds for trepidation. Violent overthrow of the government is, of course, now more immediately identified with the Communistparty rather than the Declaration of Independence.

Retaining the sections about the Colonies and the King of England was certainly a mistake and was irrelevant to what the poll was trying to find out. It could only confuse people and made them wonder about the person taking the poll and left a neat hole for those not wanting to face its premise. The concluding sentence should have been: "...it is their duty, to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security."

In the best of all possible worlds, the poll should be approached in a strict interpretation. People should be willing to sign a petition against the conditions given -- and answer suspicions that these were the conditions under which they agreed with it.

I believe the state of New Hampshire has incorporated into its constitution the principle of violent overthrow of dispotic government by force of arms.

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"Salt adds tang to the flavor of oranges."

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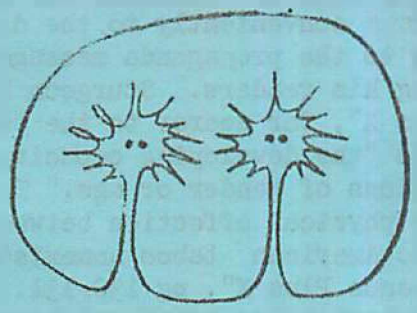
THE STRANGER AND THE CRITIC



by WALTER BREEN

It seems to be my fannish fate to tangle with James Blish over Hugo winners. The first time it was Blish's own "A Case of Conscience"; the second time now is over "Stranger In A Strange Land" (right now it doesn't seem to have any serious competition for the Hugo). And whether we will also tangle over "A Canticle for Leibowitz" is moot, but I'll be watching the letter column of DISCORD and future Blish columns in Wrhn after Redd prints my critique of "A Canticle for Leibowitz". Right now I propose to go into some detail on the aesthetic, sexual and religious aspects of the Heinlein book, in passing giving my reasons for disagreeing with some conclusions Blish reached in his review, and specific rebuttals to a few points there made.

I. Sex in a Strange Land.

Not surprisingly, Heinlein's treatment of sex in the Smith cult is misunderstood -- something one might have predicted after reading Sturgeon's little postscript to "Venus Plus X": the public treats everything in this area like so much True Confessions guff, superficial meaning only and even that only imperfectly perceived.

Labeling the sexual sharing "promiscuity" is a mistake. The word "promiscuity" has been used to mean at least two different kinds of activity.

Most commonly people mean by it mere indiscriminateness, not caring who is one's partner for the night, Don Juanism in the common misinterpretation. More ignorantly, the term is also applied to the infrequent instances of genuine plural affection -- polygamy with or without benefit of clergy. There is obviously need for different terms for these different situations. If we use "promiscuity" for the first, we need another word for the second, for nonpossessive, nonexclusive sexual friendships -- a word at least ethically neutral if not favorable. (I am optimistic enough to believe that the introduction into general language of such a word might make the practice slightly more common; the present lack of any such word in English is doubtless relevant to the rarity of the practice, even as to its being immediately confused with promiscuity properly so called.) Ted White's term "expansive love" possibly might serve, though regrettably Heinlein does not show in "Stranger In A Strange Land" that he understands the concept in depth. Nevertheless, Heinlein -- following Sturgeon's "Venus Plus X", as I will show below -- does recognize that possessive "love" is something that can and must be outgrown, and he is trying to show among other things one way in which such outgrowing could come about. (Valentine Michael Smith "does not recognize the heartbreak which can in this culture be bound up with sex", Mr. Blish, principally because as an adept he is well beyond the stage of growth at which possessiveness remains possible.) This point deserves a separate book all to itself; unfortunately that book has yet to be written, though features of

it are adumbrated in Sturgeon's "Venus Plus X", parts of"Gestalt Therapy" (Perls, Hefferline & Goodman) and Alan Watt's "Nature, Man And Woman"--and, most remarkably even in brief passages, Henry Miller's "Sexus". Heinlein probably could not write such a book because he still apparently retains certain prejudices, which poke up their ugly little heads on occasion, perhaps conveniently to the dramatic development (such as it is) but not so conveniently to the propaganda message, unless indeed they were left in because he feared alienating his readers. Sturgeon has shown himself far more enlightened here in "Venus Plus X", far nearer to the "expansive love" concept. A definition of the latter might be "the developing capacity to love a widening circle of friends, without a priori limitations of gender or age." This automatically excludes taboos such as Jubal's against physical affection between males, or Ben Caxton's against orgies. The former is an Anglo-American taboo nonexistent in France and devestatingly commented on by Sturgeon in "Venus Plus X", pg 130-131....There is, of course, a difference between regarding something as taboo and simply finding a given instance or practice not to one's personal liking or not as pleasurable as something different.

II. Rodin, Rossini and Sears Roebuck.

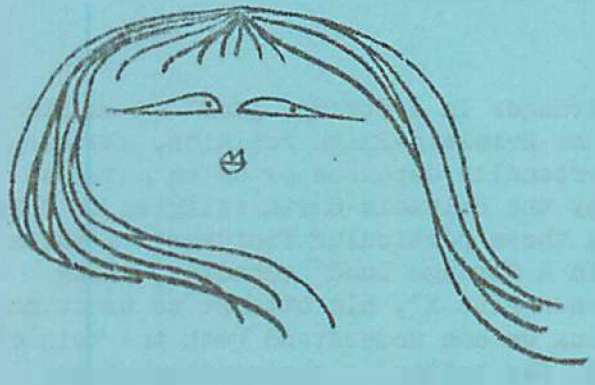
Blish and I have little quarrel over the aesthetics of Jubal/Heinlein's creations and insights. It was notorious long before "New Maps of Hell" that aesthetics is a rare subject to encounter in stf (despite occasional excursus by Stapledon and Sturgeon), and even more rare to find well handled.

I would suggest, though, that in the Martian view high art need not be as explicitly story-telling as is Liszt's "Mazeppa" or a Satevepost cover (or for that matter any of Richard Strauss's tone poems), as Blish seems to think it must be for Heinlein's Martians. There are story-telling works and story-telling works. I propose for Blish's attention Mahler's First Symphony as something the Martians might have grokked over centuries. It is clear enough that the work has no explicit programmatic content in the sense in which "Mazeppa" has; but instead of this there is something far more extreme, more emotionally naked, and it is there for even the perceptive listener who resents literary interpretations of music. I think a brief demonstration is in place as an illustration of how in one sense a work can be story-telling without the bathos implied by Blish's use of that notion.

Listeners familiar with the work will immediately recall the contrast between the first two movements and the last two: something obvious to even the most superficial users of music as background to fill in conversational silence. Program-note and jacket-blurb prose aside, the opening movement is obviously concerned with spring and joy of living and the wonder of closeness to nature -- particularly birds -- in what can only be a rural area. To point this up, Mahler uses as a principal motive "Ging heut' Morgen über Feld", a song from his own "Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen", whose words actually describe the singer's wandering over the countryside one joyful spring morning. The second movement is one of those vigorous peasant dances. So far nothing pretentious, nothing portentous. Then a long pause, and the third movement -- violently attacked in print since its premiere, and often justly called a "journey through hell" -- shatters the mood up to now established. Its funeral march is punctuated now by grotesque evocations of village bands, now by ironic or unbearably poignant quotations from earlier Mahler songs, songs of regret at loss of someone loved. The journey is clearly through the hell of eternal regret of lost loves, the hell of remembering unhealed wounds; the concern of the movement is clearly very close to that of the third act of Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" -- the agony of reliving the past. This is confirmed by the final movement; its opening is shocking, defiant, black, titanically raging -- some have called it blasphemous; it is certainly an outburst unparalleled in music up to that time. Battle and mocking laughter are briefly interrupted by what again can only be memories (from the first movement) -- from a past when all seemed

well and eternally joyous and beautifully promising of better to come -- but how ironical, how vain in context: and the attitude is unequivocally "how beautiful were my rosy dreams and ambitions then, how lovely the spring world around me -- and now all is gone, is gone, is gone...nothing is left but to put these memories aside, to return to battle -- a struggle which for me is personally hopeless but which for the rest of humanity may eventually succeed." (Six years after I arrived at this insight into the content of the symphony, and fourteen years after I had first heard the work, I found simple confirmation of the insight in biographical material about the composer, so this is not merely reading something fanciful into a piece of music devoid of such intention.)

I submit that this is story-telling in a work of art, in a higher sense than that found in Liszt or R. Strauss or Norman Rockwell, and approaching the 'story-telling' in Mozart's G minor quintet, Beethoven's C minor sonata op. 111, Greek vase-painting. And in a more explicit sense of the term 'story-telling' one might call to mind that it applies also to some of the most profound works in all human culture: the Oresteia, (which was music and dance and pageantry, poetry and drama and religious experience) the Book of Job, Bach's St. Matthew Passion. And though far from being Martians, human scholars have spent in aggregate many centuries studying these. In this light, Blish's flippant references to "Mazeppa" and the Saturday Evening Post seem to fall short of the possibilities inherent in the Martian view. Perhaps -- as suggested by his insights into Rodin -- Heinlein for once made a genuine effort to transcend the engineer/Sears Roebuck catalogue/Saturday Evening Post cover aesthetic; or perhaps his subconscious simply made him say better than he knew. In short: Story-telling works are not automatically worse than others; not automatically superficial Kitsch: some works not ordinarily considered to be story-telling actually are (but in an unconventional sense) and among these are some of the higher creations of the human mind. Though this aesthetic was crudely stated in "Stranger In A Strange Land" and is obviously incomplete, it is quite possibly a good beginning, and I believe Blish underrated its potentialities.



Without specifically leaping in to defend Heinlein, I might nevertheless suggest also that his scorn for opera is perhaps a little more justified than it seems at first sight. Operas, with very few exceptions (Don Giovanni, Boris Godunov, Wozzeck, Three Penny) have libretti ranging from mediocre to utterly ludicrous. Sometimes, as in all of Schubert's operas, the libretti have sunk with such a dull pshush that they've pulled the music down with them, nor all the king's horses and all the king's men could pull them back up to performance again. To me an opera with a hopelessly inept libretto is automatically less than a satisfactory work of art, however much I might appreciate out of context individual arias, choruses or orchestral interludes. I can therefore see one good reason why Heinlein would go on record as scorning opera -- though I do not pretend to say that this is why he actually did. But as a story-teller, he would of course be more sensitive to story value of the libretti than would a person less concerned with plot, characterization, atmosphere, style: and we know all too well that many opera buffs are prone to explain away or disregard the libretti (the resounding failures of opera-in-English are notorious, showing that once the words are heard in their full stupidity, they engender dissatisfaction not earlier experienced) and to appreciate their favourites as one would appreciate an athletic or trapeze performance, watching for the way in which a coloratura negotiates treacherously demanding passages, applauding fine tone or a high B-flat, but probably as incapable as the average rock & roll fan of giving any sound argument for how and why any particular opera is or is not an aesthetically superior whole to any other.

When Heinlein mentioned the "Nine Planets Symphony" I assumed he was either referring to some Space Age work not yet composed or else groping vaguely for a dim recollection of the Holst work; I did not get any such idea as that Heinlein assumed that symphonies ordinarily had nine movements, as Blish implies. For that matter, I can recall only two other instances in Heinlein's writings where he went into any detail whatever about music: once in "Methuselah's Children" where mention occurs of the Valse Triste and the "immortal Fifth", the other in "Double Star" where he refers to a C major symphony, "Ad Astra", op. 61, by one Arkezian, with 14-cps "scare" tones buried in the timpani (!).

There is one other aesthetic issue involved, one about which I suspect differences of opinion will remain irreconcilable. That is the issue of the integrity of a hack writer, or of a writer who though perhaps capable of profundity nevertheless continues to turn out the kind of popular material which sells -- material well adapted to its admittedly superficial function of entertainment. It is the issue Bloch raised in HABAKKUK 4. For him, as for Jubal Harshaw, the issue of art as a Way of Life (and therefore the issue of artistic integrity as fundamental to one's ethics) does not exist; for him, writing Kitsch is not prostituting oneself, because he does not consider his writings as of extreme importance, let alone a matter of One's Sacred Honor. Nothing to be proud of, perhaps, but nothing to be ashamed of either. It is a different matter, perhaps, for a person whose entire life is devoted to his chosen art-form, who is Dedicated, who believes he has something now to say to fellow-artists and the world. This issue was neatly dealt with, from one viewpoint, in Hermann Hesse's "Steppenwolf", where the protagonist eventually learns to accept frivolous dance-hall music for exactly what it is, not berating it for failing to reach a greatness to which it never pretended. So too Jubal Harshaw -- and Heinlein.

III. Mars Plus X?

Blish -- like many other commenters on "Stranger In A Strange Land" -- considers the book primarily a vehicle for what he calls the Heinlein-Smith religion, whether as intentional propaganda for positions Heinlein personally espouses or as an extended example of the Socratic godfly approach. But why the Heinlein-Smith religion in this particular form at this particular time and with these particular features? I think the conclusion almost inescapable: "Stranger In A Strange Land" embodies, among other things, Heinlein's reply to Sturgeon's "Venus Plus X", his attempt to treat many of the same themes on a larger scale. And I think we can understand both the Heinlein-Smith religion and "Stranger In A Strange Land" far better in the context of the Sturgeon book.

Leaving aside the artificial hermaphrodism in the latter, and the miracles in the former, as possibly necessary gimmicks, we can still learn a great deal by treating the two books as parallels. So far as I know nobody in the fan press has yet done this, but I don't get every stf-oriented fanzine in the microcosm and it is therefore possible that I'm repeating conclusions independently drawn by someone else; if so, my apologies for unintentional duplications.

The parallels vary from obvious to recondite. The former first:

Both books manage to comment on present-day society by the traditional device of introducing an outsider element. In "Venus Plus X" this is reciprocally double: the contemporary vignettes are commented on by their very juxtaposition with particular Ledom episodes: and in reverse the figure of "Charlie Johns", homo sap, comments as from outside unfavorably -- on the Ledom. In fact, on pg. 44 Sturgeon explicitly says that objective commentary on a society is something only an outsider can provide and that this is why the Ledom brought "Charlie" in. In "Stranger In A Strange Land"

the commentary is again double: contemporary society is commented on by Smith's observations and by Heinlein's describing Smith's motivations in confronting it; and in turn contemporary society's hired guns make literally devastating comments on the Martian Smith and the Martian cult.

In both books, native language has a functional role unlike that of ordinary Indo-European tongues: Ledom is peculiarly attuned to emotional states, and -- shades of 1984! -- many concepts do not even exist in it which seem to have been present in virtually all human cultures. Martian language, on the other hand, is peculiarly adapted to coding so-called paranormal or esp techniques. Without these languages, neither culture would have been maintained for appreciable time in its characteristic form; Benjamin Lee Whorf's thesis, with a vengeance!*

In both, contrasting juxtaposition of the idealized society and its degraded contemporary counterpart also occurs. It is a specific and much misunderstood technique in "Venus Plus X", and a much more conventionally handled practice in "Stranger In A Strange Land". Invidious contrast of the predatory business world with an idealized all-sharing oasis is commonplace, but the Sturgeon technique throws both into sharp relief (often to the point of seeming caricature), while in "Stranger In A Strange Land" it seems less artificial principally because the Enemy is part of the same world and the same story. (In passing: though I voted for "Venus Plus X" for the Hugo, I did so realizing that it is really not a novel and therefore hardly eligible. But then the winner also was not a novel. Is length then, rather than form, what makes a book eligible for nomination in that category?) It is a defect in both "Venus Plus X" and "Stranger In A Strange Land" -- but one difficult to avoid, given the requirements -- that characters tend to become archetypes when not stereotypes, that attitudes and practices and institutions develop more and more as White and Black, Good and Bad, Idealized and Contemporary-or-worse. It would take a writer of extraordinary stature indeed to construct a novel with the ideational content of either book and still manage to avoid this pitfall. I am not sure that it is even possible. Perhaps this is why Sturgeon put his book into something other than novel form -- he himself called it a fable at the Phillycon -- and perhaps this is one reason why "Stranger In A Strange Land" fails as a novel.

In both, there is explicit contrast between primary (immediate in the sense of direct, un-mediated) religious experience and secondary (ritualized, routinized, mediated by priestly casts) religious experience, the former invariably charitic and invariably preferred to the latter.

In both, material but symbolic sharing is a characteristic of the ritual of the charitic religion; the food-sharing (Ledom feeding their neighbors at the ritual banquet, pg. 103-4) in the Ledom cult, the water-sharing in the Martian water-brother ceremony. In both, an all-too-human cult is transfigured into something utterly alien: some pentecostal or "Holy Rollers" religion has been at some time in the unremembered/renounced Ledom past metamorphosed into the Ledom religion of transience; and the commercial Fosterite cult becomes, in the expanding inner circles, a comletenly antimaterialistic bunch of adepts.

In both, renunciation of the past is an explicitly built-in feature of the new Way of Life. For the Ledom, renunciation of homo sap emotions -- the more destructive ones -- via the language, renunciation of homo sap history and technology and artforms (save for archives accessible to scholars, and the handicrafts they rediscover for themselves), renunciation even of homo sap sex roles and sex differentiation; for the Martian-speaking water brethren, renunciation of emotions seemingly all but

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* Jack Vance's "The Languages of Pao" illustrates other aspects of the Whorf thesis.

universal in this culture (material and sexual possessiveness, drive for status), with all that this renunciation implies. And all follows logically from the characteristic demands found in scriptures of charitic religions: put off the old Adam and become born again of water (!) and the Spirit, etc.

In both, similar ethical codes are explicitly held up to the reader's attention as intrinsically superior to that by which human beings in western civilization supposedly live, and far superior to the mores by which they actually live. Blish professed uncertainty about the ethical imperatives, if any, of the Heinlein-Smith religion. I think the following summary of them is fairly accurate:

1. Everything that groks should be given its specific respect and treatment as end rather than as means, though in full realization of its place in the larger ecological whole. Such respect, however, may be forfeited by some twisted types that trangress in particular ways.

2. Whatever promotes growth is good and should be encouraged.

3. Whatever tends to destroy or hamper grokking creatures is not good and should be discouraged. (And it can be destroyed by adepts, whose superior knowledge enables them to take command of the situation.)

4. Grok thy neighbor as thyself.

5. "Growing closer" (tangibly expressed as physical affection of which sex is one manifestation among many) is good insofar as it includes freedom from jealousy or possessiveness, and should be encouraged.

6. "Bilking the mark" should be discouraged as it drives its victims towards diminished participation; and where possible it should be replaced by fair exchange ("good show") or still better by expansive acceptance, warm generosity.

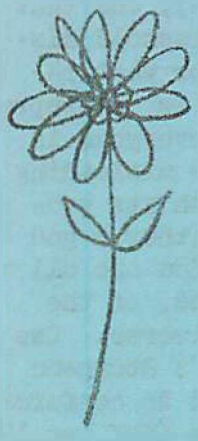
7. Truth should be preferred in action or speech to falsehood, whenever truth promotes growth.

8. Life should be lived to the fullest with detached compassiomate non-possessiveness.

Blish's notion that "shared experience is to be preferred to solo experience" is an obvious corollary of the above. No. 1 is Kant's categorical imperative; 2 is closely related to the Schweitzer "reverence for life" principle, which has origins in ancient India; 4 is a more realistic approach to the so-called golden rule; 8 is a part of all forms of Buddhism; the others are familiar enough from the "Perennial Philosophy" of Aldous Huxley though in other forms all to often contaminated by an anti-life bias.

Sturgeon stacked his cards in favor of the Ledom by building in most of these imperatives via biological wizardry and language; Heinlein stacked his in favor of Smith and his cult by building in these imperatives via the Unitive Way (mystical experience leading to miracle-working adepthood at which level wrongdoing is apparently impossible) and a situation in which virtue is <u>experienced</u> pleasurably as its own reward, rather than merely so labeled as in christianity.

In both, the problem of evil is explained away: among the Ledom evil doing is not merely impossible but formally <u>meaningless</u>; many acts not intrinsically hurtful but for various reasons taboo in present day society are tolerated or positively encouraged,



and others of more obviously damaging character are excluded by not being formulable in the language, or perhaps the felt need to do such is quickly outgrown thanks to the charitic religion. Among the Smithites, the religion clearly acts as the panacea: once a person no longer feels that he needs to be possessive or exploitive, he will no longer perpetrate atrocities in the name of christianity, commerce or parental authority, nor perpetuate the Social Lie now that he has seen through it; once he has renounced his dependence on the typical distorted masculine (or feminine) self-image, he will no longer feel a need to be cruel to those deviating from his particular idea of the One True Path.

And in both, the authors make inevitable the conclusion that the world as it stands is pretty much a lost cause without some drastic reorientation: Ledomizing, or at least imparting the Martian language (or its equivalent which mystics the world over have been trying to translate into humanly understandable terms since god only knows how many thousands of years ago) together with a charitic religion and all the revolutionary social changes which either would produce. Bit-by-bit improving of the present-day social structure as it stands, without changes in its fundamental premises and attitudes, is simply patching up a building rotten at the foundations and due to collapse.

These parallels are too numerous and too far-reaching to be ignored, or (I think) to be purely coincidental.

IV. "Tat tvan asi."

More detailed rebuttals of Blish and other critics are now possible. In particular, Blish makes a big point of the alleged eclecticism in the Heinlein-Smith religion, apparently in contrast to "genuine" religions. I submit that this is deceptive and misleading, and that the result is no more eclectic in fact than are most of the great world religions. With the possible exception of Theravada Buddhism all the great world religions are syncretic, i.e. they are a jumble of accretions from numerous sources onto the particular individual approaches which make each unique. The contributions of Judaism (Hillel, Shammai and Essene schools of thought alike) and late Greek metaphysics (particularly stoicism and certain mystery religions) to christianity are well known to any student of comparative religion; there is Greek metaphysics throughout the fourth gospel; the dunghill of Philo Judaeus and of Manichaean dualism reeks in Augustine and fairly overwhelms us in Luther and Calvin -- and it has not been washed away in its entirety even yet, as Sturgeon's book fairly shouts. Judaism itself, as Robert Graves handily proved, shows clear evidence of borrowing from older Mediterranean cults. Islam borrowed much from Judaism, christianity and primitive Arab cults. Comparable borrowings on the part of Mahayana and Zen Buddhism, and Vedanta, are also demonstrable. It is therefore no surprise to find similar intentional borrowings in the Heinlein-Smith religion (and note well that Smith -- pg 301 -- did a doctoral dissertation on comparative religion, so he knew his sources) even as in other sects with less to recommend them; it is also no denigration. In fact, I would find it astonishing to the point of stupefaction were a religion adaptable to humans to be completely unrelated to earlier cults; not even Subud or Taoism can make any such claim, and it would be tantamount to denial of the validity of any earlier mystical insights, of any trace of the "Perennial Philosophy": a most unsafe claim to make, in the present state of our knowledge.

Specifically, the Heinlein-Smith religion derives much from the Hindu insight expressed as "Tat tvam asi" which literally means "Thou art That" with the direct implication "Thou art God." I have studied enough comparative mysticism to know that this insight is part of the content of all the major mystical systems (regardless of

where the particular mystics arise -- in christianity, Islam or Buddhism), and that it is pantheistic rather than blasphemous. Mysticism above a certain threshold discards monotheism as something outgrown. Pantheism is a very weak term for what replaces it, but it is the only existing word that comes close. Pantheism is misrepresented by the popular view which would have it say that "everything and everyone is God"; rather, pantheism in its various mystical avatars tends to deny as misleading the notion of a transcendent god outside the universe but interfering with its processes, and instead to emphasize the notion of an "immanent" god, i.e. either a god pretty clearly identified with the universe itself (of which We-Who Are-God are all a part and therefore by definition share some spark,however small or damped, of the divine nature), or else a god said to be evolving from and within the universe. One reason why pantheism has acquired a bad name is clear from "Venus Plus X": Sturgeon spells out that in this path one needs no priestly caste, one is not tied to conformity and support of the political or religious status quo by guilt and threats (VPX, pg 126-30) and furthermore one's adherence to the official mores and support of the rulers are far less assured than they would be in more conventional, conservative sects. But pantheism has a long and honorable history including such illustrious figures as Giordano Bruno, Meister Eckhart, John of the Cross, William Blake, Spinoza, and it makes unexpected appearances in theosophy and scientology as well as in more "respectable" places.

And Heinlein's treatment of the afterlife is, curiously enough, not really inconsistent with the pantheistic/theosophic/Scn view, in which after all little or nothing is known or postulated of the history of any given thetan/soul/"I" in between successive incarnations if any. Hornell Hart, of Duke University, gave a lecture in 1947 summarizing a content analysis of thousands of alleged mediumistic revelations concerning the afterlife. The atonishing thing about these was the amount of apparently independent duplication of details -- not derivable from official christianity or other cults -- much as though the mediums' "controls" had been trying to describe the same thing. (Which probably establishes at least an unsuspected degree of cross-cultural similarity among human wishes anent the afterlife, anyway...) Environmentaly the afterworld(a temporary phase) was said to be much like earth but behaving like dream environments rather than physical objects; psychologically, one "law" operated consistently: personalities tend to remain with others of their own general kind and level, and that some at least continued to grow and evolve at faster rates than others, gravitating then to companions of their own levels; and this affected the body and environment they found themselves in during subsequent incarnations. (What a logical positivist would make out of all this is beside the point.) Reincarnation is taken for granted in those world-views, and Heinlein apparently accepts it. There are two lines of evidence pointing to this conclusion: in one of his unfortunate (but luckily unimportant) afterworld scenes in "Stranger In A Strange Land", someone speaks of expecting to return to earth shortly in a new guise; and in the 30th AMAZING annish, Heinlein's article expressed the belief that the Bridey Murphy experiments established that there was some truth to the notion of reincarnation. The concept of "Old Ones" staying around their home planet discarnately and taking some part in activities of the living is also not surprising; it comes out of Bradbury's story "In This Sign" in the April 1951 IMAGINATION, though Bradbury may have developed part of it from one of the earlier Heinlein juveniles. The mundane parallel is found even now in mediumistic "controls", some of whom have purportedly gone on creating writings or helping people -- the Stewart Edward White "Betty" books -- which are well above the level of superficial dreck that one would expect -- are long famous.

The soup ceremony is less like father eating child, I think, that like a deliberate parallel -- not quite a parody -- of the ritual cannibalism explicit in the eucharist. I don't see that it means that the martianizing of earth has "gotten out of hand": I am not sure I even know what Blish meant by this phrase.

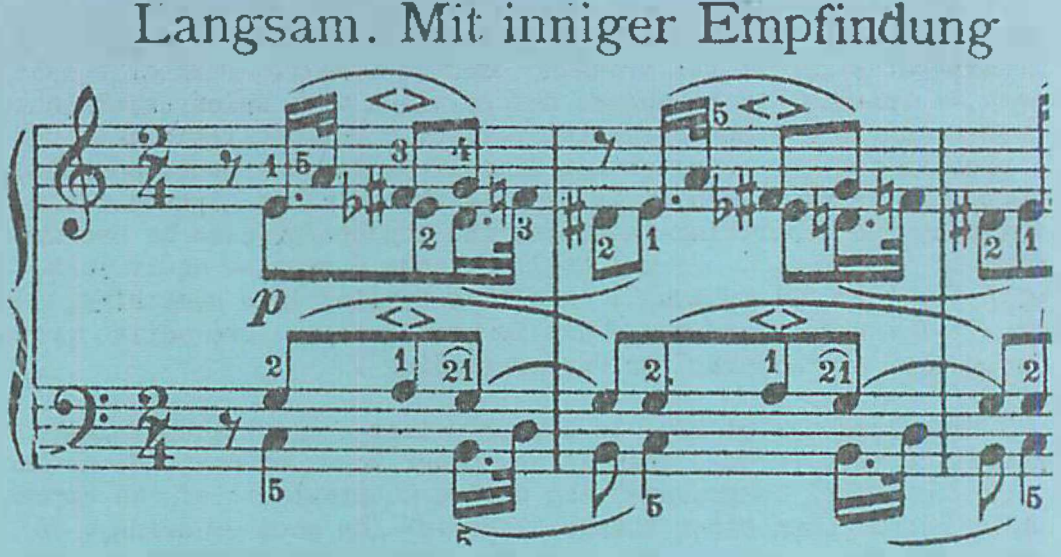
For all his insistence that Jubal Harshaw could grok in nearly Martian degree of penetration, Heinlein presents us with essentially an outsider's view of the religion he describes and of the grokking process itself. Part of the difficulty is -- I suspect -- inherent in having to defend views with which Heinlein could hardly agree while continuing in his own essential patriotic rationalistic conservatism; Smith would be a problem for any novelist not himself at least a poet, something Heinlein most certainly is not. And right here is why Heinlein gives himself needless trouble in defining and describing-in-action the concept/process he ascribed the exceedingly ugly name of "grokking". Formal English lacks a precise equivalent, but German comes close with its term "Einfühlung", an active feeling into something, empathetically penetrating it for understanding. What is needed is a more active process than the passive "sympathy" or "empathy" or "understanding".

The language of Hip, as Norman Mailer calls it, contains a term "to dig" which is nearer to this process than is any other term yet devised; at least three of its meanings are actual components" the active counterparts of "to appreciate", "to assimilate" which means among other things "take in" (as good or drink), "digest", "breakdown and reassemble", "make part of oneself". The parallel between taking in food and making its nourishing elements part of oneself, and actively/sympathetically understanding a concept and making it part of one's mental equipment is deliberate. According to Gestaltists, Reichians,and hipsters,this parallel reflects not an artificial analogy but the actual state of affairs. Heinlein's religious research regrettably did not extend far enough for him to familiarize himself with this actually quite elementary concept-- otherwise how explain the excitement Smith manifested over Jubal's being able to dig certain Martian notions? This kind of active insight-gaining is absolutely necessary in the study of poety and in psychiatric work; it is, apparently, a process somewhat more rare in engineers. Or if Heinlein actually did understand the notion as something already known on earth, he must have decided that it is too difficult for the squares who would comprise the greater part of his audience.

The "miracles" worked by Smith -- so far from being ridiculous as Blish seems to think -- are actually the precise ones traditionally ascribed to prophets from Jesus on down or on up as the case may be, and they are not nearly as fabulous, it would seem, as some ascribed to Apollonious of Tyana. It is an important point, as it implies that Heinlein subscribes (for the novel's purposes, anyway) to the view that miracle-working becomes a routine possibility -- one of many means to one's ends -- above a certain stage in mystical development, the same stage at which the adept is no longer capable of wrongdoing. And particularly it points up the deliberate parallel with Jesus, even as does the manner of Smith's death -- even preceded by a Last Supper...and the political/economic motives behind both murders. The reasons why miracleworking Jesus and miracleworking Smith allowed themselves to be murdered have long remained obscure to me. Christians of course claim that Jesus did so to atone for the sins of the world -- a most repugnant doctrine because of its implications about the sadistic nature of God, the same God who is credited with creating everlasting hell. Heinlein is vague on the point; the nearest reason I can arrive at, other than the superficial "so that he could complete his story", is (a) Smith perceived that perhaps the outraged robber barons could cool down and relax their surveillance against his religion if the focal point of their hostilities were publicly destroyed; (b) alive he could not add much more to what he had already done, dead he could provide a constant model and encouragement as well as an example of the kind of courage possible to an adept; (c) his death could, by the publicity it would receive, perhaps shock the common people into recognition of just what the robber barons were doing. But back to the miracles: These are also allegedly teachable by Smith's methods -- just as adepthood is something theoretically attainable by use of ancient methods in the Via Mystica in most Eastern religions, and miracleworking is (as I said) simply a part of adepthood.

(Concluded on page 35.)

THE HARP THAT ONCE OR TWICE



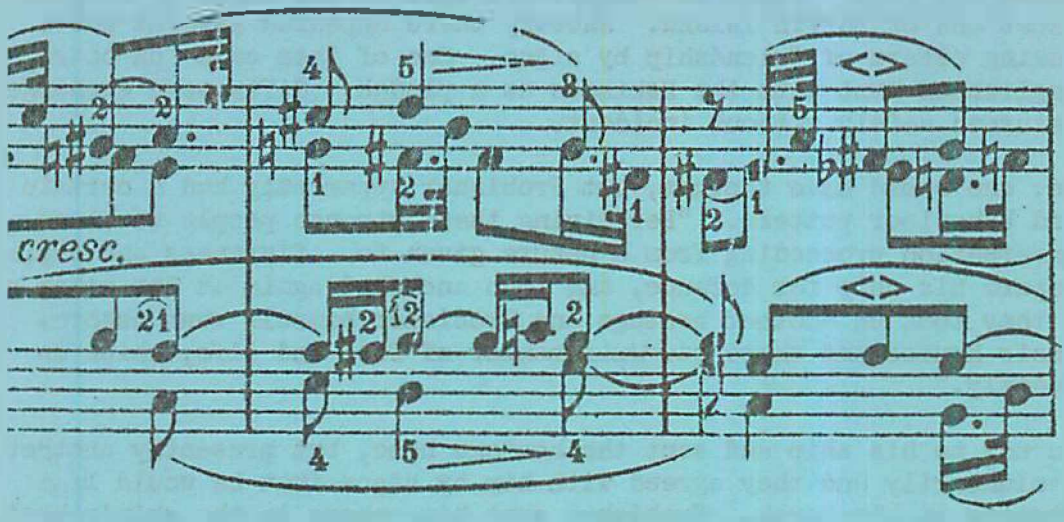
THE STRANGER BEING ON THE SHIP MADE GREAT WONDERING OF ALL THINGS

I'm glad that Castillo was amused by something in my artless little column, even if it were a remark with so few obvious boffos as that "Hegelians and dialectical materialists say this process -- thesis, antithesis and synthesis -- is the essential nature of all phenomena and there's no doubt that it is somehow pleasing to the human mind, even if it's just a symbolism of sex." I would hasten to assure him though that my use of the word "just" was not careless, as he suggests, but cautious. I intended no disrespect to Sex, which has made great progress since Burbee invented it in 1926, and which I firmly believe is here to stay. There are, however, more basic phenomena. And as I understand it, the Hegel/Marx theory is supposed to apply to all phenomena, not just those nearest and dearest to Art Castillo.

The question I was touching on was whether particular examples of synthesis are pleasing to us because we subconsciously recognise this underlying unity, or just because we associate them with the pleasure of sex. The same point arises in aesthetics: whether certain curves and forms are pleasing because they enshrine mathematical relationships, or just because they remind one of a woman's body. Possibly Art and the logical positivists would say the question is meaningless, because our criteria for female beauty are based on functional efficiency and anything which is functionally efficient must be mathematically correct, but I would suggest that in one way the question could be very important indeed. What we are discussing is really not whether one particular theory of philosophy is correct or not, but the degree of objectivity of which the human mind is capable.

To tear ourselves away from women, we generally regard other life forms on this planet (tigers, birds etc) as beautiful, presumably because we recognise their functional efficiency. But there are other life forms just as functionally efficient but which some of us dislike (spiders, snakes, insects) because they have unpleasant emotional associations. The question arises, what might our reaction be to alien life forms? Any life form that makes it this far must be functionally efficient and therefore beautiful in itself, but if it happens to resemble a Terran life form we dislike, will we be capable of overcoming our prejudice enough to appreciate that beauty?

To some extent this is a question which sf fans have had to face in advance of the rest of the world, because even authors of the class of Heinlein have tended to make their aliens either furry, cute and friendly, or slimy, insectile and hostile. It



BY WALTER WILLIS

would be interesting if they would try us with aliens which are slimy and friendly. And it would be even more interesting if they were to admit that whether they are friendly or not depends as much on us as on them. After all, we are aliens too. Are we friendly?

This question reminds me of the old and simple but very profound story of the woman who came to live in a strange town and asked the woman next door what the neighbours were like. The answer, when you come to think of it, was the only possible one. "What were they like where you came from?"

Man is not friendly or hostile in vacua. The doctrines of original sin and of the noble savage are both rubbish. Mankind is capable of the ultimate in both love and hate, good and evil, depending entirely on the circumstances. Why should it be assumed that the attitudes of aliens are any more pre-set? (To by-pass possible objections here, perhaps I'd better say I'm discounting antlike communities and psychotic societies like Nazi Germany, as being so incapable of progress or inherently unstable as to be unlikely to develop interstellar flight.) Sf authors have generally assumed that aliens are either friendly, in which case we co-operate; or hostile, in which case we fight. But it seems to me that there are two lots of aliens to be considered and that our emotional attitude is just as important as theirs.

Well, are Terrans friendly? Or, as Lowndes put it in his analysis last issue of the themes of "Starship Troopers"and "The Star Dwellers": "What assumptions ought to be made a priori about encounters with other intelligent life forms, and what attitudes and behaviour patterns necessarily follow?" Well, of course it is unfortunately impossible to say whether Heinlein or Blish is right without experimental evidence. We would need a documentary record of Man's first encounter with a species as essentially warlike as Heinlein says Man is, and no such records exist.

Or do they? There was one previous occasion when Man discovered a New World full of strange creatures,,and the first contact with these aliens is fully reported in Hakluyt's "Principall Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries of the English Nations (London, 1589)". This contains eye witness accounts of the first encounters between Eskimoes and Elizabethan Englishmen, who were not all that far apart in civilisation (despite the desperate hardship of their lives the Eskimoes had a high degree of social organisation, a knowledge of their own history and acquaintance with reading and writing) but whose ways of life were as alien to one another as is possible for two races on the same planet.

On the 11th August, 1576, Captain Marin Frobisher finally forced his one remaining ship through storm and pack ice, and anchored in what is now known as Frobisher Bay, at the South East end of Baffin Island. Shortly there appeared several boats full of natives, making offers of friendship by signs. One of them came on board, while one of the Englishmen went with the Eskimoes as a pledge. Gifts were exchanged. The two hostages returned safely without incident.

So far so good, one would have thought, but Frobisher apparently had a certain kind of attitude and behaviour pattern. "Perceiving these strange people to be of countenance and conversation proceeding from a nature given to fiereness and rapine" he stood off to prepare his ship for defence, and then anchored again at the other side of the bay. There they took on another hostage and Frobisher himself went ashore. He "was led into their houses and there saw their manner of food and life, which is very strange and beastly."

Frobisher returned to his ship and sent the hostage home, but presently another alien came aboard voluntarily and they agreed with him by signs that he would lead them through the straits in his kayak. Frobisher sent him ashore in the ship's boat to get it. The crisis was approaching.

The boat on which the new pilot was being sent ashore was manned by a crew of five and Frobisher gave them strict instructions that they were not to go out of sight lest they be set upon. But having set down the pilot these five men inexplicably disobeyed their orders, and rowed on round the headland. They were never seen again and what happened to them was to remain a mystery for nearly 300 years.

But it was no mystery to Frobisher. Obviously, his men had been enticed way and captured. He "caused his trumpet to sound and shot a piece of ordnance over the houses." Nothing happened, except that "he heard the people of the land laugh". This produced a fine flowering of military logic. "He swore not to make peace with them but rather to depart to other places, where to try and find some other people of that land to whom these late doings were unknown, and of them to take some prisoners in reprisal for his own men." My underlinings.

Three days later he saw a number of Eskimo boats and got ready to fire his cannon at one of the larger ones, containing some twenty or thirty men, hoping to capture some of the survivors. But seeing what he was up to, the Eskimoes stayed out of range: only one kayak came near, the man in it making signs of friendship. Frobisher returned them and proffered gifts, and when the lone Eskimo ventured near enough to accept a little bell, Frobisher grabbed his hand and pulled him onto the deck, kayak and all. He tried to explain to his captive by signs that he wanted his five men back but the Eskimo didn't seem to understand and all his companions had fled wailing in grief, so Frobisher set sail for England, taking the lone alien home as a souvenir. The "strange man and his boat...was a great wonder unto the whole city and to the rest of the realm that heard of it."

It is eerily poignant to think of the life of this lone Eskimo in Elizabethan London, and we can only hope that the disease which presumably brought it to an end was less painful than homesickness. All we know is that he died within a year, before Frobisher's next voyage.

Yes, next summer Frobisher was back in the Arctic looking for gold, the Northwest Passage to the Pacific and his five missing sailors, in that order of importance. On 19th July, 1577, the English landed again and exchanged gifts with a group of Eskimoes, but now neither side would trust the other enough to exchange hostages.

Frobisher and his mate tried to capture one by force, but they slipped on the ice and had to run for it, Frobisher in a most undignified fashion, having been "hurt in the buttocks by an arrow." Soldiers from the boats then intervened and captured an Eskimo.

About ten days later the English landed again to look at a couple of Eskimo villages from which the inhabitants had fled. They had brought their captive with them and noticed when they were leaving that he had left something odd on the ground. It was a circle of five small sticks with a small bone in the middle. It was conjectured that these represented the five Englishmen and himself, and presumably it was intended to convey to his friends that the presence of the five Englishmen on shore was keeping him imprisoned. I must say I admire that unknown Eskimo: that was a pretty fancy piece of symbolic logic for an untutored savage.

On being questioned by signs this Eskimo genius agreed that he knew about the five Englishmen, but he earnestly denied that they had been killed and eaten. They were alive and well, he insisted. But unfortunately his word carried little weight against the evidence the Englishmen found in the next village...some English clothing and "raw and new killed flesh of unkown sort". A punitive expedition set out for vengeance and hunted down a group of Eskimoes, and there followed the first battle of this tiny war. The Eskimoes fought to the death -- and beyond: for when they knew they were dying they threw themselves off the rocks into the icy sea so that the Englishmen could not get at their bodies. Both sides were now firmly convinced that the others were cannibals.

In the battle the English captured a woman with her baby who had been hiding behind some rocks, and who had cried out when her baby was wounded by a bullet. They put her in with the man captive and watched curiously if they would mate, like animals. What actually happened has really nothing to do with our theme, but it's curiously touching...

> At their first encounter they beheld each other for a good time without speech or word uttered, with great change of colour and countenance, as though it seemed the grief of their captivity had taken away their tongues. The woman at the first turned away and began to sing, as though she thought upon some other matter: but being again brought together, the man broke the silence first, and with stern countenance began to tell a long solemn tale to the woman, whereupon she gave good hearing. Afterward, they being grown into more familiar acquaintance I think the one would hardly have lived without the comfort of the other. Yet, insofar as we could perceive (albeit they lived continually together) yet did they never use each other as man and wife.

A week later the Eskimoes were again seen waving a flag and begging for the woman and child to be released. They assured Frobisher again that his five men were alive and suggested he write a letter to them. This Frobisher did, telling them that the prisoner he had taken last year was dead but he now had three more he would trade for them. But if the Eskimoes didn't give them back he would kill everyone in the country. The Eskimoes promised to come back in three days and they did, three of them coming forward to meet Frobisher. But his soldiers saw others hiding behind rocks and, suspicious, withdrew to their boats. They filled the holds with what they thought to be gold and returned to England, taking three more human souvenirs home with them.

Frobisher made a third and last expedition the following year, but saw nothing of the Eskimoes. But three centuries later, in the winter of 1860/61, a young American called Claude Hall finally solved the mystery of the five missing sailors. The Eskimoes had preserved a most detailed account of those events of 284 years ago. It appeared that the five men had in fact deserted from Frobisher's stern discipline and had lived amicably among the Eskimoes for four years, hiding out from Frobisher's annual searches. It is certain they were alive after he left for the last time, because they had used some wood abandoned by the third expedition to make a boat to sail to England, and Hall actually found traces of the work. But against the advice of their Eskimo friends they had set sail too early in the season and at that point finally disappeared from history.

Now Frobisher was not a bad man, and all his actions were dictated by what he regarded as realism: they were the inevitable result of his attitude and behaviour pattern. Nevertheless they had cost the lives of five of his men apart from those lost in battle. He had also killed a much larger number of Eskimoes, condemned four of them including a woman and child to death in exile, and left an impression of his race which was to last for three hundred years. Even his precious ore turned out to be "Fool's Gold" and was jettisoned in an English harbour. All we can be thankful for is that those Eskimoes did not happen to be an outpost of a civilisation armed with nuclear weapons: and all we can hope is that we have enough sense not to let our policies and our attitudes resemble those of that Sixteenth Century Sailingship Trooper.

Note: The above account is based on excerpts from Hakluyt in a book called "The Ice Age" by a Canadian called Moffatt, which aroused my sense of wonder more than any recent science fiction. I could have also given an account of another expedition led by by an unpractical idealistic Quaker-type Christian who faced a situation similar to Frobisher's but whose very different attitude and behaviour patterns not only saved the lives of many Englishmen but brought about the friendly relations between us and the Eskimoes which last to the present day.

--Walter A. Willis

communication problem

"I love this sort of thing about a subject I'm interested in, and it is the best way to interest me in a subject I'm interested in and this is the best way to interest me in a subject I am unfamiliar with."

--Bill Donaho in VIPER #4

our forgetful critics

The novel under study is Alberto Moravia's "The Empty Canvas," and in Italy as well as here the author's intentions have been questioned with unusual acrimony....'

"'An Empty Canvas' has been compared to Albert Camus' 'The Stranger' because of its nihilism...'

"That Signor Moravia is reaching a little more thoughtfully into his talent can be seen in many passages in his story -- even if the total effect of 'The Empty Canvas' seems to dissolve...'

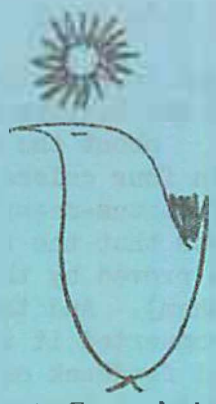
"In 'An Empty Canvas' he allows his character's erotic obsession with an inarticulate and probably shallow 17-year-old to dominate and finally run away with the novel."

From Herbert Mitgan's review of "The Empty Canvas" in The New York Times, Nov25.

.....

"He wrote that Christianity would be better off without me in it."

.....



ACCIDENTALS AND NOMICS
by JAMES BLISH

"If there is no X such that X is a unicorn, then there is no X such that X is a unicorn that is not black. Thus, if there are no unicorns, then all unicorns are black; but also, if there are no unicorns, than all unicorns are red."

ONE WAY TRIP: Is anybody reading? If there is any question that distresses me about science fiction, it is this one. It distresses me because I can't think of any way to get an answer, not any more.

Writers shouldn't inflict their problems on readers, who presumably have more important things to think about; but if the writer has no readers, he has lost his reason for living, no matter how much money he may be making by running a typewriter. And I for one no longer know whether or not anybody is reading the stuff, and in this I am not alone.

Consider: What an editor buys reflects what he likes to read, and what he thinks will sell. Six or eight months later, he may find that Vol. XII, No. 11 of his magazine sold very badly, but he has no way of telling which of the eight stories in that issue depressed the sales. If it sells very well, he has the same problem. The usual out is to blame the failures on the readers and the authors, and claim the successes for the editor. This is human and I point no fingers; but it's no help to the writer.

There was once a time when the editors of science fiction magazines received letters from their readers -- a very rare situation elsewhere in specialized fiction, and one that the editors of the day were quick to use to their profit and to that of their writers. They used these letters in three ways: (1) They spot-checked what was unpopular with the readers, whether it be technical inaccuracy, too much mushy love stuff, over-emphasis upon atom doom or some other crotchet, or a simple preference for Author A over Author B; (2) They passed what they learned on to the authors, as well as re-balancing their issues from the new knowledge; and, (3) They printed many of the letters, thus providing a feedback mechanism through which the readers could learn whether or not they agreed with each other, and whether or not they were developing crochets of their own (as of course they often were, being even more human than editors). It also happened that editors used letters from readers to prove themselves right, and to puff their magazines; but if you will look back at the letter columns of science fiction magazines when there were such columns, you'll find remarkably little of such puffery compared to the amount of genuine criticism and argument that was then being printed.

This situtation no longer exists. Dignity set in -- and in this instance I think "set in", as in a disease, is the right phrase. The editors, most of them, concluded

that a magazine without a letter column is more dignified than a magazine with one. Though the excuses given for dropping the letters were very various, it is noteworthy that the columns were all dropped at about the same time that the magazines were going in for abstract illustrations in four colors, scholarly blurbs, big-name mainstream writers, and other symptoms of status-seeking. One of the most remarkable excuses ever offerred for this policy was that the readers themselves had voted to drop the letter column (as could easily be proved by the letters received, the editor said -- were there any way to get a look at them). And the most influential magazine to retain its letter column had long ago converted it into a discussion forum for the editor's crochets, thus shutting out almost all feedback on the fiction in the book. (This danger had always been hovering on the edge of disaster; "letter comments" -- meaning the editor's habit of having the last word in a letter column -- have been with us from the beginning. But now most printed letters, and there are damn few of them, don't get into the book unless they are "editorial comments", or arguments picked with some previous position taken by the editor. Of course he <u>still</u> gets the last word; the difference is that he has now worked out a way to have the first word, too.)

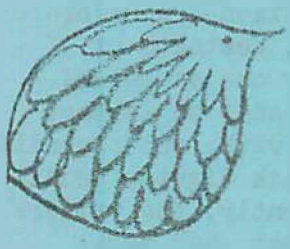
Under these circumstances it should hardly be surprising that science fiction readers stopped writing letters to magazines, except for those few readers who shared the editors' crochets or wanted to argue with them. Feedback between author and reader disappeared, so far as the stories were concerned.

AnLabs? Well, they were a noble effort. These are, essentially, popularity contests; readers are urged to vote for the best story in a given issue; the story that gets the most votes wins the author a bonus, and so does the story that winds up in second place. I have received several such checks (which I drunk), so I have no special reason to complain about the system. But it is plainly a fraud, because no magazine today receives enough letters about the stories to make any such poll a useful guide to what readers really like. From the beginning, the magazine that instituted the system has been carrying the popularity ratings out to two places to the right of the decimal point, which implies that a <u>minimum</u> of ten thousand votes is received on the stories in each issue. The other editor to adopt this form of contest carried the results out to three places, implying that he got more letters than his magazine had readers! Yet no science fiction magazine in the whole fullness of time has ever received so many as a hundred letters per issue, let alone a hundred thousand; so these highly fractionated analyses, lucrative though they may be to the winners, are pure cases of phony precision. Furthermore they are highly sensitive to loading, or, if you like a blunter word, faking. If three letters favoring "John's Other Spaceship" come in, and four letters favoring "Spaceship's Other John" arrive in the next mail, and only thirteen other votes for the other stories are on hand to be counted, can the editor be called dishonest if he makes "John's Other Spaceship" seem like a heavy favorite, even if he has to go out to three decimal places to do it? Well, yes, in fact he can be so called; but nobody will ever catch him at it.

(I know one writer who used all his relatives and friends to load up the voting, too, though in his case there was no possibility of a bonus -- the magazine didn't give one. He seldom failed to come out first...but what for? The writer who wants to know what the readers think should be happier to lose this kind of contest than to win it.)

The last remaining professional source of feedback for the science fiction author is the book review, and here the situation has gone beyond the worthless into the scandalous. Reviews of science fiction books no longer appear, except by accident, in the major review organs, such as the Sunday book sections of the New York Times and Herald Tribune. They do not appear <u>even</u> by accident anywhere else, except in the science fiction magazines themselves. *See footnote, pg 32

And the science fiction magazines, the last (and a naive man might think, the first) point of contact between s-f writer and s-f reader, currently conduct their review columns almost solely on the assumption that anything that appears outside the magazine is a potential competitor and must be put down. Most of them have given up book reviewing entirely, although they find space for fillers about virtually every other imaginable subject, from saucers to Feghoots. Those who still retain book reviews fill up the small space they allot to them with typographical tricks, with the crochets of the reviewer (I refer only to crochets which have nothing to do with fiction), and with reviews of popular-science books which the reviewer, nine times out of ten, is utterly incompetent to assess. The science-fiction book which manages to squeeze in among all these pieces of miscellaneous yatter is, by a natural law known as reviewer's obsolesence, so long out of print that no reader could find it even if he wanted to. Finally, there is the book review column which is conducted upon no principle at all except that the reviewer is the brother-in-law of the ex-editor and is still managing to collect a little spare cash from an obsolescent situation; good for him, but nothing that he has to say even begins to answer the question at the top of this article.



No real financial harm is done to the author by this policy. For example, the assumption that paper-back books compete directly with magazines has lead several publishers to tell their book reviewers to ignore the paperbacks as much as possible; but the paperbacks have been selling better than the magazines for more than three years, and the policy of ignoring them in the magazine reviews has neither hurt the sales of the books nor increased the sales of the magazines. Its sole effect has been to deprive the readers of information they would probably like to have -- and this is as true of the "shopping list" kind of book column as it is of the slightly more pretentious ones.

What the author <u>does</u> lose is technical criticism, far and away the most valuable kind, no matter where he finds it. He used to find it in the letter columns -- and he paid close attention, if he had any sense at all. In the brief heyday of close book reviewing in the magazines, he got it from his fellow authors, too, for many of them took to technical criticism with great zest, and, usually, to good purpose. But if he looks at the book reviews in today's science fiction magazines, he finds most of the space devoted to "A Child's Guide to Molecules" or other such laymen's books on what purports to be science, reviewed by a man who ordinarily cannot count up to two without going down the hall to borrow the Monroe calculator from the sales manager -- and often written by one, too, for Asimovs are very rare. Much of the rest of the space is filled by the ex-editor's brother-in-law's estimate of a really technical book (to which *** are assigned).

I can't speak for anyone but myself, but I would consider that I had lost my mind were I to buy a science-fact book because a review in a science-fiction magazine said I should. "Science-fact" in our field has become a synonym for fraud and saucerism; but even before this happened, I knew better sources for authcritative reviews of scientific books; for example, Scientific American, or the ~~now-extinct~~ American Scientist. Can anyone suggest to me any circumstances under which I would be justified in reading, let alone trusting, a review by the ex-editor's brother-in-law of a book about stellar evolution? Or, to put the <u>best</u> Possible face on the matter, though I have good reasons to listen attentively when Alfie Bester talks about protozoology or descriptive astronomy, Fred Pohl about the theory of sets or P. Schuyler Miller about archeology, why should I be patient with them when they do this in the book review section of a science fiction magazine? Why, I beg to ask, are they not talking about science-fiction, in the very little space in which they are allowed to do so? None of

these men are authorities on the subjects I have connected with them, and if they were, they would be talking about them somewhere else; they are amateurs, expressing amateurs' opinions, lovable perhaps but hardly reliable; any man who believes that a science fiction writer (or editor) is a reliable reviewer of scientific texts, or popular histories of the sciences, is a logical target for any form of quackery and deserves no better than he gets.

In the meantime the reader of science fiction is ill served, and the writer starves -- not for money, there is no particular shortage of that, but for contact with the reader. What is left behind -- and it is valuable --is fan mail, and the fan press, upon \h ich the science fiction writer who cares whether or not he is being read is now whollly dependent. This means that he is learning more about his writing from fewer and fewer readers. Even though he may have several paper-back books in print which have sold in the hundred thousands, his fan mail audience is inarticulate except for the crackpots who accuse him of stepping on their toes: out of a readership (or, at least, a sales record) of better than five million, accumulated over 22 years, I have only 5° letters from book readers, and Uy ofthem were written to tell me that I was a dirty fascist, Jesuit, n------lover, liberal, communist, madison-avenue brain- washer, anti-semite, corrupt capitalist apologist, bisexual pervert, aesthete or apologist for XXXXXXism (supply your own term). Though I can't deay one or two of these accusations — if I did, it would cost me money — what impresses me is that letters -written directly from reader to author are rare to begin with, and secondly, seldom have anything to say about the story; they ore written to pick fights, usually regardless of whether or not the story was a good one. Quite frequently, the writers are so incensed that they ask the publisher not to buy from the writer any more; though the letter-writer has spent only 35^ for the writer compared to the publisher's $3000; sometimes, indeed, they ask for their money back. (And they get it.) But in the world of ideas, two-and-half crackpot letters per year is no guidance at all, and it would be of no help to me '.'ere those two-hnd-a-half letters instinct with the wisdom of the ages.

"What thou lovest well remains; the rest is dross." Science fiction is a small field and sometimes a funny one., but after two decades I can hardly pretend that I don't love it; and I'm distressed to find that, no matter where I publish what I write, I can't find out what other people think of it, in any way that I can trust.

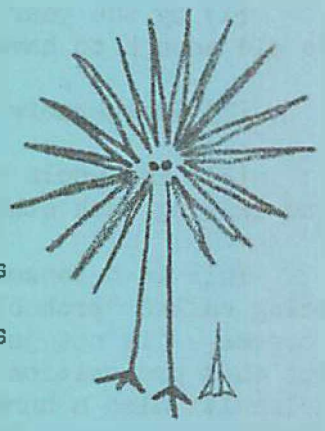
But a return to the widespread FICTION reviews of the early 1950's, and, a wholesale revival of megazine letter columns, would please me inordinately,and possibly make me write better. What is more to the point: it might make most s-f writers write better. As of this moment, we do not know what the reader wants -- as he has been complaining for years — and even worse, we have no way of finding out.

IN THE CURRENT (sixth) annual Merril anthology there's a piece by G. Harry Stine titled "How to Think a Science Fiction Story", an excerpt from a longer essay which appeared in ANALOG. I strongly suspect that the title is not the author's or I'd be quarrelling with him even before getting into his text; in any event, the main point of his argument is that s-f writers have been too conservative in predicting future technological developments. That is, that's what he thinks he means; actually, he seems to be saying that we have been too conservative in assigning dates to such developments. He then cites six technological areas where major changes could mean major changes in our lives ...all of them, as it turns out, areas that have been explored extensively in s-f, in some instances way back in the '20s; it would seem that Mr. Stine has't read much s-f.

That, however, isn't the aspect of his article that interests me most. Fundamental

to his thesis is the use of the trend-curve, from which extrapolations can be made -- not exactly a new idea in this community. Mr. Stine's handling of it differs from the usual practice, however, in that he ignores the fact that all functions -- of which curves are only pictures -- have automatic cut-off points, or areas where they do not apply. Or, in more familiar terms, Mr. Stine not only permits but insists that we ride his curves straight out into Cloud-Cuckoo Land.

As an example of this, examine his first point, the curve for Life Expectancy. As he reads it, this means that anyone born after the year 2000 will live forever, "barring accidents." Now any function capable of describing such a curve would involve its proprietor in several operations wherein he would be forced to subtract from infinity; for although "anyone born after the years 2000" can be (if the definition is hedged a little) a finite number, "forever" cannot. In other words, Mr. Stine's hedge, "barring accidents", is unnecessary; anyone born after the year 2000 would live forever even if they died by the billions. Infinity minus any finite number is still infinity.



The dangers of this kind of single-minded faith in extrapolation were pointed out 25 years ago in Claire P. Beck's "S-F Critic", by John Campbell in an unbetterable example. Suppose, he said, we plot the tensile strength of glass thread against its cross-sectional diameter; the resulting function clearly shows that the strength goes up as the diameter diminishes. Plotted as a curve, however, it also shows that it is possible to have a glass thread with tensile strength 20 times that of the finest steel. The only requirement is that it be of xero diameter.

Nor is this all that's wrong with Stine's life expectancy operation. There seems to be little doubt that life expectancy has risen sharply since about Roman times; at present, according to Metropolitan Life's charts, it's going up a fraction of a year every year, and now stands at 81.5 (though the figures for men and for women differ, with the advantage on the side of the women). But "life expectancy" is not so simple a concept as it might appear on the surface, and it certainly does not mean, "How long it is possible for man to live," or"current maximum old age." That figure, as far as we know, has not changed at all in the whole of the lifetime of man; some people lived to be 100 or so in Biblical times, and some still do today, but there has been no improvement.

What Stine has failed to bear in mind is that the figures for life expectancy are derived from an enormous population in which individuals may die at any age. In Roman times, for instance, the life expectancy figure seems to have been somewhere between 25 and 30; but do we visualize the world's most stable Empire having been populated and run by men not long out of their teens? Of course not. The very low life expectancy figure is heavily biassed by the fact that large proportion of the Roman population died in infancy; and another large proportion of the more serious childhood diseases (pre-eminently, scarlet fever). The tough specimens who ran this gamut successfully then had the sword to face -- the armies were largely teen-agers. Those who survived to become adult Roman citizens were a relatively small fraction of the total population being counted -- but most of them managed to live just as long as we do. Exactly the same reasoning applies to the low life expectancy of the Middle Ages.

The advent of effective medicine, dated for convenience just one hundred years ago -- that is, at the height of Pasteur's career -- began to run up life expectancy at a terrific rate. It did this first by cutting back infant mortality; second, by

cutting down battlefield deaths (into which I lump deaths from surgery, since medically they are wholly analogous); and finally by reducing all infectious disease to the category of a nuisance rather than that of a major menace. But it has had no effect upon the age beyond which a man can confidently expect to be dead; all that has happened, and all that the life expectancy figure really shows, is that we now have more aged people in our population than ever before in history. (That curve, too, shows signs of flattening out. It cannot, of course, become asymptotic, because that presumes an infinite population).

Kurt Vonnegut, some years ago, read this curve and extrapolated from it much more sensibly, in a GALAXY story in which he combined it with the population curve and came out with these conclusions:

(1) By the year 2000, almost everybody will have living grandparents even when he is old enough to have teen-age children; he may even have one great-grandparent living.

(2) Furthermore, they will all be living with him.

(3) The whole crew will probably be jammed into three rooms, if they're lucky, and driving each other crazy.

This is a reasonable way of reading paired curves, and strikes me as worthy of being called "probable". Stine's conclusion -- that anyone born after 2000 will live forever -- is not just improbable; it is impossible. Had the technically trained Stine put this proposition up against the law of the conservation of energy (discovered by Helmholtz also a hundred years ago, and still standing, no matter what Campbell and Dean say) he would have seen for himself that his curve had a cut-off point.

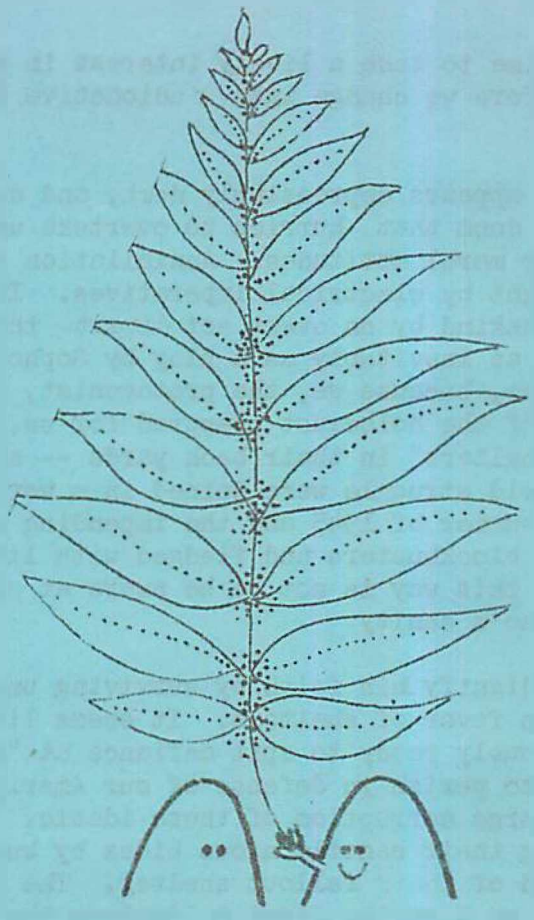
MY NEW YORK APARTMENT is in Little Italy, where, I have discovered, it is possible for a man to become a devotee of what might be called olive-oil-can fandom. Many of the imported brands -- mostly from Lucca, a Tuscan town about midway between Pisa and Florence -- compete by imitating each others' labels, which are replete with scrolls, gold medals, and reproductions of the makers' signatures (with terrible warnings against copying which I gather do not have the force of Italian law behind them). A more imaginative group derives its brand names from opera, and some of these are startling. The "Enrico Caruso" brand manages to encompass both schools of thought by being non-genuine without Caruso's signature, now about as protected by even a stiff copyright or trademark law as Abraham Lincoln's would be, but others go farther afield. One brand, for example, is "Pace O Mio Dio", another calls itself "Pasta Diva".(Both labels show ladies rather like Mazola's "sweetheart of the corn".) Another calls itself "Profeta" -- which may be allowable, since the firm involved is Profeta Bros., but I'm suspicious, particularly since the graphic element in the trademark is a conspicuously knobby cross. For the opera-lovers in the audience, I'm establishing what I've decided to call the John Berry prize, to be given to the first person who can identify these last three examples as anything other than brands of olive oil. The prize will consist of a handsome scroll, slightly spotted with peanut butter. -- James Blish

Footnote to pg 28: And in the NATIONAL REVIEW, the house organ of the middling far right, which used to publish good reviews by del Rey and now seems to be printing Sturgeon reviews on a regular basis, These are presumably read by Dick Lupoff and little old ladies in tennis shoes.

.....

"Hip, hip, but not hooray!"

.....



FILE 13

by Redd Boggs

THE WINE OF WRATH

You are all the last generation. Fate was penurious with us: the future is not as long as it was. When we finish the '60s, will we have room to live another decade, or a fragment of one? I have read many books, many articles on the matter of nuclear warfare, and no one -- not Herman Kahn, nor Edward Teller -- has disclosed to me the smallest chance of mankind's survival in the fireball and fallout to come. I suppose the only bright spot in the whole ominous picture is that at least we hold tickets for bleacher seats at Armageddon. In this respect we can claim to be the favored children of time, for to be in at the end -- the grand climax of the drama that began 2,121,003,423 years and four months ago when life first appeared on the planet -- seems a strange and unearthly boon. We might have been born into and lived out our lives, safe but unenlightened, in the changeless Middle Ages or the tranquil Victorian Age; instead we are here fretfully awaiting the messenger who will bring the news that all is lost. We, out of all the generations of man, have been chosen for transfiguration in the sublimated fire and will, presumably, meet our Maker face to face when we have sifted across the Bar. "Who minds the cross who knows he will have a crown?"

I think we were born and bred for the apocalyptical moment, for who else in the full span of history could have appreciated the story to be written in roentgens on the prevailing winds? Had the medieval alchemist succeeded in destroying the world in the backlash of a successful experiment with cow-dung and quick-silver, the serfs would have beheld the blazing sky as dumbly as the sheep in the fields. As science fiction fans, we at least will understand the significance of the mighty

flash, and perhaps have time to take a lively interest in the predicted manifestations of the detonation before we change into radioactive dust and are borne aloft.

Otherwise the future appears depressingly dark; and even the present is spiritually obscure. The doom that hurries to overtake us is so roundly mechanical that there is no place for moral attitudes. Annihilation is programed by computers and guided through the night by electrical imperatives. It comes by no apparent will of mankind; neither can mankind by an overt act divert the disaster if it is to come. The drama proceeds as inevitably as a play by Sophocles, but it lacks a tragic dimension, I suppose, because we, the protagonist, possess only a potential, not an active, awareness of the holocaust prepared for us. A few dizzily scheming souls are scraping out "shelters" in their back yards -- shelters that would make good sense if only this cold struggle were joined in a world like that which existed in World War 2 up to the summer of 1945 and the impending war were to be fought by powers armed with puny blockbusters and fledged with little Superforts to deliver them. But to be aware in this way is not be be aware at all, though it has the advantage of preserving one's sanity.

The Christian might dignify his faith by surviving under it, but even the churches are coming out in favor of shelters. It seems like some obscene joke that the people most vociferiously ready to spit defiance at "godless communism" and to proclaim their readiness to perish in defense of our American ideals are also the readiest to display the large corruption of those ideals. These same people talk of the necessity of saving their sanctimonious hides by butchering their friends and neighbors at the threshold of their fallout shelter. The other side of the question has not been heard. Perhaps I am the first to declare the high morality of forcing your way into your neighbor's fallout shelter if you have none of your own.

I have heard it said that a man in a lifeboat in danger of being capsized by less fortunate survivors struggling in the water has a right and an obligation, on behalf of himself and his fellow passengers, to brain anyone, old shipmate or not, who attempts to clamber aboard. This, perhaps, is true, but it does not improve the moral atmosphere of a voyage to begin uttering warnings and taking a few fierce practice swings with an oar when the ship has scarcely entered the iceberg zone.

We must be ready to acknowledge the human ingenuity that prepared the cosmic doom for us, and have on our lips when we learn that the alien missile is on its way the very words that Isaac Asimov used to comfort Ted Sturgeon when the first sputnik was sent aloft: "We didn't lose; humanity put that object up in space -- and 'you' are all of humanity." For under such terms, of course, man is always on the winning side and cannot be defeated. My greatest regret is that no life will survive us on earth, and there will be none to mourn our passing. And the catastrophe, mighty as it will be, probably will not make a flash on the dark side of earth that can be seen by watchers in space much farther away than the orbit of Mars.

NONSENSORSHIP

Men have been jailed or fined in some communities for selling "Tropic of Cancer" and PLAYBOY magazine, which are freely sold elsewhere in the land. But the grand prize for asininity among book-burners and banners must go, I think, to the administration of a Downey, California, school that removed the Tarzan books from the library. Their reason? Well, they doubted "whether Tarzan and Jane were legally man and wife."

Mr. Ralph Rothmund leaped to the defense of the Apeman and his mate; Mr. Rothmund is general manager of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc., and he "spoke out" in Tarzana, California, saying that ERB's famous pair "most definitely were married." I trust that Tarzan has been restored to the library shelves as a result of this assurance. But I shudder to think what books may be banned now, if censors accept the principle that characters in all books must be "legally man and wife". The Bible, for example. Do you think Adam and Eve could display their marriage certificate if challenged by the school librarian of Downey, California?

OH, BAL -- DERDASH!

"More Americans are buying green Christmas trees this year than ever before," reported WPBC, the squares' favorite radio station in the Twin Cities, during the Yuletide, quoting a Christian businessman (sic) in Chicago, who claimed to have taken a solemn survey of Christmas tree sellers all over the country. "Trees sprayed with various colors are on their way out because more and more people are coming to believe that it violates the true spirit of Christmas to spray paint on one of God's products."

That's what the man said, with pious approval shaping his hushed tones, I too am conducting a solemn survey and patiently await a report from Detroit that will reveal how many automobiles in an unpainted state are being sold to priests, deacons, and devout laymen of the church. Or aren't steel and plastic God's products? When I hear news like this, I begin to cogitate dimly down in the southwest corner of my pretty pink brains. I'm all in favor of taking Christmas away from the manufacturers of electric can-openers, but somehow I'm not too sure of the wisdom of giving it back to the Christians.

FANDOM'S CORNERSTONES OF FAITH

Fandom will fall whenever fans cease to believe...

1. That the NFFF is basically a great idea and all it requires is the enthusiastic support of actifans and the administrative know-how of a few leading BNF's.

2. That all trufans enjoy folk music, and most of them are secretly taking lessons on the five-string banjo.

3. That modern science fiction was invented singlehandedly by John W. Campbell, with a little help from Robert A. Heinlein.

4. That L. Sprague de Camp, Poul Anderson, and Grendel Briarton are great humor writers.

5. That John W. Campbell is a nuclear physicist with a degree from MIT and a graduate degree from Duke.

6. That Dr. J. B. Rhine, whose work has launched more science fiction stories

than Albert Einstein's, will be remembered in future ages (if any) right along with Galileo and Roger Bacon.

7. That ANALOG sells hundreds of copies every month at busy little newsstands across the street from atomic energy laboratories all over the country.

8. That to be a top-rate science fiction editor you've got to be a little cracked.

9. That all leading fans would make top-rate pro editors and help establish a new golden age of they were hired in that capacity.

10. That there is a new golden age of science fiction right around the corner.

-- Redd Boggs

the sinking editor

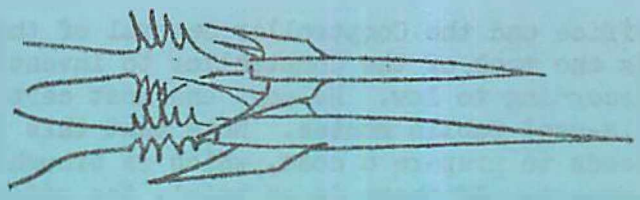
If you thought Wrhn was planned months in advance and each issue painstakingly dummyed before etching into stencil, you couldn't have been more wrong. As I leisurely compose this filler, the rest of the issue, with the exception of "File 13" is at the printer where a not so leisurely call brought the mimeo drums booming to a halt. Redd's column arrived about 2 hours after the magazine had been put to bed, but I thought the installment so depressing that it just had to go into this issue to counteract some of the fannish good cheer. (Of course having a "File 13" (at any time) is an inconvenience to be looked forward to each issue.)

This issue I seem to have stabbed myself in the back in a couple of places. In the mailing comments I've allowed as how I won't expect an atomic war until I've read Redd's "The Craters of Earth" and now along comes Redd with "The Wine of Wrath", which will do very nicely, thank you. And in the mailing comments on CCON I'm now maneuvered into direct opposition to the thesis of this "File 13". Oh well, if enough of you call me 'coward' I may reply to it in the next issue, but crossing Boggs once in an issue is enough for me -- anyway where would the 7 page answer go?

The other place where I stabbed myself in the back isn't so apparent, but the only way I can possibly fill this space is by confessing my stupidities so I'm forced into revealing that too. When I tore out of the house with four stencils, (most of the writing and all of the stenciling is done after hours at the office where the equipment is superb), I estimated from the length of Redd's draft that I'd need a short filler (I never thought I'd be able to reprint HABAKKUK here!) and picked up the SLANT file which was handy. There was a filler in it I eventually wanted to use and I find it answers one of the questions addressed to Larry Anderson in the mailing comments.

Walt Willis from SLANT #5, Spring 1951:

"Since we keep getting subscriptions from what you might call the sane fringe of sf, a short note on technical terms might not be out of place. If my memory serves me right -- if it does,what a horrible punishment -- the name 'fan' was foisted on his readers by Hugo Gernsback some twenty years ago. We have been stuck with it ever since because 'articulate readers of imaginative fiction' is long and life is short. For some reason fans are born amateur journalists and produce large numbers of 'fanzines' -- henceforth called 'fanmags' here for the very good reason that this one often runs out of 'i's. They vary in size from the minute 'Fanscient' to mimeographed mountains, and in quality from 'Nikromantikon' through good to ordinary. There is no such thing as a bad fanmag, because what's worth doing is worth doing badly. A 'BEM' is the bug-eyed monster you see on certain promags if you don't rip the cover off in time, not to be confused with a 'BNF' or Big Name Fan, however close the resemblance. Finally, 'egoboo' is a word invented by Forrest J Ackerman (who else?) for the infaltion of the ego which results from praise or seeing one's work in print. It is the motive for other people's activity as opposed to the creative impulse which inspires one's own."



THE GRAND INQUEST OF THE NATION
by JERRY POURNELLE

It has become fashionable in certain circles lately to condemn Congressional Investigating Committees in general, and the House Committee on Un-American Activities and the Senate Internal Security Committee in particular because they have not resulted in a flood of legislation. If they do not result in legislation, the argument goes, they cannot have any possible use, except the harassment of the citizens. As such harassment is evil, the committees are evil, and ought to be abolished; indeed, they cannot have any basis of existence, except that of legislation, and when they fail to perform that function...

Aside from the obvious failure to understand the distinction between potential and actuality, the above argument is specious in one other very important respect. It neglects the function of exposure.

The power of Congress to expose individual citizens is not well understood today. There is such a power, and the purpose of this essay is to demonstrate its legitimacy, as well as point out several of its limitations; but we may as well say it now, this essay will attempt to show the valid power of the Congress of the United States to subject individual citizens to "exposure".

The Constitution of the United States does not create a sovereign in the Austinian sense. It sets up three Departments of government, each of which has certain powers and is recruited in a certain way. Unlike Great Britain, where Parliamentary Sovereignty is an absolute fact, the US has no single body capable of performing all the functions of government and changing all the laws. If we have a sovereign, it is 2/3 of each House of Congress and 3/4 of the legislatures of the States; even this has limits.

This fact of the division of powers of the government gives rise to several problems of relationship between the coordinate Departments. It is not our purpose to deal with all of them, but one in particular is obvious: one department appropriates the money, and another spends it. Yet that department which appropriates must, if it is to be honest at all, have some means of knowing that government money is spent properly. It not only may set conditions for government spending -- it must have some way of knowing that these conditions are carried out.

That the setting of conditions is valid is, I believe, admitted by all. The usual remark made about HUAC is that the FBI does a better job of enforcing the law, that is, the will of Congress. Congress has stated that it wishes no money spent to support the enemies of the state, and in particular, communists. Like Shakespeare's Henry IV (H IV pt. I, Act I), Congress does not wish to buy treason. The executive is bound by this decision once carried into law.

Yet it would be naivity itself to suppose in theory or practice that the Congress should rely upon an Executive agency to report to the Congress that the legislative policy is being carried out. I have heard no liberal protest at the creation of the

General Accounting Office and the Comptroller General of the US, arms of Congress, not the President. It is the task of the Comptroller to investigate expenditures and see that they are made according to law. He may and most certainly does "expose" individuals who have mis-used public monies. Note that this is all he does. The Dept. of Justice then proceeds to prepare a case, which is brought to trial before an arm of the Judicial Department. If there is no trial, the officer "exposed" is still subject to all the penalties that go with exposure, though he has never seen a court.

Now the same must be true of the problem of subversion. It is the policy of Congress -- the Legislative body, which sets policy -- that communists not be employed by the US Government. It is the duty of Congress to see that this policy has, in fact, been carried out by the Executive. It is not, nor can it ever be, sufficient simply to ask the Executive if it has done so. Congress must determine for itself. It must have power to investigate, and such investigations take the form of a hunt for communists within the government.

(Now it is one thing to argue that such hunts must be conducted under the rules of fair play, and quite another to say that they may not be conducted at all. I am not here concerned with whether or not fair play has, in fact, been observed. I am attempting to show that the hunt is a legitimate power of the Congress.)

Now if Congress is to satisfy itself that its will is being carried out, it must have the power to so satisfy itself -- that is, it must have the usual investigatory powers of compulsory attendence of witnesses. It may not, of course, require an individual to testify against himself; but it may require him to testify. In what other way could it learn of inefficiency in the Executive establishment? How can Congress know that the FBI has done an adequate job, unless Congress itself tests the results of that job?

So far, however, we have dealt only with government employees. We have shown some power of the Congress over the public service; now what of others? Is there any power of "exposure" as such which can act on private citizens?

No, of course not. Not on the citizenry as such. BUT -- where these citizens are the recipients of public money, or act in a public capacity, such as advisors to the Government (Owen Lattimore) or as recipients of stolen government property (the magazine AMERASIA), then they become subject to the powers of Congress. The same is true of schools, where public money is obtained from the Federal Government. It is absolutely inconcievable that one should argue in favour of, say, Federal Aid to Education and simultaneously deny to the Congress the right to determine how, for what purpose, and for whom such money is spent. That is an argument of sheer irresponsibility, and invites a waste of public funds. (I am unalterably opposed to Federal Aid to Education for precisely this reason. It is insane to think that Congress will shovel out money without supervising its expenditure.)

Any citizen, then, who becomes an objectof Federal funds, either as a recipient, or by dent of being responsible for their expenditure, is a legitimate subject for investigation.

But the power of Congress goes further. Any citizen who becomes an object of legislative favour - or more particularly, any group which becomes an object of legislative favour, - is also a fit subject for investigation. That this encompasses quite a large number of people is no doubt true, and it is no doubt unfortunate; but the remedy is elimination of the Federal influence by elimination of Federal favour, not by restricting legitimate rights of government.

Lastly, one should never forget the source of Congressional Investigations as a method of supervision. The Teapot Dome scandals, which resulted in McGrain vs. Daugherty, aroused (rightly) popular indignation across the country. It became obvious that the government was intending to do nothing. The Executive would not act. It was demanded that Congress do so, and Daugherty, former Attorney General, was summoned before the bar of Congress to testify concerning Executive laxity in prosecution of cases involving misuse of public funds. A warrant was issued by the Senate to one McGrain, serjeant at arms, who took Daugherty into custody. Daugherty sued out a writ of habeas corpus. It was denied, the Court holding (through VanDevanter, J., speaking for eight justices, Stone, J., not taking part in deliberation) that the power of compulsion of witnesses was inherent in the Legislative function. Although the argument of the intention of the Framers seems not to have much effect on modern liberal opinion, it cannot even be pleaded that the Framers had not intended Congress to have such power, it being exercised by Madison in 1792 in a House committee.

The Court also states "the contention is earnestly made on behalf of the witness that this power of inquiry, if sustained, may be abusively and oppressively exerted. If this be so, it affords no grounds for denying the power."

Now it is definitely true that in the last analysis, Congress must have in mind some legislation -- some remedy for abuses. Yet, without the power of investigation, including "exposure", Congress cannot know whether there are abuses to be remedied by legislation. If it finds none, it will of course not legislate; but surely it is not held that because no abuses are found, the search was wrong?

Note also that Congress does not punish. It does not even imprison for contempt.* All that is done through a court of law. All Congress can do is to find and make public certain facts about public servants and recipients of government largess, finantial or legislative. This it is entitled to do.

(Note*: Congress, or rather each House, has the power to summon anyone before the Bar of the House and by majority vote commit his person to imprisonment in the District of Columbia jail for the life of the Congress -- ie, 3o years or less. And it is a proper return to a writ of habeas corpus that Congress has done so, the Court being unable to inquire into the reasons for such action. The Houses do not use this power... but they could. --J. E. Pournelle

Breen-conclusion

If it sometimes takes decades of intense study of ko-ans to achieve the Zen breakthrough of satori, and Zen is acknowledgedly faster than most other roads to enlightenment, how can one expect a better rationale to be spelled out in a book written by an author himself not an adept?

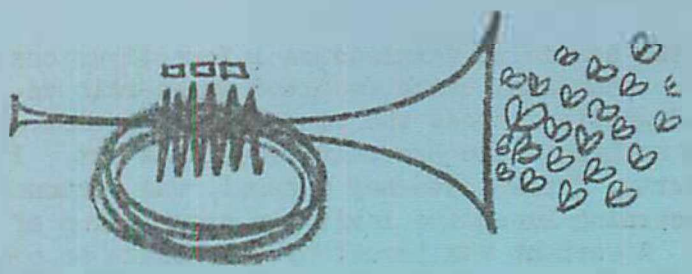
I would summarize this excursion by saying that some of the more vigorously attacked ideas in this book are sounder than Blish or less able critics believe, and far sounder than the general public would suspect, despite the book's numerous blunders; and that "Stranger In A Strange Land" and "Venus Plus X" alike are of considerable and lasting value as books calculated less to entertain than to make people think, to shake them out of their complacency on issues in which complacency has already ruined many lives. I hope it does not become fashionable to sneer at either book: there is too much of value in both to justify sneers even when they are not merely the common square reaction to whatever one does not understand or automatically find sympathetic.

--Walter Breen

.....

"For 7½ years Cabot Lodge and I have sat in the National Security Council in the Cabinet."

.....



UNPREDICTABLE REACTIONS

WILLIAM F TEMPLE: So Wrhn graduates from paperback to hardcover. When can we expect hand-tooled leather? Congrats -- even though the front cover came adrift the moment I touch it. I put it on the music stand of the piano and my wife played the cover design, muttering: "No bars, no key, naturals but no sharps or flats...what the hell?" :: An original composition? Yet if you can say a rusty carillon has a familiar ring, there was a familiar ring. But I couldn't place it. Pause while someone screams: "The fool doesn't know the opening bars of the third movement of the Ninth!" Or something like that. :: All right, there's an awful lot of music I don't know. Likewise, a lot of awful music I do know, don't like, and should....I suppose. Take Mozart. (You're welcome -- I don't want him.) I read Art Castillo (and other such people whose opinion I respect) and tell myself for the nth time I'm missing something great here, I must try again to appreciate Mozart. And I try. And the patterns weave fussily on, inverted double-cross hemstitch and what have you, doing nothing at all for me. Until at last I feel it's more time-wasting than TV and switch off. :: Mozart composed much of his music while playing billiards. Seems to me it should be listened to the same way -- background music while you play billiards. So I'm a heretic, who'd like to be a repentant heretic, and can't find the way. But the 3 B's exult me. Form and feeling I must have. Patterns have no feeling, and shouldn't be confused with form. Michaelangelo's frescos have form. Beside them, Mozart's stuff is just patterned wallpaper. That's it: Mozart wandered around that damn billiard table subconsiously setting the saloon's wallpaper to music. :: There's so much to comment on in Wrhn, and I've but one air-letter and little time. The day after tomorrow my daughter weds, and the household is reaching a crescendo of preparation-frenzy. The bridegroom is Joe Patrizio, and Edinburgh Scot, secretary of the British Science-Fiction Association. After Xmas he plans to edit and produce his own fanzine. S-F is inbreeding here. :: In the distance I hear the skirl of the pipes as the Scottish clans march, converging on Wembley. We'll have to sleep them in layers three deep. :: Oh, dear, I did want to comment on Berry and his "beautiful bombers" and "the art of bombing." But, like Mozart, he speaks another language than mine, and there's just no communication. :: I went to that Soviet Exhibition which so impressed Brunner. The sputniks were impressive, certainly...but, oh, the drab environment in which Ivan and Olga live their daily lives! It might seem paradise to the peasants, but...All the furniture and domestic appliances were square, boxy, clumsy, inelegant, poorly finished -- in a word, shoddy. The fabrics were coarse-woven, colorless, with straggling ends. The range of models severely limited. In cars you have the choice of black or gray. The overall idea of design seems to date from the 1930's. No spark of originality or imagination anywhere. I know man does not live by washing machines alone, but on this level of day to day existence all was dull and depressing. Definitely second-rate, and I'd say nearer third-rate. A poor advertisement for the Modern Utopia. :: The Russians themselves, though, were warm, human, charming. Just as their Moscow State Circus and Bolshoi Ballet companies are. What a pity that the function of politicians of all nations seems to be to keep the ordinary men in the streets, squares, and boulevards apart, misled, minisformed, misunderstanding. :: It seems to me that in politics the scum always rises to the top. (Wembley, England)

AVRAM DAVIDSON: On p. 35 it is written, "Violence /ie, the Civil War/..did not settle the question of whether, under the Constitution of the United States, 1860, a group of states had the right to secede." Well, now. In c. 1867 the US Supreme Court, in the case of White vs Texas or Texas vs White, declared that, under the Constitution

of the United States, 1860, or any other date, neither a state nor a group of states, had the right to secede. The case dealt with payment of interest on State of Texas bonds during the Civil War. Had the Civil War ("violence") not occurred, the question would never have arisen. I admit this is one step removed from violence itself; but don't think this invalidates the point. It may not have been that "upsetting the chess board" settled the problem, but in picking up the pieces it was settled that neither a bishop nor a group of bishops can move like a queen. (New York)

JAMES BLISH: Lowndes puts his finger squarely on the hole in Heinlein's position that no man is born with a moral sense. Anyone who has worked for a while in the field of mental disease runs up against the kind of case Lowndes describes, the moral moron whose sole visible deficiency is his inability to tell wrong from right, or to believe that the distinction is important. Many of these patients are brilliant; others are, in Heinlein's term, boobs; but they are all distinguished by having holes in their heads where the moral sense should be, and no amount of inculcation can give it to them. The suspicion arises that they never had it -- whereas most people do have it, and hence in them it can be cultivated by the kind of measures RAH advocates (among many others). To propose that nobody has it until education sets in is tempting, but there's no evidence for it, and lots of evidence against it. Contrariwise, the real moral moron is born without it and nothing, at least thus far, can be done for him. (This kind of character, by the way, can be spotted instantly on an MMPI profile--providing that he's not intelligent enough or well-educated enough to fake an MMPI profile, which can be done mechanically in about three seconds without bothering even to look at the questions on the cards.) (New York)

TOM PURDOM: I especially liked the Lowndes and Blish pieces. Both of them are the strongest arguments I've seen in support of the old idea that only professional writers should write literary criticism. Both are judicious, fair minded, courteous to colleague, understanding of the problems and purposes of fiction. Lowndes, conducting as he does a three way debate, is especially impressive. His literary and critical philosophy, as expressed in the beginning of the essay, I agree with almost one hundred percent. :: In dealing with the flaw in Heinlein's Utopia, I think he missed a couple of things that occured to me after I'd had time to digest the book. First of all, Heinlein's proposed test of public spiritedness (which, after all, is all that the military service requirement is in his society) probably wouldn't work. A man with a real drive for power might endure anything to put himself in a position where he could stand for public office. Again, even if the test did give the vote only to people who put the good of the group before their own self interest, there are certain problems such people are usually poorly equipped to handle. Take a strike for instance. The "public interest" is commonly defined as not having a strike. When most people think of the public interest, that's what they think of. That there may be a real question of justice in the distribution of wealth -- especially when their own wealth isn't involved -- is often overlooked by people with a strong feeling for the public interest. And of course a man can really be devoted to the public interest and yet convince himself that his own interest (keep the trains running, say, if he's a commuter) is the public interest. Then, too, the selfish desires of a selfish individual may be in the public interest -- and if that selfish individual can't attain power and leadership, the community may be destroyed. :: Heinlein's limited franchise, while the best attack on the American Constitution I've read, cannot cope with the complexities of human nature. The universal franchise we have today can be defended by a cynicism that was apparently a strong part of the character of the men who wrote our constitution. In answer to the question Who is fit to rule? the monarchists say, The King; the businessman say, The successful businessman; the aristocrat says, The upper classes; the sentimental democrat says, The people: and Heinlein says, Those who have proven they will place the community above themselves. But the cynical democrat says, No one is fit to rule, and decides in favor of the

universal franchise. Though there is universal agreement the Cuban invasion was a fiasco, there is an argument as to what made it a fiasco. The conservatives think the mistake was not giving the revolutionaries enough military support. The liberals think the mistake was staging the invasion. Kennedy continues to get my support because I think he agrees with the liberals. Of course, other liberal criticisms are the failure of the CIA to provide adequate intelligence and the failure of the CIA to give its support to liberal anti-Castro elements. :: I'm convinced "Operation Abolition" was largely a fake and that the riots either weren't riots or, if they were, probably weren't organized by Communists. But I think it's a mistake to battle the HCUA on this issue. The film was probably a very clever -- and highly successful -- attempt to divert liberal fire from the real issue: Should the HCUA be abolished? It's impossible to debate what did or did not happen at San Francisco more than a year after the event, if you weren't there. But you can amass a strong legal, constitutional and moral case against the HCUA simply by logic and referring to the records of the Committee's other hearings. :: This whole business of anti-Communism reminds me of one of the wisest points Heinlein ever made. In "Methuselah's Children" a character, some kind of government official, says democracies collapse when the voters concentrate on one issue to the exclusion of everything else. In the mind of the anti-Communist, there simply is no other issue. Civil liberties, fair play, freedom of education, all are unimportant beside the threat of Communist subversion. I object to Richard Nixon not because of any particular campaign tactic he did or did not use but because he rose to prominence on the anti-Communist issue. Communist subversion is a relatively minor problem in the United States. To treat it as the major problem-- especially when as in the case of racists, businessmen fearing government regulation and unionization, and others, it is used to distract the voter from the really important issues of the day -- is the trick of a demagogue. If Communism is really so evil, why are we so afraid it will prove attractive to people? I am not very worried about Communist subversion, though I admit modern weapons may make the saboteur a real threat. I am, however, worried very much about the problems of defense, avoiding nuclear war, preserving American independence, the quality of our education, racial segregation, juvenile delinquency, the squalor and decline of our cities, and many other political problems. And I would like to see these issues debated in a reasonable manner, not by yelling "Communist", "traitor", "fellow traveler", "dupe" and other unpleasant names. Nor do I think any man who rose to prominence by obscuring the issues in this manner should be rewarded with the Presidency. (3317 Baring St., Philadelphia 4, Penna.)

RB: I'm not so sure that pragmatic (if a thing works it's good) Jack agrees that the mistake was in staging the revolution. Did failure make the mistake apparent? Would it still have been a mistake if it had succeeded? A mind that could initially see the need for the invasion would see it as a failure of tactics not a failure of principle: note the continuing cleverness; while Kennedy was in South America on his good will mission and, incidentally, dominating its press, Secretary of State Rusk was in Spain praising Franco. Better timing than the Cuba invasion and an example of successful, for a change, tactic over principle. :: Congressman Roosevelt did make a constitutional and moral case against the HCUA but the House of Representatives proved singularly impervious to it when it was pointed out that a few of Roosevelt's arguments had also appeared in THE DAILY WORKER.

RICK SNEARY: Speaking of SAPS, that was a mighty fine editorial you did about it and FAPA. I found little to disagree with, other than your view that there was a need for a change. It seems to me that SAPS is admirably fulfilling its mission in life. :: It is a little hard to remember details back as far as fifteen years, so I dug out a letter of Joe Kennedy's of August, 1946. In it he tells about giving up for the time the idea of a new stfish apa, that he had proposed to call the Comet Amateur Press Association. Partly because it sounded like a lot of work, and partly because he had just gotten into FAPA. But his outline of rules, such as the single elective officer,

were the ground work for the first SAPS constitution. :: But of perhaps the greatest interest is the last paragraph,in which he outlines his views as to the reason for such a group:

> "Yet, somehow the enthusiasm and ambition of the new fan makes the idea of another stfish apa an intriguing one. Despite sloppy duplication, crappy material, and general technical ineptitude -- I still think the first efforts of new fans are much more enjoyable than some of the heavy-weight, carefully polished attempts at super-intellectuality produced by the old guard. There's a certain something found only in the newfan publications -- and, moreover, fans of one or two years' standing are usually still vitally interested in stfantasy. It makes a difference. So, although I donno if anything will come of it, I still think the concept of a brand new apa which would throw its gates wide open to the new fans is an idea with intriguing possibilities. It might not be literary, it might not be intellectual, two thirds of its publications might stink to high heaven, but it would probably be a heck of a lot of fun!"

Could anyone be more prophetic? And so it has been. SAPS was formed by the Spectator group in NYC, and the Michigan group, who made up the biggest part of the youngest and most active elements in the then current fandom. There is no one in current fandom who could be so easily pointed out as our most important fan, as we back then were able to point to Kennedy and later Rapp. (Tucker and Ackerman were still acknowledged as First Fans, but they were as elder ghods to us brash young fans who came storming into fandom in the mid-40's.) :: I see no reason why SAPS should develope the hard-core and seriousness of FAPA. That the group is alive and vitally active shows that it fills a need as it is. In fact it may not be free wheeling enough, or else why the need for the Cult? As to the loss of its most valuable members -- who is to say who is the most valuable to SAPS? Much of the vitality of the group comes from it's new blood: members who, from past experience are more interested in publishing than serious discussions. That this sort of thing is no longer of interest to me is not a sign that I don't think it serves a valuable service. I'm only sorry that it appears that it will be still two more years before you get into FAPA -- I think you are ready for it now. :: Agree with you regarding your feeling about Leman, but to debate at this level -- whether the film contains things that did not happen in the picture or the soundtrack, etc, etc -- is rather a waste of time. You two can cat-and-mouse with words till doomsday (which may not be too long at that) and still not change the basic belief of the other. I don't know how one goes about changing what Lemon thinks to what we think he should think, but I don't think picking his remarks apart word by word will do it. But, that's only what I think. :: Willis and Berry are fine reading as always, but I don't find anything to say about their columns. And, as of this moment I haven't read Lowndes -- but will. It is interesting to note the amount of talk about science fiction stories that Heinlein has caused. Sort of reminds one of the old days of fandom, when we still re read that crazy stuff. (2962 Santa Ana St., South Gate, California)

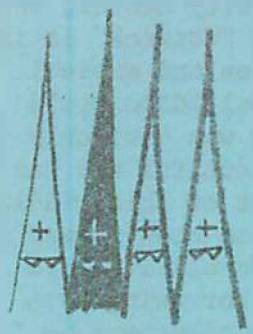
RB: If Leman and some of the defenders of "Operation Abolition" are supporting it with arguments that contradict the film itself, it can hardly be called splitting semantic hairs to point out that (a) in contradicting the film they're supporting my argument and (b) in view of this they should re-examine their position and find out what they're defending. Changing Leman's mind would be a precious dividend: the purpose of the article was to sharpen my own thinking on the subject and present the case for anyone else who cared to read it. :: The Cult is more free wheeling than SAPS only in its organization: it also has a harder core than FAPA, because of its small size (13 members), and more serious and thorough discussions than FAPA. But it's a mistake to confuse my demonstration of the condition of SAPS with a plea for more "serious discussion". What SAPS members do with their magazines is their own

business: I'd just like to see the best of them doing it longer.:: I deliberately let the showings of the SAPS polls decide, by implication, who our most "valuable" members were -- not wanting to get into a semantic squabble over the word. I'm questioned by someone who reprimanded me for apparently attempting to change beliefs by attacking the words that were used to express them. I would say an apa decides who its most valuable members are when it arrives at a decision through its polls of what members it likes best, what member's material it enjoys most. Any other criterion is meaningless because if the most "valuable" also arn't the most enjoyed they provide no incentive to remain in the club and my article, which finding you don'd disagree with, shows that SAPS has been losing its most enjoyable fans to FAPA -- a situation I can't blame you for thinking needs no remedy.:: I can't agree that SAPS' "new blood...from past experience are more interested in publishing than serious discussion." It seems to me that the order is exactly reversed: that fans grow from placing their emphasis on publishing to what they're publishing when it becomes apparent that those funny little typographic marks they're distributing are of more importance, in terms of boredom or interest, to other fans than the fact that they turned their mimeo drum 10,000 times. By which time they've progressed to the top of the SAPS egoboo polls and are then, it seems, (and with no disgruntlement from FAPA!) ready for another apa. The question before SAPS is whether it wants to go on functioning as such a clearing house;and if not what to do about it. The collective SAPS decision will decide whether that long FAPA waiting list is really necessary.

WALTER BREEN: You asked me about my own preference for FAPA over SAPS. The problem is clearly in the hyperactivity requirements, which distinguish SAPS from all other apas. Not only can a spate of post-con gafia (or fafia) cost one his membership; the temptation to keep one's hand in with a few pages of dashed-off-on-stencil routine mailing comments or the like every other mailing (to continue receiving in return a quarterly sheaf of fanzines some of which might even contain goodies) is too great for many members. It is certainly too great to be ignored in understanding the game and the frame of reference and the attitudes characteristic of SAPS. The combined requirements of frequency and quantity certainly militate against quality. :: I will stay in SAPS as long as Wrhn and the occasional good contribution from one of the eight or ten outstanding members continue to show up. But after having read a couple dozen SAPS mailings and a somewhat larger number of FAPA mailings, I cannot avoid the conclusion that FAPA's more leisurely pace and greater frequency of appearance of a larger number of writers and artists whom I dig suit my personal preference more than the wilder atmosphere of SAPS. I am in an apa for two things: communication and exposure to quality fanwriting. I see no reason whatever to risk minimizing the latter for the former. Yet SAPS's present rules do precisely that. It is perhaps no accident that SAPS is now becoming a training-ground for neofans who would rather not bother with N'APA -- neofans who possibly can benefit by the pressure to contribute quantity, to insure that they get not only practice in writing and meeting deadlines, but criticism. Now I have nothing whatever against neofans, but I do think it a legitimate question whether this training-ground image is what we want to see in SAPS.

JAMES BLISH's long letter on issue number 12 was held out of last issue for one reason or another. It is paragraphed by subjects:

Though it's probably too late, I hope to divert your attention at least temporarily from Frank Donner's "The Un-Americans" to the Ballantine reprint of Telford Taylor's "Grand Inquest", published simultaneously. Though the Donner does contain a wealth of information on HCUA, it is not very informative on the constitutional issues involved (despite the fact that Donner is billed as a constitutional lawyer -- this and the names of his law partners being the only pieces of information the book gives about him) it's exceedingly tendentious in tone (in a field where dispassion is surely the #1 requirement for a writer), and it's pretty badly written (among many other defects,



Donner's subjects tend not to agree with their verbs in number, a failing Donner shares with BB's blurb-writers, and especially confusing in long sentences about difficult legal points). :: The Taylor is not so recent, but is brought up to date in a new preface for the BB edition -- obviously never copy-read by BB -- and is miles better; also, it has an index, and a complete set of legal and other source citations, not just HCUA, and though the author can at times be forthright about his own opinions, and is almost always highly witty, it is mostly pretty judicial in tone. Among other things, it deals at length with the constitutional issues, and also the question of rights and recourses, so carefully and clearly that I hope I'll have the book in my hand if I am ever called before one of these circuses. :: Taylor discusses, for instance, the nature of "contempt" in this context, the same question you raise on p.42 of Wrhn; and the use of the Fifth to avoid becoming an informer, which you discuss on p.6 (Taylor points out that this usage is indeed and legitimately in contempt, if the witness has no other reason for pleading the privilege against self-accusation; the Constitution nowhere grants a citizen the right not be an informer, no matter what his personal feelings may dictate, and in cases involving the public good, giving information about others may be and usually is a positive duty. The witness may plead the privilege granted by the Fifth only if his testimony would place the witness himself in jeopardy.) And lots more. :: Since the texts of the two books are about the same length (not counting the scholarly apparatus in the Taylor) and about equally condensed, and since Donner has only one committee to cover, his book does contain a lot of information not in the Taylor, but I have the feeling that it is not nearly as reliable even in the factual sphere. For example, Donner devotes some space to the charge that the FBI is acting, and has so acted for a long time, as a feeder for the HCUA. This is something many reporters have suspected for a long time, and Donner's case for it is moderately convincing, but wholly circumstantial; anybody who cited this hypothesis as a proven fact would find himself in a jam. Also, there seems to be some loading of the data by omission, consistent with the tendentious tone of the book (Donner uses and misuses this adjective so many times that I am finding it hard to shuck off myself); for example, Donner discusses some of the events involving the Emergency Civil Liberties Union, but nowhere in the book mentions the powerfully strong, real evidence that ECLU is a front group -- a fact of some importance when you consider how readily the public can be led to confuse this group with the larger, libertarian CL organization (exactly the outcome the Party, of course, thinks most desirable). (And in fact I may have the name of the front group wrong myself; lacking an index, I can't find my reference in Donner.) :: Of course, read them both if you have time; I'd be most curious to know how you'd compare them -- and how Speer would, too. ::

Mrs. Bradley's rebuke of my musical snobbishness may be deserved, but I'll claim the privilege of public comment on what's been made public. Berry printed his list, and asked for comments and counter-lists. Nor do I agree with MZB that one must beat one's way through the 1812, the Liebestraum and the Cradle Song before being able to dig masterpieces, and that "difficult" things scare potential listeners away. This is to be sure the standard freshman Music Appreciation approach but there is no evidence for its validity. (No more is there any basis for her assumption that Mozart and Schubert are "easier" composers than Bruckner or Delius; "easiness" in a composer is a measure of how much work it takes on the part of the listener to get out all their is to get in a composition, and Mozart and Schubert both score high in number of compositions which are absolutely inexhaustible no matter how hard you work on them; Bruckner, less so; Delius, hardly at all.) :: Actually people respond most to what they've been exposed to most, as generations of programming experience have proven to the hilt; can MZB otherwise explain, for instance, why the Met public, pretty well conditioned to the standard repertoire prior to Bing, took so heartily to "Wozzeck"

after only two seasons of exposures (plus a trial run or so at the City Center, which wasn't available on radio)? It could of course be pointed out that "Wozzeck" is in manyrespects a highly traditional grand opera, complete with choruses and musical devices snitched bodily from Verdi; but on MZB's reasoning its atonal idiom would make it so formidable as to be unapproachable. Not so; in fact, it was obviously much better liked than "Peter Grimes", though the latter is also beautiful and has the "advantage" of being in the traditional idiom. :: One way out of this riddle, it seems to me, is to point out that the part of the public which has been raised on kitsch has been listening to the devices and idioms of concert music all its life without realizing it. On the simplest level, this consists of the borrowing by a dance orchestra leader of a bit of one classic to use as a theme or signature -- I think it was the unmourned Blue Baron who used to close every piece he played with the chord-suspension sequence from the end of Stravinsky's "Firebird," a piracy Stravinsky could do nothing about because the copyright had lapsed. On a larger scale, many of the lushest devices of the most overheated of late 19th Century operas--specifically including "Elektra" though technically that's a product of our century--are the common coin of the arrangers who work for such outfits as Kostelanetz and Montevani, so that it's not at all unusual to hear the sappiest recent show-tune served up on the same musical platter that once bore the dripping head of Jochanaan. :: Finally (a word which in my lexicon is usually the signal for about five more paragraphs), much of the stuff MZB would probably regard as most difficult of all is also familiar to the unwashed through a lifetime of exposure as background music. Consider, please, such a work as Schoenbergs's "Kammersynfonie". Listening to this now, fifty years after its composition, it inescapably reminds you of -- movie music. (Particularly the brand used to accompany suspense and horror films, or today, TV).

Nor is this an accident. Not only was the piece enormously influential, but one of Schoenberg's major disciples, Ernest Toch, was specifically taken on by Hollywood to make that kind of noise for that kind of film, and remained there doing just that for better than two decades; he wrote all the scores for the Sherlock Holmes films, for instance. Krenek, another atonalist, took on much the same kind of assignment, before he decided to go Broadway instead. Now you throw the "Kammersynfonie" at the musically unlettered movie-goer cold, and he is not going to be alarmed one bit by the idiom; he may even have the vague feeling that it all sounds kind of old hat, as indeed it is, not only for the experienced concert-goer but for the very listener I'm hypothecating. :: There is a bad side to this conditioning, I will agree, and that is that this hypothetical layman of ours has been trained by association to believe that no piece of concert music can possibly be great unless it is also considerably overwrought and feverish. For this man, Mozart is a much harder composer to crack than Richard Strauss, or even Beethoven. And in my experience most ignorant objections to concert music tend to take the form, "It's all so la-de-dah and fairies-in-the-bottom of my garden"; while something powerfully rhythmic, almost intolerably noisy and of no visible merits at all, like the Sabre Dance of Katchaskatchkanian, will make him sit up and say, "Now, that's more like it!" He will even feed a juke box to hear it again. (New York City 12, New York)

JOHN BRUNNER: This point about the East German problem, though, has to be set in perspective. The London Daily Express (the furthest right of the mainly Conservative daily press here) estimated recently that about four per cent of the people who leave East Germany are genuine political refugees; the remainder are looking for higher-paid jobs, cheaper luxury goods and as often as not simply a convenient way out. Prime example of this was that guy, the son of an East German cabinet minister, that such a fuss was made about until it leaked that his reason for quitting was that he'd made three different girls pregnant and his life was just too complicated.

(More than likely there's a shortage of rubber goods.) :: I spent about an hour yesterday afternoon talking to a West German pacificst about this very point. There was definitely a population trend from the poorer eastern part of Germany to the rich, highly industrialised western part, which began at least thirty years ago and probably longer. East Germany was in no sense a viable economic unit; additionally, after 1945 the Russians took reparations in kind from factories in East Germany to replace the industrial plant knocked out during the war in West Russia. Net result is that what was not a prosperous area to start with had to begin from scratch. :: Unfortunately, in the present political climate, it wasn't exactly flattering to the West to say that these emigrants from East Germany were people looking for luxuries and more spending money (which they are; most of them can be accurately compared with the Irish and West Indians who come over here because they can earn more and send money home). Consequently they had to be called refugees and be held up as freedom-loving people defying a tyranny. :: Further consequence: signs of tyranny promptly appeared behind them. The East German government, trying to pull up a barely viable economy by its bootstraps, has been losing a very high percentage of skilled workers and professional men who were indispensable to their plans for expansion. It isn't even officially denied that West German firms do the following: (a) Plan a new factory or a new city branch. (b) Send a representative to West Berlin to recruit its future staff from people in the East, and to inform East German mechanics or whatever that in so many months time they will have a job in the West. (c) Pay the said workers a retaining salary to be collected in a lump sum when the factory is finished and the word goes out for them to cross the frontier. :: Who wouldn't go to a new job under those circumstances? I would! :: Worse, though, is the following example vouched for by a friend of mine who knows Germany well and has been in both halves of it during the past year. An East German doctor (very highly paid even by eastern standards)was given a brand-new limousine during a sort of counter-bribery drive. He promptly got into it with his belongings and went to the West. A few weeks later one of his former patients saw him in West Berlin and asked what the hell he was doing. The doctor explained that he had been approached by a West German recruiter and offered a considerable sum (it was 5 thousand marks,) plus a guarantee of a salary equivalent to his present one, to go to the West. Which he did. And found that owing to the surplus of doctors in West Berlin he had no patients. He hadn't done a hand's turn for weeks except collect his pay. :: Me, I don't wonder that the East Germans got sore. (England)

HARRY WARNER: During this merry yule season, let me try to get away from conscience pangs involving unwtapped gifts and rings at the doorbell involving relatives, to accomplish those long delayed comments on Warhoon. The only good thing that comes from these long delays in comments is the fact that it practically guarantees me from the peril of appearing in the next issue's letter column. I've been becoming quite self-conscious about this, ever since someone or other counted up the fanzine letter column contributors and claimed that I was the champion letterhack of 1960. :: At this point, I must make a confession that I couldn't make before because I just noticed something: the misprint on your Prnited Matter Only stamp on the envelopes. I must have glanced at them at least a dozen times, because I read Wrhn in several instalments and on other occasions was forced to pick up the envelope from behind the desk. :: The start of your discussion on SAPS is a good indication of the job I face as historian. Apparently there are as many explanations why the organization was formed as there were founding members. After all these years, how am I to delve into memories and consciences and subconscious motivations to detect the true reason? In general, I agree with the stand that FAPA's merits depend largely on its occasionally active members as much as on its regular ones, and I don't think that SAPS will ever lose the slight feverishness and rapid alternations between triumph and utter despair in the opinions that its members hold of it, until the activity requirements are relaxed so that it can include some fans too ancient and exhausted to be able to produce without extended periods for recuperation between writing and publishing efforts.

This doesn't mean that I'm wholly happy about FAPA's membership makeup; I think that recent changes in the rules have made it entirely too difficult to lose members and that three or four years from now, the organization may be as unbalanced with near-cadavers as SAPS currently is with fans of too much energy. :: And on the Operation Abolition question, I had planned to read no more and to add nothing to the very few words that I've already said about it. But I suspect that the arguing individuals on both sides are assuming something that isn't so: that it would have been possible to make the movie without turning it into a propaganda film of some type. More and more, I'm becoming convinced that it's impossible to do anything with pictures without editorializing to an unbearable extent, whether the pictures are still or moving, and whether the subject is something unimportant like the attractiveness of a girl or the innocence of persons accused of being communist chattels. The old saw that the picture is worth a thousand words carefully remains silent about the more important matter, whether it is possible for a picture to be worth any number of true words, great or small. I can't think of any practical way for the photographer to adopt devices equivalent to the writer's ability to tell the facts dispassionately and completely. This is tied in with my disgust with the intelligent people who keep wailing that television has a potential as the greatest communication medium man has ever known, if it can only be pulled away from the advertising and government domination that exists in various countries. I think that television is inferior to the moving picture in every way as a communication medium--what you see can't be rerun, the picture itself is incapable of providing fine detail, and there are many other drawbacks inherent in the medium itself, no matter how enlightened the program direction. :: Blish's review is the first article about "Stranger In A Strange Land" that has given me more idea about the nature of the book than I normally get from a book jacket blurb. It's particularly good to see a fanzine with an article saying some critical things about Heinlein. He seems to have done such a magnificent snow job on fandom at Seattle that I thought we'd never see anything less than idolastrous adulation in the future. I think Jim is fandom's and prodom's best reviewer, although Damon Knight may sparkle more blindingly on occasion. My only complaint is about the footnotes. There is no valid reason why these appended remarks couldn't have been incorporated in the main text, and the reading would have been less jolting. :: I've had the same experience

that Willis describes, a remark that didn't belong where it came from, on several disconcerting occasions. Even worse is the situation when some friend whom you know to be a dull, plodding and unimaginative type suddenly uses a mot juste in conversation; it's like an unexpected jolt from static electricity. One school teacher here does it particularly often. He'll rattle along endlessly about the Civil War, his favorite subject, and when I'm almost asleep, he'll produce something like this: "So this old farmer told General Lee that he wasn't going to give up any horses to the Confederates and General Lee told him, 'Look mister, my men have just fought the Battle of Gettysburg, and they're awfully nervous.'" Normally it would take a real literary genius to use an adjective as unexpected yet perfectly accurate as nervous at that point. :: The letter column gave me some satisfaction because I found some support for a growing suspicion that Art Castillo doesn't know quite as much about everything as he seems to know. Usually he's writing about topics outside my major range of interests. But when he makes these remarks about music, he is writing about provable matters, and he gives every indication that he gets his knowledge of music from the jackets of lp records rather than from listening to the compositions or reading the authoritative writings about music. The opening of the Mozart quartet that he mentions isn't a fugue by any definition, it isn't atonal and is in fact no more unusual a use of chromatic passing tones than Mozart wrote in several other widely known works, but sounds more striking because of the extremely slow pace, which gives ample time for the ear to seize the full extent of the discords. Mozart did not retract the quartet in any way that I can imagine the word to mean: that is, he did not withdraw the work from performance,

or rewrite the offending bars, or apologize for his boldness, or change radically his style of composition. Of course, Art is generalizing impossibly in what he says about the popularity of contemporary music. Europe is probably a trifle more liberal in attitudes toward advanced styles of composition today than the United States, but not seriously so unless you compare the Darmstadt festival with the programs of the New York Philharmonic. I think that Art knows nothing about musical tastes in South America and Japan and just stuck in those references to make himself sound more convincing. :: You are giving credit where it doesn't belong, listing me about the FAPA brain trusters. That term properly applies to the group that dominated intellectually in the early 1940's, and I was simply not up to their level at that time. The term hasn't been used much since Stanley, Chauvenet, Rothman, and a few others dropped out. /FANCYCLOPEDIA II gives you the credit and I must concur: I have all the FAPA mailings of that period. -RB/ :: The only reason I consider Lowndes' article a trifle lower than Blish's in interest is that I've read neither book but am tired of reading about "Starship Troopers". I know that fanzines don't run anything about science fiction any more, but I somehow have the impression that I've read a good bit about several recent novels in these publications which talk only about sports cars and old comic books.(423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland)

ROBERT A. HEINLEIN: Thanks very much for the invitation but I do not write for fan magazines. I'm not being chinchy or hard-to-get in this policy; it is simply that I do not write for fun, I write to make a living -- and I don't really like to write. :: Were I to write in answer to those two articles you published (very interesting, each of them -- I enjoyed reading them), not only would it take time and thought to write my comments in a form suitable for publication -- time taken from work which I can't spare -- but also it would inevitably result in sequential correspondence...which is still worse; I have some forty letter to answer right now and no secretary. :: But I did indeed enjoy reading WARHOON. It is a handsome and interesting publication.

JACK SPEER on Wrhn #12: I'm sure that in speaking of antidotes about the John Birch Society you didn't mean, at the moment, to equate it with poison. I have other marginotes opposite "The Politian" and, for other reasons, "it can be also forgiven of journals one might hope to find a reasonable degree of thoroughness in" (a touch of divinity you never got around to justifying), "It may be used to avoid opening the doors on a line of inquiry which will lead to the implication of other parties" etc (which I don't think is the law), and "though suit would involve a clear violation of his property rights". However, I enjoyed your putting Welch on the spot. There is so much of this kind of thing in Warhoon that I tend to believe the image of you as surrounded by file cabinets electronically indexed. :: In "File 13", it looks as if you cheated us of some O W Holmes quotes, if Redd was quoting him for the fourth time there. As for conservatives in fandom, Redd has overlooked one rip-roaring Tory, J Chapman Miske, fl 1939. :: One thought that came to mind in reading the Harp was, how many times did Walt re-write this one? When a writer starts showing his bare bones, it's hard to think of him as a unitary organism any more. My own pattern of writing involves not nearly so many drafts. An idea takes possession of me, and starts running around in my head, increasing in volume. At a certain point I get a compulsion to sit down and write it out, in shorthand if no typewriter is available. In the writing, gaps in the thought may appear, Often I get to thinking about the draft afterward, and my memory represents it as fuller of holes than it actually is. Anyway, a second draft usually improves it, and it's rewritten for the last time as it goes onto master or to a faned. Occasionally, however, the subject under discussion will completely change aspect as I'm writing, and I have to start over again. :: Willis's distinction of two types of fanzine nonfiction might be better stated in the terms exposition and personal essay. :: Things like that 1953 GMCarr quote also support the file-cabinets-and-electronics image of Bergeron. :: Speaking of the Wedding March, do you happen to know the customary words to it? The only ones I can

recall are "Here comes the bride, Big, fat, and wide" usw. :: A couple of queries occurred to me on National Health Service, but I don't suppose you have the answers. Videlicit, does Berry continue to get paid while incapacitated to work? and What does he mean, it's not essential to join the NHS? They have to pay for it willy-nilly, nespa? It occurred to me also that our doctors in the US would snort at compensation of anything like $4,000 per year. :: I don't always favor using the easiest put-down, but Bill Donaho left himself so wide open on fluoridation that I'm obliged to point this out: The only persons benefited much by fluoridation are those who are under the age of discretion at the time they receive it. If the argument is that compulsory fluoridation amounts to a Communist theory that "people shall be done good to whether they want it or not", then arguably we have no right to force fluoridation on inexperienced children. :: Bill Conner's letter, concerning the need of observing certain rules of order, overlooks a fundamental point of ordinary rules of order, that both sides should have a chance to be heard. In this respect the HUAC has always been weak. The weakness would not really be remedied unless the persons accused had as much right as the Committee to subpoena people and force them to answer questions under the Klieg lights. A bit further along, Bill makes a rather egregious error. The FBI is not a police force, and it does not submit reports to the Justice Department; it is part of the Justice Department. The federal police force consists of the US marshals. His apparent desire that the FBI be allowed to bypass presidential control in instituting prosecutions is merely an expression of the desire of a faction that loses elections to have things go as if it had won them. :: There's a more famous letteringuide misprint than the Astouding one. In a FAPAzine supposed to be entitled "Have at Thee, Knaves!", Sam Russell or somebody like that gave birth to the term "Knanves", which became the tag for the first secessionist faction in the LASFS Blowup.

JACK SPEER on Wrhn #13: I question Blish's footnote saying that most major Christian communions hold with transsubstantiation, but I'm only familiar with two, Methodist and Unitarian; they don't. I wonder what was Freudian in "Gulf"? :: I don't think the question of whether a group of states has the legal right to secede from the United States is any longer important. A much more significant point in this connection against the view that the Civil War was a good example of violence settling something is the opinion, which extends at least from Benet's epic to the latest writings of Bruce Catton, that the very act of fighting a war destroyed forever what both victor and vanquished thought they were fighting for, bringing instead the unintended consequences of emancipation, the Age of the Moguls, ktp. :: I don't think Heinlein is indictable as implying that his utopias can last forever. At any rate, the utopia shown at its best in Coventry was depicted as brecking down in "Methuselah's Children." :: An even better example of a military utopia in which the common citizen had no redress was that of the Lensman saga, in which the unattached lensmen were completely uncontrolled. :: I disagree with Harry on the slogan "This is a republic" etc, (and also on an insanity explanation being implied in the Twilight Zone production). More important than the theoretical question of whether the United States is a democracy is why this slogan appeals emotionally to the John Birchers. I think the reason it appeals to them is that they want to rule even though they've been beaten at the polls. I feel sure they wouldn't stand by it in any situation where it operated against their wishes. I'm thinking of the fact that conservatives and reactionaries are very anxious to "let the people vote" (direct democracy) on anything where they hope to block action, such as increased taxation or a PUD taking over a private utility. Just another example of that phenomenon I mentioned a while back in FAPA, that they will seize upon any theory, constitutionalism, natural law, or what you will, to defend their interests and prejudices. :: Wood: What's "dangerous" about the doctrine that we're too sophisticated to talk about s-f? :: Castillo's remarks on man and woman sound like Spengler's. :: So far I see no signs of a war brewing between us and the only intelligent aliens we know about, the porpoises. :: GMCarr continues to use "or" in the fine old McCarthy tradition: "...that Ike's failure to

stem the threat to this hemisphere could be due only to stupidity or deliberate intent". Little as I like Sokolsky, I love the remark you quote: "obviously the former President is not a Communist; he is a golfer." :: I think too many people tend to stop thinking about a subject after they've said "anyone is entitled to any opinion they care to hold about anyone". If some people hold opinions that may lead to alarming consequences, we ought to do our best to change those opinions and keep them from spreading. The fact is, of course, that the John Birch Society does much more than share opinions among its members; it tries to propagate them, and to replace liberals in office with reactionaries, by fair means or foul. If it ever shows any signs of increasing its effectiveness, it can become an object of great concern, not merely passive toleration. :: Kennedy's description of Daniel Webster's ability to deliver a speech as composed in his head is a little hard to square with the introduction to my edition of his second reply to Hayne. It says that the text is not what was actually delivered on the floor; that Webster made extensive revisions in it afterward before it saw print. Anyway, it's a wonderful piece of oratory. :: Well, surely you see the point of the Pacifist's Dilemma. What Buz means is, if all Americans are converted to pacifism, who will protect us? This is a very valid point against pacifism; its assumption has always been that wars are caused by the country in which the pacifist operates, or that it's feasible to avoid war if one side is committed to pacifism. :: The floundering over who has the burden of proof on Helen Douglas's reputation could have been avoided if you had observed the rule of law, which happens to be sound on this point. This rule is that a person's reputation is presumed to be good, and the burden of proof is on the one who claims it's bad. Thus it would make no difference whether the case arose on Nixon's claim that Helen was a Red, or on your claim that Nixon smeared her; in eithercase, the presumption would be that Nixon's charge was false.

BETTY KUJAWA: My "cruel and slashing attacks", though, were more the ones I'd seen in fanzines rather than in press and generalzines...when I speak of attacks on Nixon and Ike..perhaps Mr. Blish does not read the zines I have read wherein this was done to quite a degree. Said zines are very very quiet these days which tells us a lttle about their pubbers. YOUR ploY of deeming the Cuba thing as a "subject of the category of topics on which the consensus is so unanimous..etc" is a neat way to avoid it -- isn't it now? Had this been done under Prexy Nixon I still wonder how you would treat the subject, my sweet young man. :: Frankly I don't think you would relegate it away so swiftly and glibly. (2819 Carolin St. South Bend 14, Indiana)

RB: Patience, love. My dossiers on Kennedy are growing. :: But, Betty, if there were complete agreement that Nixon's handling of the Cuba situation was ghastly and he had taken full blame and responsibility for it, there would really be little to discuss and you'd find as little mention herein as there was of the real culprit. The difference in Nixon's boffos is that there always seems to be someone around defending them and presenting a lovely target. If there's one thing you should have noticed about Wrhn, it's that I try not to bore you with restatements of the obvious. I don't recall any extended playback on the U-2 affair in these pages nor do I recall your complaints at the omission -- once again I didn't want to bore you with the obvious, obviously. :: I trust I will be assumed innocent of supporting specific Kennedy policies until proven otherwise?

FELICE ROLFE: I'm sorry to start out with a pan, but here it is. The strong liberal and strong conservative both have one set of characteristics in common; they are dogmatic, intolerant, emotional in their logic, and unwilling each to concede the other even the smallest point. I've noticed this through contact with Berkeley fandom on the one hand and with the conservative element in my family and my suburban neighborhood, on the other. A pox on both your houses. :: You,sir, give a fine example of what I mean in the first two pages of your article "The Mind of Robert Leman". Most of your points were well taken. It's a pity you couldn't have left off the cutting re-

marks as to Bob's intelligence and/or good faith. That sort of thing arouses an equal and opposite reaction in me, which is a shame because it obscures the facts you're tying to present. (1360 Emerson Palo Alto, California)

RB: Your displeasure with "The Mind of Robert Leman" seems to be largely esthetic for while you cite it as an example of the dogmatic, intolerant, emotional, and unwilling to concede approach, you fail to find a single instant of each. If anyone argues that your letter is incorrect because you have a black spot on your nose, his argument deserves to be exposed as well as refuted. I'd like nothing better than to see the demolition of my finding that Leman has been conducting his case on a base of guilt by association and ad hominem -- I think Bob Leman is one of the most admirable talents in fandom and it's no pleasure to see my arguments stand.

FRANK WILIMCZYK: Better and better, seems to be the motto. Warhoon #13 is as close to a VAPA mailing as anything I've seen, which means it's about as good as one could expect a fanzine to be. Naturally, the presence of Blish and Lowndes in tandem suggests the reference to VAPA, but the other material is not excluded from the honors. It's hard to see how you can top yourself, but give it a good try! :: Blish's review persuaded me to do something I haven't done in many years: buy a hard-cover s-f book, instead of borrowing a copy from the library, or waiting for the paperback edition to come out. Now that I've read "Stranger In A Strange Land", I find that I got a bigger kick from Blish' · review than from the book reviewed. :: I assume that Blish's attitude is that imputed to C.S. Lewis in a recent NYTimes book review: "the quality of a bock is to be determined by the kind of reading it invites, not vice versa"; if this can be taken as a valid point of view (it's certainly not mine) then perhaps Stranger is a real gasser. :: I don't mean that I disliked the book -- as Blish's column attests, it's a thought-provoking book, but for my money it's not much of a story. I don't agree with Blish that it's a well-plotted book (a novel of ideas seldom is), as well as disagreeing with a number of his minor points (for instance, Blish takes "Thou art God" as excluding a single God, whereas Foster himself, in one of the interludes, refers to a single God). Actually, here, as opposed to "Starship Troopers", I'm inclined not to take Heinlein very seriously, except in the sense that he's throwing out ideas -- aside from the story itself, there are too many tongue-in-cheek bits (athletic director Hornsby, for one), to warrant completely serious acceptance. :: My disappointment with the book is in the loose organization -- Heinlein is most at home with novels which are tightly plotted, and strong on story, and in which his Little Lectures (e.g., those on eugenics and genetics in "Beyond This Horizon") intersperse the action, without dominating it. In Stranger, I could not help feeling that these elements were transposed, and that, while ostensibly narrative, most of the book was a thinly coated Big Lecture (albeit tongue-in-cheek), with, admittedly, one fascinating (if unlikely) character thrown in. :: Lowndes specifically points up the Little Lecture technique, and makes an interesting point when he describes "Starship Troopers as juvenile. I both agree and disagree with this. Sure, the protagonist is under 21, but that's practically necessary given the background of the story. However, I think that, in terms of Lowndes' reasons (other than age) for this categorization, almost all of Heinlein's books are juveniles to some degree. Heinlein is fond of characters who are adults chronologically, but emotionally are under-developed, and usually not-quite-dry-behind-the-ears, politically and socially naive sorts who are almost totally unaware of what's going on around them, and have to be led by the nose, usually through intriguing manipulation and Little Lectures into seeing the light. Perhaps (maybe almost certainly) that's why Heinlein's juvenile books bear such a strong similarity to his adult stories, and usually can be read on an adult level: we've been indocrinated. :: Well, not as brief as I thought, but certainly unorganized. I suppose that eventually, after I've gotten back into the habit of letter-writing, I'll get used to thinking at a typewriter, but as of now I still find it pretty difficult. Which reminds me, I don't think I mentioned previously that I like very much Willis

and Bergeron on writing. Possibly copies could be mailed to neofans panting to publish or be published. Some of the stuff I've been reading these past months is pretty sloppy, and at least one article I've seen was obviously not even read by the author (if he can be called that). I mean, when you write something, you don't actually read it -- it's sometimes surprising to discover what you've put down, even excluding Freudian slips. (447 10th Ave. New York 1, New York)

DEREK NELSON: By the way, I note friend Castro has come out with a very revealing statement. "I am a Marxist. It have been a Marxist since college. I've just been stringing the bourgeoisie along since it is the only way to achieve victory." Nice play Fidel. I wonder what Mills is saying now, or any apologetic liberal? (Canada)

VIC RYAN: I'm not sure the problem you pose re SAPS -- or illuminate -- has a definite answer, and I doubt that you're expecting one. Despite this "lose of talent", or whatever one chooses to call it, the organization still produces some fine material, and the usual run of clinkers. There are enough SAPS members currently festering in the shadows to fill most any vacated position; if anything, the turnover is further incentive to chuck the excessive mailing comments and work on something constructive (in the broad sense of the word.) /How so? -RB/ :: Despite Blish's allegations that he "hardly knows where to begin," he's done a masterful review of an unusually complex book. The prose, of course, was enthralling, but I was more than a little disappointed that J.B. read no more into Stranger than I did, or, in all likelihood, ever will. Here I was convinced that Heinlein was operating at least one level above me, but if Blish fails to grasp any such Cosmic Truths, then little hope remains. :: Berry is the RAF's Stormy Petrel, of course. :: With a sinking feeling I admit the familiarity of the passage you quote from the first Kennedy-Nixon debate, Since you apparently have the texts from all the debates, and are willing to check them all for any statement of Kennedy's either admitting to the allegation in regards Federal aid to education or passing it off however indirectly, if you can find nothing such as I suggest was said, I'll publicaly bare my bosom and shout to the treetops that you were RIGHT, RIGHT, RIGHT, and that I'm the poor, suffering pawn of rightist propagada. (Evanston, Illinois)

GMCarr: Where did I learn the technique of "reviewing the critic instead of the criticism"? Chortle. Surely you must realize that this is what I have been doing all along -- which is what irks fans so! For years and years fans have been demanding that I stick to the discussion and leave personalities out of it -- but as far as I'm concerned, the only thing interesting about a discussion is the personality of the speaker. What makes him tick, and why he feels the way he does about things. I'm far more interested in WHY you think what you do about the JBS, than in the details of what you think about them...and, incidentally, if you have read the "Blue Book" you are far more of a Bircher than I am, for I haven't. (5319 Ballard Ave, Seattle 7,Wash.)

BOB PARKINSON: Many thanks for another copy of Wrhn, and the honor of being mentioned on the first page. Let me compliment you on taking the 'Times' look off the front page and giving something that I can put on my desk without looking like work! I;m still trying to work out what the tune is, and I ain't being helped by the lack of bar-lines and key signatures. I haven't even worked out what key it can be that can natrualise both G and A, or is that top line really a bass-cleft, when it would be B and C, yet another impossible combination? (England)

RB: Thus far only Walter Breen, I believe, has correctly identified the notes on the cover as from Chopin's funeral march. How he guessed I'll never know for I grafted two separate passages onto each other for a better design effect. The splice is detectable in the upper bar.

LARRY McCOMBS: What's with this fashion of revising format? First LIFE, then

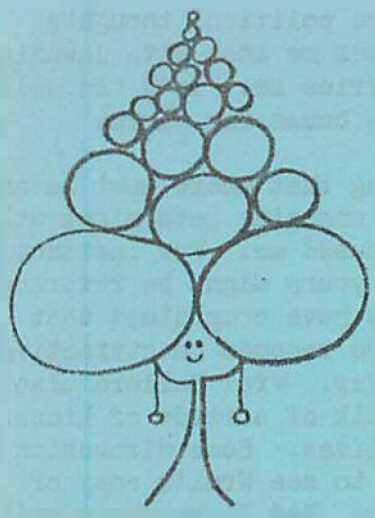
the SATURDAY EVENING POST, and now WARHOON? I stopped buying LIFE and SEP, but I still like Wrhn. But I hasten to add my vote to those who like the blue paper and the solid format. That is to say, I like the changes you've made so far, but don't go any further. I'm a conservative at heart and I don't like too much change at once, you know. :: Although I've never happened to notice a crew of Irish road menders , billycans or no, on American roads, I seem to be continually passing people on the sidewalk who are engaged in some imporbable conversation... I remember Bjo telling stories about someone -- I believe it was Harlan Ellison -- who delighted in playing this game in elevators at conventions. He would walk into the elevator and notice several mundanians already there, so without losing stride he would change from whatever conversation he was carrying on to something like: "...so damned careless! If you hadn't pulled the gat everything would have been fine. Now we've got to worry about whether the stupid cop kicks the bucket or not. Well, what the hell, what's done is done. Now listen, for the next caper, tonight you and the boys meet me at..." The whole thing is carefully timed so that the elevator doors close at just the proper moment, leaving the occupants in suspense, as he walks off at his floor. Another time he came into the elevator and saw Bjo already there. He did not show any signs of recognizing her, but began to edge toward her through the crowd of little old ladies already there. Then he began making outrageous advances towards Bjo, who did her best to be offended, modest and outraged while the little old ladies nervously tried to decide what to do. (Conn.)

ETHEL LINDSAY (for TAFF): Your letter column is extremely good, and I notice is one of the few containing Bill Temple. I attended the wedding of his daughter Anne yesterday and Bill gave a very good speech which sounded both witty and impromtu! :: John Brunner's letter: don't you believe that about the Soviet Exhibition. I saw it too and did not think it all that wonderful. Some of the exhibits yes, but by no means all. What I liked best was the film shown which ends up with a series of color scenes depicting man in space and what he will see in the future. This was as good as Bonestell, I had to admit. Atom was with me and was greatly interested in the cars and aeroplane display, but he did not feel that it was much different from our own.

TOM ARMISTEAD: On "Stranger In A Strange Land" I think it would clarify everyone's viewpoint if they noticed what is written on the front cover flap. "He (Heinlein) tryed to turn every custom of the Western Culture around and to...make the antithesis of it...a more desirable thing (than the present custom)or more" I think this partly explains why Heinlein did not offer the obvious retort about cannabalism (ie,The Lord's Supper) but fleetingly, and in a question at that. Heinlein does refer to a Supreme Being, though. Thru his Angels and Heavenly Denizens he refers to one called "the Boss". :: Blish questions Heinlein's background, the ether in which his characters move about. This is not Heinlein's purpose in writing the book; that is, to present an easily acceptable science-fictional concept. No, his purpose was much more grand, much more breathtaking. It was "to make the antithesis of all Western mores, if not desirable, at least thinkable". (Quarters 3202, Carswell AFB, Ft. Worth, Texas)

SETH JOHNSON: The article by Lowndes was excellent although a percentage of it went right over my head somehow. However his article reminds me of a game we are playing in the N3F round robins right now. Each one in the robin postulates his own idea of a utopia and makes as many postulates as he pleases and gets all the details he cares to hammar out into his utopia. Then on the second round we tear each others utopias apart and start all over again. (339 Stiles St. Vaux Hall, New Jersey)

Caught in the closing doors are several good letters but never fear: all comments are passed on to the authors they refer to. Also heard from were: Bernard Deitchman, Kevin Langdon, Art Castillo, Richard Ellington, John Champion, James Sieger, Ron Bennett, Sid Birchby, Larry Williams, J. Ben Stark, Len Moffat, Tom Dilley, Gary Deindorfer, Steve Schultheis, Peggy Sexton, Nan Gerding, and Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy.



DISSONANT DISCOURSE

The Seacon Memory Mailing of the Spectator Amateur Press Association is at hand in a commentable position, but I'm not sure there's going to be very much to comment on in spite of the fact that I enjoyed much of it. For one thing, it's the smallest mailing of my current membership, which in itself should work to keep this column to its shortest length yet. For another, fully 1/6th of the mailing is entitled Wrhn #13, which eliminates a syncophantic page or two. And I seem to be the unique member who did not attend the convention, which renders magazines like THE ZED and SaFari and a good share of the rest of the mailing to voyeristic interest. So don't feel annoyed if your fanzine isn't mentioned this time; it's safe to assume that it was appreciated even if it didn't inspire any particular comment. Perhaps by next mailing you'll have all caught your breath and this department will be back to its normal length. The absence of Rapp and Breen was an interesting experiment but not one I'd like to see repeated soon. Please. Comments on SAPS mailing #57:

FENDENIZEN -- Elinor Busby: I don't think I'm related to Trader Vic Bergeron. Trader Vic's in New York is one of the most beautifully decorated eating establishments in the city -- it's style is Disneyland Polynesian -- and serves some of my favorite food. But I recommend several Zombies before a look at the check. I had expected the food at Trader Vic's in Hawaii to be a revelation, but it was quite bad, though the prices were scaled down as low as the quality of the food, The revolt of the insects must have occured on the night I went: the place was swarming with ants. :: Bergeron is French, but yes.

FLABBERCON -- Burnett Toskey: I expected my art-work to be a little far-out for your tastes, but it just occured to me that Garcone artwork and that lovely (but far-out) cover by Helen Hendrickson on FLABBERGASTING should be too. Just idle curiosity; is it?

COLLECTOR -- Howard Devore: I assume you buy and sell mimeographs and printing equipment. You don't make a hobby of collecting the things do you? :: A quarter of the population seems like a rather large group to have heard of the Peace March. Even less impressive would be the number of people who understood what the Marchers were trying to do. :: Your serpentine tale was almost as blood curdling as the fragmentary news references to flooding and snakes in the South during the hurricane. Just about <u>everything</u> heads for high ground. A girl at work told me of relatives in India who'd seen hilltops that were seething masses of pythons and cobras at floodtime. :: The Nelson cartoons were lovely.

WATLING STREET -- Bob Lichtman: If an electric mimeo makes the whole process of publishing a fanzine seem entirely too easy as compared with a ditto, you should try sending your stencils out to be duplicated by a mimeograph service sometime. But your preferance for ditto seems sentimental rather than logical: like the old craftsman who prefers curing and stretching his hides to getting the leather from a tannery. To each his own form of sublimation, I suppose, but my ideal is still H.C.Koenig of whom I vaguely recall Harry Warner once telling us that he dictated his fanzine, READER AND COLLECTOR, to his secretary, who stenciled, mimeographed, and mailed it. If I ever get a secretary, I have every intention of emulating H.C. :: As part of their censoring service,did your parents ever tell you what they thought of Wrhn? It has come to my attention recently that a number of young fans have been showing Wrhn to their parents as proof that fandom may not be a waste of time after all and while I certainly appreciate the implied compliment (I can read an implied compliment into

into anything) the fact that some of these parents seem to have political thoughts that make the John Birch Society look like welfare statism makes me look with jaundiced eye on the practice. It's not the political thinking that worries me. It's the well known over-protectiveness of parents for their cubs that gives cause for alarm.

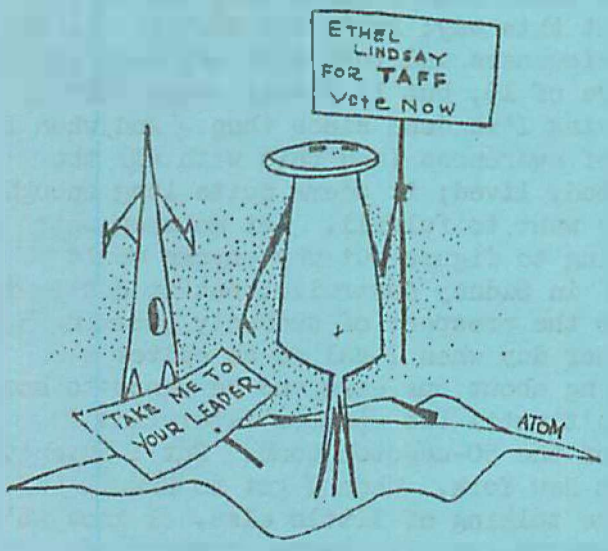
THE SPELEOBEM -- Bruce Pelz: At times I get the feeling that there must be an alternate universe editinn of Wrhn. Some of the comments the magazine gets might well have come from such a place for all the puzzelment they've caused me. For instance, Bruce, I can't for the life of me recall what this comment of yours might be refering to: "Moskowitz is occasionally correct. Like this time." Fans have complained that mailing comments should be intelligible to outsiders, but we've reached an attractive pass when mailing comments make an insider feel like an outsider. Wrai Ballard also commented mystifyingly on the 12th issue. He told me: "You talk of a Pride of Lions... Gaggles of Geese, etc.", but I don't recall mentioning collectives. Some discussion of them occured in YANDRO recently, but where in Wrhn? I'd like to see Wrai's copy of Wrhn. I'll bet it's a flimsy thing printed on white paper. :: Did Dickensheet mail Charteris a copy of his open letter on The Saint? And if so, was there an answer? :: I appreciate the egoboo but do think my sending those paintings to the art show has been built-up out of all sensible proportion. I'll grant that from a monetary standpoint they were successful beyond my wildest dreams. I expected them to raise little more than $30 or so, but was estimating without consideration of such wild-men as Sid Coleman and Walter Breen, who painstakingly bid each other up to $42 on a single item! But the donation wasn't the labor of love some seem to think it was: the paintings were experiments and things I've stock-piled over the last five years and would have eventually given away to mystified relatives. The art-show and TWAF seemed like a good opportunity to see if they couldn't be of use to someone.

SCORP -- Walter Coslet: "Groking Place" is a fine title for a mailing comment section. :: Coswal, you seem to have more "Good-bys" in you than Betty Hutton. I've long since lost my apprehension over them. I note in the latest GEMZINE that a recent N'APAzine of yours ran to 18 pages and GMC further commented "I hope you keep it up, I like those big mailing comments for a change." Is this our Walt?

MEST -- Ted Johnstone: Your advertising the lack of an atomic target as part of the real estate value of San Diego reminds me of the grim bit about the group who fled prime target Manhattan for a California settlement that turned out to have a missile installation nearby. :: Isn't "From Russia, With Love" a takeoff on another more famous title that I can't place? :: The Johnstone recommendation should be enough of a reference for Ian Flemmings's James Bond series, but if it isn't you can add John F Kennedy as #2 on the list of endorsers. The liberal scallywags have it that he's a great fan of the books and Max Lerner even went so far as to intimate that Bond's exploits set the frame of mind for Kennedy's Cuban adventure! :: I'm thrown a bit by your remark that "Pot Pourri was very well done; you should get into FAPA." Elucidate? :: What kind of a name did 4e, Daugherty, and Evans give the LASFS?

RESIN -- Norm Metcalf: Anyone for motivational research? An inquiry might be: why "much of OMPA's material is general material while SAPS' material is largely mailing comments"? :: Jack Speer has recently been sending me copies of his FAPAzine rolled up into a lead pipe. The experience must be traumatic for a fanzine, because everytime I lift up the Webster from it, it hastily assumes its mailing position -- as though it thinks I'm Jack and it's cringing from me. :: Whatever happened to Roger Dard? :: I have a theory that mailing comments are commentable to the extent that they are provocative. And provocation would not necessarily be an insulting approach, but merely stating opinions and information. a way that's intended to leave the reader with the urge to reply, educate, inform, or set straight. Is that provocative enough? :: It's a pity that minor fannish masterpieces like the Bill Morse con-report have to stand as testament to the irresponsibility of faneds.

OUTSIDERS -- Wrai Ballard: "Weird Shadow Over Blanchard" was, of course, aimed directly at you. I don't often name paintings, I usually do them and forget about them, but the ones sent to the convention seemed to demand names -- if only for identification. Thus I found myself wildly pulling names out of thin air for those paintings on the day they were shipped out. "Weird Shadow Over Blanchard" gave that painting a more fannish and fantasy slant than it would have had otherwise -- as did the name "Requiem for a Nunnery" for that painting. However, when I saw the list of names and their buyers I couldn't recall which painting I'd tagged with what name. I've figured all out but "View From a Time Machine", which Sid Coleman, Wrhn subscriber, bought. I still can't recall what that one looked like. Sid? I:: I considered, for about 10 seconds, attending the Seacon incognito just to overhear what the fans had to say about the artshow, as you suggest, but decided against it when I recalled trying the same thing at a typography show last year. I heard more ooboge than egoboo. :: In that case, why isn't it called the Spectator Amateur Sewing Circle Society?



TOLETAN -- Bruce Henstell: How does one make a good selection of books before he has read them? :: I imagine a John Birch Society member would answer "yes" to your question "whether the people have a right to change their governement in any way shape or fashion?". Their goals of repeal of the income tax and the impeachment of Earl Warren indicate as much -- not to mention Welch's opinion that the Communists plan to take over the United States Government "by a process so gradual and insidious that Soviet rule is slipped over so far on the American people, before they ever realize it is happening, that they can no longer resist the Communist conspiracy as free citizens, but can resist the Communist tyranny only by themselves becoming conspirators against established government." Shades of the Declaration of Independence and other subversive documents! :: Hmm, Metcalf's NEW FRONTIERS is becoming almost as unheard of as the Kennedy version. :: I got the same mindless enjoyment from "The Guns of Navarron" as I do from a good western or a Fu Manchu thriller.

WAFTAGE -- Vic Ryan: It's a lovely allusion, but it doesn't seem to hold up under examination. If I were the "sort of fellow who makes dry martinis by gently speaking the word 'vermouth' over the rim of a gin-filled glass" it hardly seems likely that your suggested antidotia to my vacation reading list would be too much for me. As a matter of fact I already have "The Conscience of a Conservative" but haven't read it yet -- at the moment I'm administering my own enema in the form of William Buckley's "Up From Liberalism". Hardly a fresh prescription, but a potent one. I might have written the chapter on Elinor Roosevelt myself. :: I wouldn't be surprised to learn that Stevenson bathes in Scotch and Soda every Saturday night and I don't see how it could matter less. And if you think the reluctance you cite to parade his drinking habits in public is evidence of '"his lack of sufficient moral fiber to create a true public image", I'll expect to see you also pointing out that Eisenhower's adoption of church going habits in 1952 was "lack of sufficient moral fiber to create a true public image." :: If I thought you were serious in claiming that I'd misinterpreted your comments about the pink-lemonade you could charge me with Creeping Serconism. But changing the subject to pink drinks from pink politics didn't provide the requested demonstration for your statement that Stevenson would obey Khrushchev.

THE SEVEN EYES OF NINGAUBLE -- Larry Anderson: If this is issue #5, where were

the first four distributed? Who was it that said "If a thing is worth doing at all; it's worth doing badly"?

FLABBERGASTING -- Burnett Toskey: Your "Italian White" sunflower that faces the rising sun in the morning, points straight up like a daisy at noon, and points west in the late afternoon sounds pretty agile, to say the least. If it's the attraction of the sun that pulls it around during the day; what brings it around during the night so that it can face that rising sun? Ever kept an eye on it about 4:45 in the morning? :: Why should the failure of the fandom is a way of life and the fandom is just a hobby schools to come to an agreement have any bearing on our conduct of our own activities in fandom? The attitude to "let those who live by fandom shape its ways" seems strange coming from one who has claimed that fandom is just a hobby and who spent a year shaping the ways of SAPS as its OE.

SAP FROM THE GUM TREE -- Bob Smith: 30 does sound like a bleak age, but as I consoled a friend the other day you might look at it this way: let's say that 15 was the age you developed the beginnings of social consciousness and that with any luck you'll live to 60. I can't remember much before the age of 15, but 15 itself seems like an eternity ago when I stop to think of all the living I've done since then. And when I look forward to perhaps twice as long a period of awareness (and this with all the attainments and developments of 30) as I've already lived; it seems quite long enough for those constantly diminishing ambitions I may want to fulfill. Let me know what your wife makes of this. :: I've given up trying to figure out why anyone would want to drop an A-Bomb "near the Harbour Bridge" in Sidney Australia, but it did remind me that I've become practically impervious to the prospect of suddenly becoming a speck in a new salt water lake. In fact the other day when I called an editor's secretary, I got the reply, "The world is crashing about our ears and he wants to know when the next issue is coming out!", and it wasn't until two minutes later that I realized she was at her wits end over the test of the 50-megaton bomb. But I haven't noticed a great deal of talk about the subject in New York. When I got to Hawaii it came as a great contrast to find the people there talking of little else. I know it's irrational, but I find the liklihood of atomic war as possible as the revival of FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERYS and I won't really believe it can happen until Redd writes "The Craters of Earth". :: John Baxter's comparison of fanart to Japanese art is perceptive. But another Occidental art form fits his discription of Japanese art: economy of line and effect and heavy reliance on stereotyped images for the quickest communication are also characteristics of political cartooning.

THE BALLARD CHRONICLES -- Lee Jacobs: Serconism at its best!

DIE STAAT, etc -- Dick Schultz: Don't ask me how, but for some reason I got the vague impression from the physical appearance of this publication that you were in the army and stationed in Germany. (I imagine it was the Germanic title and the good bold artwork.) I was about to ask you how the transferance of General Walker had affected your moral! :: Surely there must be some things that a Central Government can do better than 50 states. And once you concede that it merely becomes an argument about where you draw the line (and when that becomes the issue you've lost half the argument). Your concession occured when you agreed that one centrally directed army was preferable in fighting a war to 50 variably equipped, variably directed roving bands.

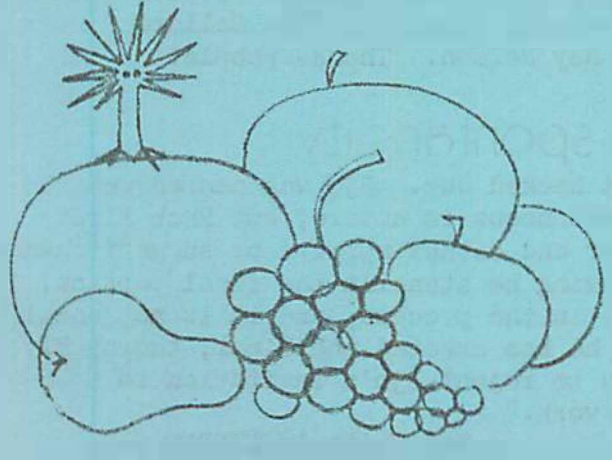
POT POURRI -- John Berry: This didn't strike any responsive chords this issue, John, but it was too good (from the Eddie Jones Cover to "Protection Racket") to let pass un-noticed. :: My favorite feature is still the Canasta column.

RETRO -- FMBusby: The devine characteristic of comments on comments is that in apa mailings the first of the set usually appeared 9 months ago. Pardon me

stating the obvious like that, but it seems to need some notice in view of your observation that your blast on "Creeping Serconism" was circulated "way way back last spring in maybe the April mailing." The fact that it was distributed that long a go is hardly a rational for not answering the comments on it -- unless you now see more sense in Earl Kemp's remarks on comments on comments. I dislike worrying so ridiculous a bone as this, but it is one you tossed out for worrying, after all, and if you prefer to give it up I'd like to see you do so on less cagey pretexts. The people who answered your article did so in good faith and, at last reading, still stand by their comments. To dismiss them on the basis that "it was a loaded presentation, set up so that only those who bit on it could be nailed by it" is to reply with an insult to their implied compliment that you're a stimulating writer. Your answers should be demonstrated before you can claim that they're self-evident. Both Wrai and Nan Rapp seemed to take your article at face value: your apparent retreat seems to leaves them rolling down hill in a gaily colored lurch.

IGNATZ -- Nan Rapp: This issue contained some really lovely passages, Nan. I think you write best when you write out of feeling. At those times you write with charming sincerity and intensity.

CCON -- Richard Eney: I don't think I've held it aginst Heinlein, so that shouldn't read "it's as bad", it should read "it's as fair", for me to stack the deck in my favor as it is for Heinlein to stack the deck in his favor. In asking fans what they'd do "What If", I expect them to bear in mind that I'm inquiring about their behavior in a particular set of circumstances; tampering with the premise will give an answer that doesn't answer the question. As a matter of fact, when I admitted my abitrary-Ghod-facet-action I explained that it's quite likely human life will continue in some form after an atomic war -- I expect most of the life of the Southern hemisphere will do so. But one can certainly inquire of a group what they'd do What If without "begging the question"; after all, it was my question. How could I be begging it by reminding someone that they weren't answering it? (My premise wasn't really arguable, for I didn't agree with it myself.) :: Judging from some accounts of the Seacon speech, Heinlein seems to understand the "grisly solution to guerilla resistance." :: Even if Jahweh called him "Tricky Dickie", I don't see how that makes the practice defensible. Would you advance the same source as a defense of your attempt to destroy Savannah, or your attempt to turn GMCarr into a pillar of salt, or your attempt to get Art Rapp to sacrifice his first born? :: If we'd thought about it we might have conveniently wedded our answers to FMBusby re Richard Nixon in order to save space -- many of them are startling parrellels. I'm not sure I'd have cared to step out on one of your planks, though: an alleged annoymous phone campaign against Mrs Douglas wasn't disputed as the method in which the Nixon smear was circulated because it wasn't brought up in this discussion. That charge has been disputed in Earl Mazo's biography of Nixon and while I don't disparage the word of the Rotslers I'd need a bit more documentation before I'd make that statement. The rest of your answer seems air-tight, however. :: I'll have to maintain a coy nutrality re your elaborations on my cavil regarding your comments on survival of the fittest vs. co-operation. I must suspend judgments on disputations into my historical blind spots. My initial cavil didn't, of course, commit me to either viewpoint -- nor do your comments imply that it did -- but was rather aimed at your reading of Willis' position to mean that incapacitated or incompetent persons "automatically"



have less obvious gifts. Agreed that Walt's line about "the strong helping the weak; so that their less obvious gifts benefit all" implies that the weak have less obvious gifts, but we shouldn't assume from this that Walt meant that all weak persons automatically have less obvious gifts, anymore than we would assume from the rest of his article that he thinks all able-bodied persons are nit-wits and leathernecks. Aside from the questioned correctness of the argument, it's plain from the rest of the sentence that quote is taken from that Walt was speaking in sweeping sociological terms of what would be advantageous to a civilization. I'm sure that Walt knows plenty of nit-wits among the weak. (If I may risk dipping my cuffs into the ink of this controversy momentarily: if the 3000 brightest people in America were to break their legs tomorrow it would hardly be advantageous to turn them loose on an ice pack. Your intent certainly is not to discard the weak -- your justification for their preservation is that it's "civilized" and a "virtue", noble motives which all civilized and virtuous people will grant you immediately. But the civilized and virtuous we number among the convinced: the argument from "advantage" is for the others. If this be not so I stand ready to be educated.) :: Most of the checkmarks in this lovely Seacon report now sink through my brain like a drop of quicksilver settling into wool (an amazingly apt simile, come to think of it!), but Heinlein's designation of Communism as a "jesuitical proselytizing religion" leaves no room for the hidden alternative Busby thinks Heinlein wants us to think of. A critical characteristic of the Jesuitical approach is that it includes the committment to die for the advancement or defense of beliefs. Martyrdom is an honor to the fanatic. Busby's alternative (firmness without belligerence was the way Nixon put it -- and well, I thought) is predicated on a different understanding of the Communist menace: that the Russians are realistic imperialists. If the latter is the valid reading they may realize that their willingness to use atomic weapons implies suicide (hi, Jim), but if the former... we'll know soon enough.

EGOBOMBSHELLS

I've noticed a frequent tendency in these pages to neglect to express appreciation for many enjoyed items in the SAPS mailings. This unfortunate condition is the result of eliminating expressions of enchantment that might be of interest only to the person addressed. I don't know if this department will be any more fascinating but it should be as brief and more inclusive than the old hit or miss method. Each issue I'll list here, in order, the 10 pieces in the mailing which I liked best. This is not intended as an olympian judgment but merely an expression of favoritism -- and should come in handy around poll time when I need to refresh my memory. Last mailing I loved: (1) "The Tattered Dragonette" -- Nancy Rapp, (2) "Whatever Happened to the Saint" -- Dean W. Dickensheet, (3) "CCon" -- Richard Eney, (4) "Yet More Canasta" -- John Berry, (5) "Coventry: Schizophrenia Unlimited" -- Jane Jacobs, (6) "Among My Souvenirs" -- John M. Baxter, (7) "How To Put ⌀⌀ On A World Science-Fiction Convention!" -- FMBusby, (8) "The Nawth Shall Rise" -- Roger Dard, (9) "The Ballard Chronicles" --Lee Jacobs, and (10) Cartoons -- Ray Nelson. Thanks people!

more thoughts on the effect spontaneity

"Anyway, Bhob's stuff for VOID is not just hacked out. Bjo was amazed when I told her this, since she felt it was highly spontaneous in nature, but Bhob first does a rough, then a pencilling, which I go over and either approve or suggest changes for. Then he inks it, and from this inked drawing he stencils the final version. I say "final version" because the drawings evolve in the process, and it is not until Bhob has added the shading on the stencil that he has created the final, thoroughly though-out product. This is why he was forced to reject Bjo's invitation to exhibit his inkings; they're still preliminary work."

--Ted White in KIPPLE #19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