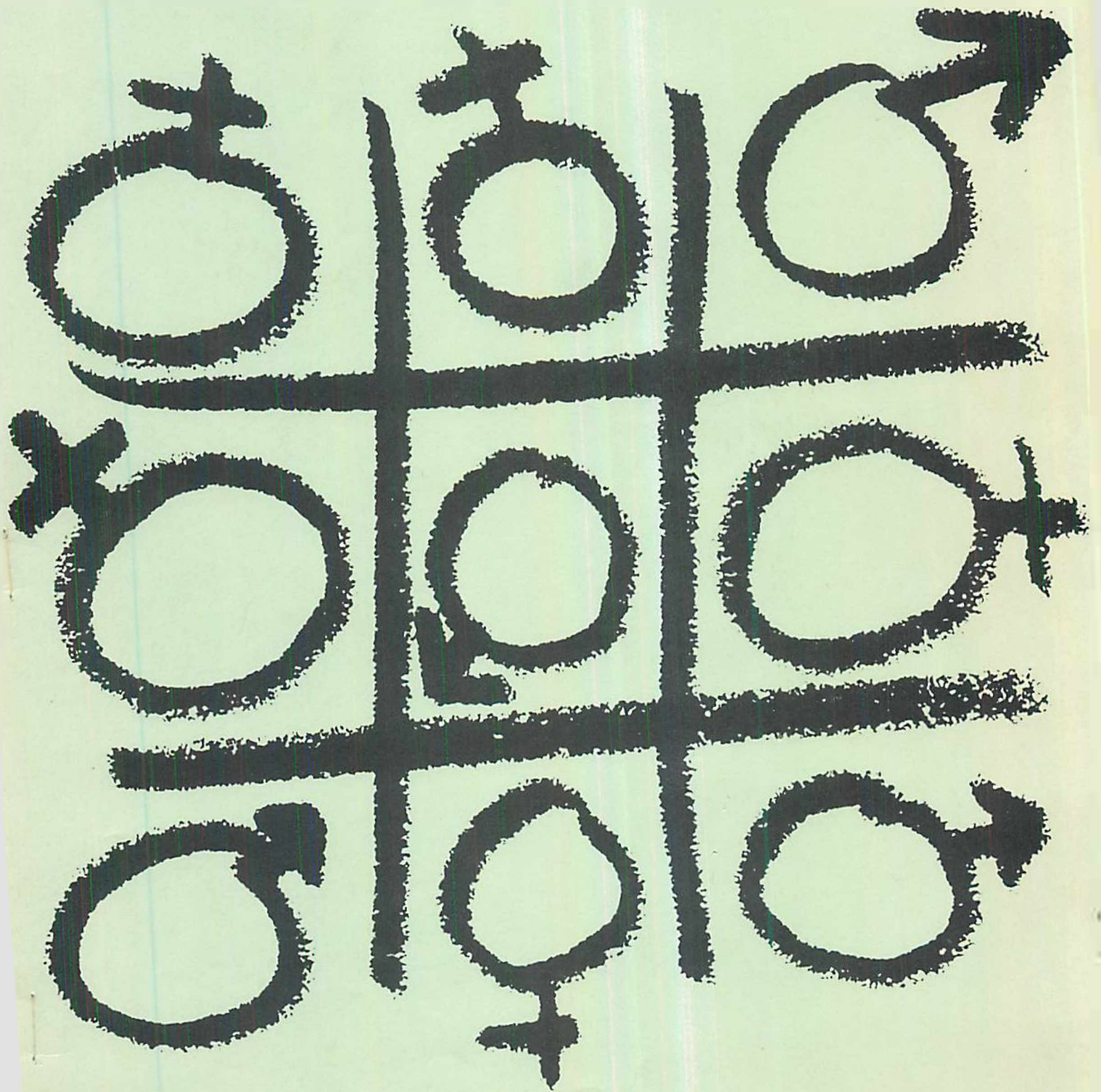


WARHOON  
16



# WARHOON

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## CONTENTS

The Harp That Once Or Twice.....9	The Fifth Column.....19
Accidentals and Nomics.....13	Mail Warp.....24
The View From Down Under.....16	Dissonant Discourse.....46

If I were president of the United States and the Communists had been as loudly demanding (as some fans have) that this magazine adopt a contents page, the above bit of appeasement would have surely cost me the next election. That may be an awkwardly realized sentence but it serves its purpose: if I'm to be forced into a position where I can be called Soft On Critics, people like Boggs, Lupoff, Baxter, Calkins and Donaho might as well be investigated on just as thin evidence. As you can see, however, criticism of this magazine is not entirely in vain. Individual barbs may lodge in an apparently impassive facade, but when enough of them collect something is sometimes done about it. The above contents listing is a case in point. If there's anything else your little hearts desire, do let me know.

Aside from the above, Wrhn is back up to its old tricks again, ie, monopolizing all unchained fanwriters. This issue sees the inauguration of a brace of columns. Welcomed are Walter Breen, whose intellectual flame-throwing and contortionist act has figured in these pages before, and John Baxter, who will introduce us to the British science fiction scene. In the meantime, Wrhn still needs someone who can knowledgeably discuss the current output in this country. Is that damon knight I see stumbling toward us through the mists?

Speaking of Walter Breen, I blushingly note that he starts off his column with a furtive peek under the lid of the Fanac Poll ballot box. I'd like to thank everyone who voted for Wrhn in first place and the rest of you who must have voted it number 10 thereby enabling it to come in number one. Now the test case that was presented to the Supreme Court can be withdrawn -- circumstances have proven that a SAPSzine can capture top honors in a Fanac poll. Offhand I don't recall any previous winners expressing their feelings rather than just their thanks so it might be time to report that poll winners are human and do have personal reactions to poll results. I might identify the feeling as one of satisfaction or perhaps it's merely therapeutic relief -- what I choose to interpret as recognition goes a long way in excising the serpentine trauma left by contemplation of issue #1; though some recent remarks by Art Rapp have convinced me that no one remembers it as well as I.

It's an old truism that nothing destroys success as well as success. At the moment I still think of Wrhn as a means of personal expression rather than as personal aggrandizement. If success is attained for itself it must needs be self destroying, but if it's a by-product of the satisfaction of other needs, it needn't be. Which is it? Perhaps only my analyst can say. In the meantime, I intend to go on producing Wrhn much as I have in the past. Anyway, I can't count the magazine a success until someone breaks down and sends in that prozine review column.

## OUR INSISTENT AUTHOR

"I am always amazed at the amount of work that goes into amateur publications. I am just barely able to drive myself into doing such work at intervals for dirty old money -- I can't imagine working so hard just for fun. Especially not at a typewriter. The work I do for fun involves picks, shovels, trowels, and wheelbarrows."

Robert A Heinlein in BASTION.

## I REMEMBER MARIENBAD. OR DO I?

Last issue's editorial excursus into realms of the cinema was more successful than I had any reason to expect. To be sure, Wrhn's basic premise is that it will be devoted to anything that interests me, but an occasional wonder whether anyone else will care does sometimes cross my mind as I whip out the 60th stencil. My doubts as to whether there were any attentions out there for me to turn to subjects like the John Birch Society and Richard Nixon were somewhat less because political subjects have usually been part of the fan press. But with the exception of an issue of CINDER, which predated the last Wrhn by a month or so and gave me a slight hint, I had no idea that any of you would stand still for pages and pages devoted to French and Italian films. Virginia Blish's tour de force, which I refused to cut despite her urging, was easily the hit of the issue and it says a lot for it that most of you seemed to find it as impressive as the Fellini epic. (If anyone hasn't seen the film, and was thus only able to enjoy it by osmosis through her article, the final recommendation I can offer is that Theodore Sturgeon tells me the movie near cost him his life but "was almost worth almost getting killed for." Well, you can never tell about these science-fiction authors.)

At the risk of losing my patients entirely, I'd like to persist a bit further with this subject -- "L'Année Dernière à Marienbad", as John Baxter informs an unsuspecting fandom. It isn't often that I flatter myself that I've seen almost as much in a movie as was put into it -- about the only thing I noticed in "La Dolce Vita" was that it ended precisely as it had begun; with Marcello's inability to be heard over the roar of the ocean, at the end, and with Marcello's futile attempts to communicate with the girls on the rooftop over the noise of the helicopter, in the beginning -- so I can't let this opportunity pass, not with the evidence at hand that many of my favorite fans have also seen it.

My initial satisfaction with the essay "At 'Year Marienbad 'last" is that I resisted the impulse to indulge in critical embroidery and attempted analysis on the assumption that "it is purely an example of cinematic technique." As I confessed last issue, Miss Elizabeth LeMay's theory that it was a retelling of the Faust legend was compelling, but subsequent reading on the film confirmed a feeling that its complexity precluded additional layers of dabbling with the meaning of the action. Miss LeMay shouldn't feel crest-fallen at the evidence I can array to support my theory that she saw more in it than it contained; after all she saw the point of its form immediately -- which is more than I can say -- and will be peeved to find it was apparently left at that. (I charge her with having a more complex mind than either Robbe-Grillet or Resnais and leave for a later date my observations on critics who substitute the cloud pictures of childhood for the intellectual structures they can find in movies and books, often to the surprise of their authors. My charge on that day will be that they are evolving puns which become as real as the roots on which they're made.) My conviction that the point of the movie is made by its form is supported by Alain Resnais, "Marienbad is a film which, for my part, presents neither allegory nor symbol...it is a film about greater and lesser degrees of reality...it is an attempt, still very crude and primitive, to approach the complexity of thought and its mechanism", and Robbe-Grillet, "the film is in fact the story of a

communication between two people, a man and a woman, one making a suggestion, the other resisting, and the two finally united,...this mental time, with its peculiarities, its gaps, its obsessions, its obscure areas, is the one that interests us since it is the tempo of our emotions, of our life." It's obvious that an artist invests his work with levels of meaning not apparent to himself, but it is possible to draw implications and parallels in everything -- and their discovery is easy to mistake for the thrill of insight. Resnais says "Yes, of course, we may think of the myth of the Grail or of something else. But the film is open to all myths." In the context of modern film makemaking, to see "Last Year At Marienbad" as witty paraphrase is to miss its true importance.

Marienbad's ambiguities make it a dangerous film for anything less than semantic analysis. Careless comment becomes a revelation of the critic rather than the movie. Walter Brean points out that "it's by no means clear that the cadaverous man is the woman's husband" thereby deflowering that assumption. I should have remembered that anything about the movie that hasn't been notarized and sworn to by both its author and director should be accepted only with suspicion. For instance, a series of ads ran in the New York papers depicting Delphine Seyrig, the lady of the film, standing in the Chateaux of Nymphenburg garden (I assume!) in a black feathered costume. She is accompanied by a man in a trench coat. One sees the film expecting that this is the man who will attempt to seduce her, but he does not appear in the movie. The ad might as well have shown Miss Seyrig standing with Gregory Peck or a battle scene from "Paths of Glory" for all it has to do with what we expect to see in it. It wasn't until long later while looking over photographs accompanying a text of the movie that I discovered the man in the ad was Alain Resnais.

Brian Aldiss's admission that the techniques of Marienbad inspired him to write an "anti-novel" and to use the "fruits of this experiment in sf" is only one instance of its influence. It should be of interest to record here that science fictional techniques might have been an influence on "Last Year At Marienbad". And interview with Resnais and Robbe-Grillet in CAHIERS DU CINEMA #123 tells us:

Interviewer: We may perhaps shock you, but when we saw Marienbad we thought of the book by Bioy Casares: "Morel's Invention".

Robbe-Grillet: Not at all. I've practically always been disappointed by the SF books I was able to read, but "Morel's Invention" is, on the contrary, an astounding science-fiction book. And a curious thing...I had a telephone call from Claude Oller, after Marienbad was shown, who said to me, "But it's 'Morel's Invention'!"

Resnais: I'm in a bad position for talking about this, because I don't know the book.

Interviewer: It's a novel written in the first person and based on the myth of the total cinema. The narrator finds himself on an island where a machine is running, set up 20 years previously, which reproduces in their three dimensions the events registered by it. You understand, these 3-D images mix with the real world to the point of being impossible to distinguish the one from the other. Like certain frames of Marienbad, the objects are thus subject to suspicion -- they are there, but are they really? That's the whole problem.

Aldiss points out that Resnais and Robbe-Grillet see a different meaning in the film, but this isn't necessarily surprising. Their disagreement is one of interpretation; not concept. Robbe-Grillet himself commenting on the collaboration says, "we saw the film in the same way from the start; and not just in the same general way, but exactly, in the construction of the least detail as in its total architecture. What I wrote might have been what was already in his mind; what he added during the shooting was what I might have written." However, viewing the end result appears to be

quite another matter and without some key as to what ability the telepath postulated last issue would have to distinguish between memory, imagination, and actuality, both director and author are on fairly solid ground in holding their own viewpoints. Nor do I think it matters whose interpretation is more correct: for me their (not hotly contested) disagreement reaffirms that the importance of the film is in its concept and techniques not in the quotation marks, parentheses, and periods we itch to apply to it. One expects a work of art to be a lucid statement, one expects the artist will be certain about what he's saying, but in this case, at least, the uncertainty is an expression of the situation. Who is completely certain in his lovelife? Who can say precisely what part of love is fantasy and what part reciprocation? Perhaps only a telepath.

However this may be, one is still reminded that here the camera has been invited to function in the role of our telepath and all our training resists the permissive ambiguities of the ideas of the French anti-novel. Consequently where ever Marienbad fandom gathers one will find people trying to unravel its mysteries, trying to draw a rational schema from its wealth of imagery. Though the camera is acting as a mindless telepath there are still indications that imply whether we are seeing imagination, memory, or actuality. Aldiss claims, with Robbe-Grillet and Resnais, that the sequence "where scenes in the bar are interpolated with fluttering white shots of increasing duration and frequency of the woman in her bedroom" may be either imagination or memory, but the clue of the camera technique is too insistent to permit much ambiguity here. I must side with Resnais, as I unwittingly did last issue, that the scene must represent the woman's memory, "suppressed but struggling to light." As imagination the flickering hesitant technique would be completely out of character in the mind of a sophisticated cosmopolitan woman. I submit that the sexual fantasies of continental society are hardly just now struggling to light. Why the shock, mingled with realization, if it is not suppressed memory?

Apparel is the major clue in the film indicating shifts between imagination, memory, and actuality. I don't think Aldiss's example that "a telepath would understand in terms of logic no more than we do" necessarily holds. I don't recall the scene he mentions but it's one of the cornerstones of the film that the conversations and narration do not necessarily correspond with the images seen at each given moment. Brian cites the continued conversation, but the images in the speaker's mind (and surely the listeners!) may be far away from the subject at hand. Until we can be sure what discernment our telepath will have, we have no way of knowing what meaning he will sift from all this.

Brian's suggestion that a perusal of Robbe-Grillet's book prior to seeing the film is "a useful, helpful thing to do" is correct, but an unhappy one, I feel. It is, as he says, "an absolute revolution of a film". Life's revolutions are so rare that it is a mistake to approach them with synopses and predigested impressions. It's a film you'll want to see again anyway -- arm yourself with exegeses for that trip but respond in your own personal way to a unique experience initially. As a matter of fact, you should all see it before you read either this article or the one in the last issue.

Lee Hoffman's impressions don't differ too markedly from my own. We agree that it's inappropriate to characterize it as a "love story". The tale certainly bears less of the marks of love than any I've seen -- it seems more an "affair" and, as I previously mentioned "a man seduces a woman". Lee correctly perceives depths to subjective reality that Resnais hasn't begun to show in "Last Year At Marienbad", I hoped to acknowledge its restricted nature when I called it "an episode that would be on a rather primary level for telepaths". One wonders what a complete rendition would have been like and whether even movies are the proper invention to attempt it. But Resnais

acknowledges this: "I stress the fact that this is only a tiny step forward by comparison with what we should be able to do someday. I find that as soon as we delve into the Unconscious, an emotion may be born. For example, I remember how I felt while watching "Le Jour Se Lève", when there were sudden moments of incertitude, the image of the wardrobe begins to disappear, then another image materializes. I believe that, in life, we don't think chronologically, that our decisions never correspond to an ordered logic. All of us have 'clouds', things which determine us but which are not a logical succession of acts arranged in perfect sequence. I am interested in exploring that universe, from the point of view of truth, if not of morality."

How does one salvage some shred of critical esteem in the minds of unsuspecting people he's recommended this movie to? When I saw it the second time I went with two friends and sat there alternately amused and apprehensive at their waxing and waning mystification. Robert Richard was quick to grasp the key of the changing costumes and emerged from the theatre with a satisfactory understanding but Gerry Schneider was frothing at the mouth and convinced that any elucidation of the ~~thing~~!! thing was self-deception. How to pierce this fairly typical reaction without flying into a rage of your own?

As we approached the exit, Gerry, buttoning up against the approaching chill, said, "It's cold tonight." Never one to let slide so opportune an opening, I asked, "How do you know it's cold?" "Because I can feel it!" he replied. "On the contrary," I answered, "you only feel something that you have learned to call 'cold'. You only know that this is cold because you experienced the sensation before. The word is meaningless without the experience. As we approached this door, there flashed through your mind the thousands of associations that tell you this is 'cold'. You had equally rapid desires for warmth as you buttoned your coat. A movie could be made that would depict these processes -- in fact, one very like it has been made. It's called "Last Year At Marienbad."

At that moment, I suddenly lost consciousness.

#### THE ANATOMY OF FANAC

There seems to come a time in the life of every truly active fan when he falls down moaning and agitated, caught in the trap of his own systematization and inspiration. Most active fans have acquired certain techniques of organization that allow them to fan with a minimum of drugery between desire and realization -- though the drugery count remains high it's obvious that it's being kept lower than the threshold of the drive toward completion. The acquiring of systematization through experience results in a condition of simplification (coupled with the growing affluence of fans) that makes the production of, say, the one-time normal 24 page fanzine a matter of but a few days work. This leads to the feeling on the part of our actifan that he has to produce something that does feel like a bit of work before it can command our attention and in the fan who can casually produce a 24 page magazine in a few evenings this means the production of large monthly KIPPLEs, and fanzines like HABAKKUK, VOID, XERO, BASTION, and LIGHTHOUSE. Even crudzines seem to have caught the infection. But there is another stage beyond Elephantiasis Fanzinia, from which this magazine has long suffered, and a glance at my twitching and contorted body (I'm peeking at it from the next room, just now.) confirms the diagnosis that your editor is in an advanced state of it. This disease will now be called Hercules' Syndrome. It is characterized by the assumption of tasks before which even those cases with Elephantiasis Fanzinia should blanch -- but some don't. Many disinterested observers believe Sam Moskowitz' case ("The Immortal Storm") was terminal, but an amazing number of the stricken have survived -- perhaps it's the wish to see the

fruits of their labors that maintains the high survival rate. Redd Boggs (THE FANTASY ANNUAL) is still with us and showed signs of reinfection until Richard Eney (FANCYCLOPEDIA II) produced the correct serum. Other successful convalescents include Terry Carr (THE INCOMPLEAT BURBEE), Ella Parker (THE ATOM ANTHOLOGY), Walt Willis (The Harp Stateside"), Francis T Laney (AW! SWEET IDIOCY), and others too exhausted to mention. Some current cases are Richard Eney (THE BEST OF FAPA or whatever he's calling it), who demonstrates that infection does not necessarily include immunization, Ted White (another Oz book), Harry Warner (a history book -- and perhaps the most serious case under study), and Richard Bergeron (THE ANATOMY OF FANAC).

"The Anatomy of Fanac" is planned as a book of critical guide-lines for the production of fanactivity. The actual mechanics of publishing will be ignored with the exception of the expected warning that the more legible your fanzine is the more inviting it will be to read -- it being assumed that plentiful advice on the techniques of publishing exists from both professional and fan sources. The book will be frankly predicated on the assumptions that the reader subscribes to the theories that the purpose underlining fanactivity is communication and that fanactivity that doesn't entertain will have to surmount the obstacle of boredom before it can communicate, and that the reader is interested in improving the quality of his own writing and editing.

Since the main areas of boredom are simply those with the most activity the initial intent of the book will be to concentrate on fan editing and fan writing. If someone can contribute a brilliant critical essay on fanart or cartooning or poetry, it will be gratefully accepted but the main aim, even to the point of being repetitious, will be to draw together the wisdom of the fannish sages into a collection which will be a reference and an inspiration for improvement for the greatest number of fans.

As much fresh suitable material as can be found will be used but such a collection of criteria and advice is not attempted as a new standard. The most significant judgements of the past are immediately encompassed by such a work. At the moment a rough and unedited list contains these possibilities: "Rising Standards" by Jack Speer, "Are You A Pseudo-Campbell?" by Redd Boggs, "Critique on Criticism" by Ernst A Edkins, "The Ways of Creation" by Harry Warner, Willis' columns on writing from this magazine, and "Syllabus for a Fanzine" by Francis T Laney. The list should be extended by one or two articles I've planned and perhaps by Vernon McCain's series of articles from OBLIQUE, which I've not seen, as well as several other titles under consideration and any original material that may be submitted.

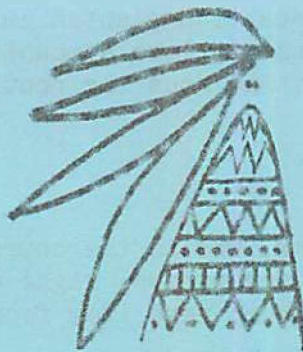
Suggestion for additions and contributions are solicited from all readers. Anyone who has any thoughts on the project is invited to write immediately. I would particularly like to hear from Terry Carr, Redd Boggs, Walt Willis, Ted White, Jack Speer, Harry Warner, Alva Rogers, and Frank Wilimczyk, but if you happen to be using some other name currently don't let that stop you.

And so the dread disease claims a new victim. Where will it stop? At about 110 pages I should imagine and not long after Stapelitis sets in.

#### YE WHO ARE SPARED

Time has run out before space this issue, it seems. The usual 10 page editorial is shortened to six, but it should be in shape next time if I survive the summer. Planned for that space was "Pablo Picasso, the Impossible Genius", or "The Hand Of Robert Leman", or "Theodore Sturgeon, Science Fiction, and The National Review", or "Beaches I Have Known", or "F M Busby, the Fanalysis of", or "Memoirs Of An Incompleat Fan; Part II, The Chicon of 1952", but none of these articles have been written.

# THE HARP THAT



# ONCE OR TWICE

by Walter Willis

"Depend upon it, Sir," said Dr. Johnston, "there is nothing which concentrates a man's mind so much as the knowledge that he is to be hanged in a fortnight." The good Doctor failed to consider an even starker human extremity, that of a columnist for Warhoon who finds that his deadline was yesterday. Grabbing the tray of notes for this column, I meet this crisis with that quiet desperation which is supposed to be the characteristic mood of Western Man, determined to try and fight my way into what space may remain of this issue. After all, I tell myself, Virginia Blish may not yet have been to see "Last Year At Marienbad."

Acting as superbly efficient paperweights in the tray are a huge anthology of world poetry and an ordinary issue of Habakkuk. Taking the lighter one first, I would like to quote from page 1154.

Early I rose  
In the blue morning;  
My love was up before me,  
It came running up to me from the doorways of the dawn.

On Papago Mountain  
The dying quarry  
Looked at me with my love's eyes.

This is a sample of American Indian poetry, a Papago Lovesong. What I would like to know is this: does it appeal to those of you who do not happen to be Red Indians?

This isn't a frivolous question. What I am wondering about is the extent to which you may have ceased to be Europeans, but may not yet have become Americans.

It has always seemed to me that it must be hard to love part of the alphabet, an agglomeration of initials symbolizing a political abstraction, like the USSR, the UK or the USA. I am not talking about flag-waving patriotism now, the synthetic perversion foisted on us by the politicians, but the deep and often unexpressed attachment a man feels for his home land. He may be willing to die even for NATO, but only because it includes his basic loyalty to a place and the people who live in it. This is geography rather than politics, because in the last analysis it is geography which gives the people of a region their common characteristics.

Which brings us finally to the question put by John Ottenheimer in Habakkuk 4. Are American schools wrong in teaching the "Western" cultural heritage? There is, he suggests, something basically incongruous about Middle East religions and philosophies on the Prairies and in the vast ranges of the Rocky Mountains and along the peaceful shores of the Pacific. But if as John says, a nation's arts are the result of their natural environment, then to some extent at least Amerind culture should by now have an inherent attraction for Americans.

The question of indigenous versus transplanted cultures is a complex one, but the practical issues are simple. Can one love a mountain as it should be loved when you don't know what its name means? And does the poetic experience of that other American mean anything to you?

## TRUMPET INVOLUNTARY

Through the courtesy of Bob Shaw, who in the course of his work in Public Relations reads all the British national newspapers, right down to the Daily Express, I am privileged to bring you this poignant news item from the Times:

Seldom can a musician have met with such a reception as that accorded on Saturday night to the trumpet player of the Philharmonia Orchestra. As he rose to his feet in the top-most gallery of the Albert Hall to produce his fanfare for Beethoven's Overture Leonora No. 3, to his surprise, horror and dismay he was seized by a burly steward and hustled towards the nearest exit.

To his credit, he remained trumpeting to the last and in fact battled his way back to his position in time for the second fanfare a few moments later.

"It sounded as though it was a complete reverse of what it should have been," said Mr. Kenneth Jones, who was conducting.

"The attendant imagined that it was someone playing a prank and I suggest that in future all attendants should be required to read carefully each evening's programme."

Mr. Jones explained that normally the fanfare in Leonora is played just off-stage, but to make things more realistic, since the trumpet was supposed to be sounding from a high tower, it had been decided to put the trumpet player in the gallery.

"Next time we shall have armed security guards around our trumpet player. He deserves everyone's sympathy for he had played most beautifully at the rehearsal."

Mr. Michael Maxwell, the orchestral manager, said that he had been waiting particularly for this fanfare. The first few notes had been fine and then they seemed to wobble in the middle and fade out. It sounded as though a door had suddenly closed in front of the player.

The unfortunate man was so upset that he left the Albert Hall immediately and went home to bed. Yesterday, he asked that his name should not be given.

## LAPSE OF THE GHODS

As an ordinary simple-minded fan, I am puzzled by something in this discussion the pros are having about letter sections in promags. Apparently the situation is that the authors want to see readers' letters, but the editors don't want to publish them. That, everyone seems to agree, is that. Too bad. Impasse. Well, I don't get it. Here we have this respected author complaining that he never gets comments on his work. By his side we have this respected editor revealing that he gets as many as 250 letters a month. There must be some reason why the editor does not pass extracts from the letters to the author, as good fan editors do.

Obviously the explanation must lie in the differences between fanzine editing and the lofty mysteries of professional work, so let us in our ignorant fannish way try and see just what these differences are. The pro editor, I understand, does not set his own type or run the printing presses. He does not have to keep subscription records, or even write mailing labels. He has a secretary for routine correspondence.

He has even, I am reliably informed, funds available to pay authors for material... though I admit that some of the contents of his magazine make this difficult to believe. He does not have to think up witty interlineations or, usually, write long editorials. (And when he does we usually wish he hadn't.) Finally, he does not have another full-time job. And that survey leaves us with just one little question to ask about the professional editor.

What does he do all day?

## IN THE END WAS THE WORD

I don't want to worry you, but I think the world may be coming to an end quite soon, despite the valiant efforts of the Los Angeles Science Fiction Society. Let me adduce some signs and portents.



When Andy Young was in Belfast, in the course of a discussion on the curvature of the space-time continuum with special reference to Marilyn Monroe, he asked John Berry what mathematical constants he was familiar with. "None," said John with manly frankness. "I don't even understand 3.1417."

"Come now, John," I said thoughtlessly, "That's as easy as Pi." Then of course I immediately taxed him with having deliberately supplied the cue. He denied it. That was the way it all started, a cloud no bigger than Berry's moustache.

At the British Convention this Spring, James White and myself were having a conversation with Brian Aldiss and Harry Harrison, and the conversation turned to how sf authors look in photographs. James said to Brian, "The last photograph I saw of you wasn't so horribel. You were standing outside the Tower of London, holding a kitten."

"Yes," said Aldiss. "I ate it afterwards." (He's like that, you know.)

A little later Harrison commented that sf authors always look as if they were looking for their mother. "It's the eat-a-puss complex," I said, before I could stop myself.

Some few days later, we were lying with Ron Ellick in the grassy grounds of Dunluce Castle when the conversation turned, as is its wont, to the intelligence of vegetable. Someone instanced the ways daisies curl their petals inwards at night-time, and we wondered if they did this a little when a cloud went across the sun. Ian McAulay, treating this research project with typical scientific thoroughness, shortly announced that he had observed them carefully but could see no sign of this effect. Whereupon Bob Shaw said sagely: "The old saying must be true then. A watched petal never coils."

But the most sinsiter of these events occurred only yesterday, when Sid Coleman dropped in on his way to a summer seminar of theoretical physicists in Istanbul. (Honest.) Naturally the conversation turned to unreal numbers.

I don't know that they're all that unreal," said Bob Shaw. "When I was in an Italian restaurant I found a cubical sort of herb floating in my soup."

"What was it?" we asked guardedly.

"The square root of minestrone," explained Bob.

"You'll just have to keep him away from Italian food, Sadie, said Madeleine. "It has an evil effect on him."

"Yes", I said, "he's sell his best friend for thirty slivers of pizza."

I expose these grisly skeletons in our closet solely for the mathematicians in the audience, so that they can calculate the odds against those cues arising in the natural course of events. The answer, I'm afraid, is only too obvious. We are being manoeuvred by some cosmic Ferdinand Feghoot.

The notion of the Universe having been created to make puns is no more far-fetched than that of certain highly respected theologians who claim that the purpose of our existence is to glorify Ghod...or in our terminology, for egoboo. And it is obvious that the dread implications are suspected by our race subconscious. Why else should the pun, like no other form of humour, be greeted with groans of dismay? (Even, in the LASFS, by extortion of a fine.) We realise subconsciously that we are all being manoeuvred towards the Ultimate Pun. Some day the almost inconceivably unlikely set of circumstances towards which the history of mankind is being directed will arise, and someone who has been bred and trained for this moment will detonate this Ultimate Pun, infinite in its layers of meaning. As in the Clarke story "The Nine Billion Names of Ghod" the purpose of creation will be realised and the world will come to an end.

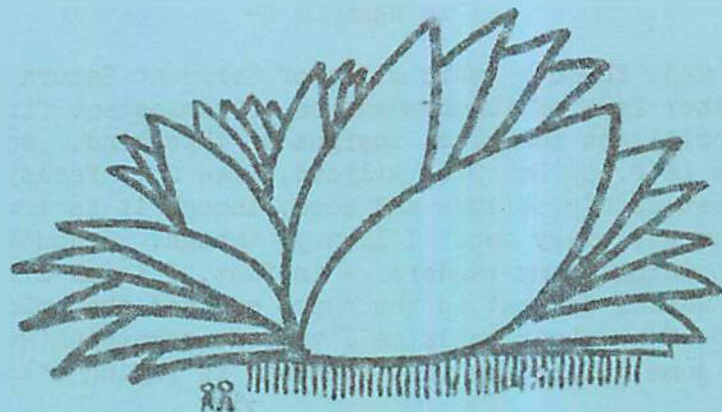
What is worrying me is this evidence that we in fandom may have been chosen as the unconscious agents of cosmic dissolution. It is as if now that the end is near the alien beings in charge of the detailed arrangements are becoming careless, more daring, less concerned about our suspecting their machinations. That business about a summer seminar of theoretical physicists in Istanbul, for instance, did you ever hear of anything so improbable? (And I know for a fact that Sid got a letter from Turkey accepting his application before he had even heard of it.) Even more worrying is the success of the TAWFund, hitherto inexplicable. Forry Ackerman and Dean Grennell will be there too... Yes, I'm afraid that the world is due to come to an end on Saturday 1st September. It will, I think, be painless and without shock. Just don't look too closely at some of those "disguises" for the Masquerade Ball.

--Walter A. Willis

.....  
 WHO SAYS A GOOD NEWSPAPER HAS TO BE DULL?  
 .....

A FOR ANDROMEDA by Fred Hoyle and John Elliot. 206 pages. Harper and Row. \$3.50.  
 A review by Maurice Dolbier quoted from The New York Herald Tribune for July 9, 1962.

"It's strange that American television hasn't done more both with science-fiction and with serial programming. :: By science-fiction, I don't mean stories of fantasy and the supernatural (like those in Rod Serling's generally excellent 'Twilight Zone' series) nor the bug-eyed cops-and-robbers nonsense that's foisted off on the younger set, but the real thing -- smooth professional writing and an authentic scientific background. And by serials, I certainly don't mean soap-operas but stories that begin, build a succession of climaxes for several weeks, and then, unlike soap-operas, come to an end. :: The British have been running science-fiction television serials for many years, and with no slackening of viewers' interest. Best of the lot have been three by Nigel Kneale, with a central character named Professor Bernard Quatermass, a scientist in charge of a rocket research station. 'The Quatermass Experiment,' dealing with the first manned rocket to be sent into space and produced at a time when such a project still seemed a wildish dream of the future, won such critical and public acclaim that the BBC happily scheduled sequels. The plays -- 'The Quatermass Experiment,' 'Quatermass II,' and 'Quatermass and the Pit' -- have been published in paperbacks by Penguin Books, in television script form and with photographs from the productions, and I recommend all of them highly to science-fiction addicts. :: 'A For Andromeda' was written in collaboration by one of England's most skillful television dramatists, John  
 (Concluded on page 18.)



## ACCIDENTALS AND NOMICS

by JAMES BLISH

I'm appalled to find that my piece about feedback between writer and reader didn't get through to gifted people like John Baxter, whom above all I was trying to reach. This is a useful critical discovery in itself, I suppose, though one that's very unpalatable. However, let me try once more.

I do not care which way public opinion is swinging. The editors know all about this, or pretend they do, and will enforce their opinion of the matter on the writer-for-money whether he likes it or not. (See, for instance, Fred Pohl's letter in *Wrhn* 15.) What I was pleading for was feedback between individual readers and the writer--not between the writer and "public opinion." Hence I don't give a damn whether the people who write letters to s-f magazine letter columns represent 1% or 98% of the readership; either way, I want to hear whatever is said, and as matters stand now I am given no opportunity to do so.

Of course the letters are unrepresentative of the mass audience. Of course many of them are cranky. Of course many of them are fuggheaded. Of course most of them will be of no use to the writer. What of it? Is any of this worse than seeing no letters at all?

Let me get down off the soapbox for a moment and offer what I think is a perfect example. Back in the days when *ASTOUNDING's* letter column was at least in part devoted to the fiction the magazine published, there appeared a letter in criticism of a story of mine. In essence, the letter said that I had a tendency to set up my story situations like a row of dominoes, and then to knock down the whole row so fast, at the end, that the reader couldn't possibly be expected to comprehend the ending.

This criticism was wholly and completely accurate. In fact, I had been setting stories up this way for about 10 years before this reader complained, and I had been doing it consciously, too; but it had never before occurred to me that it was bad plotting (I had been doing it for an entirely different reason). His letter compelled me to review my whole practice, and to reform it, furthermore.

The writer of the letter later became a professional author of great skill himself, and still greater promise: Dean MacLaughlin. But at the time he was only a writer to a magazine. If he had been a fan of note at the time, I wouldn't have known it, since back then I was paying no attention to fandom; I became aware of his criticism only because he sent it to Campbell, and Campbell published it in *ASTOUNDING's* letter-column. It was a fantastically valuable letter, as far as I was concerned -- but had it been sent to *GALAXY*, I would never have seen it.

I am willing to wade through cubic miles of Sergeant Saturn or the Shaver Mystery or psionics or any other form of fuggheadedness or adolescent fireworks in the hope of finding just one brilliant technical insight of this kind. And I do wish I got more mail: my address is P. O. Box 273, Milford, Pike Co., Pennsylvania; and I will read every letter I get with gratitude and hope, though it is true that I couldn't possibly promise to answer every one. I'll try, though. I don't want to hear the conglomerate public opinion of my readers -- in fact, I think I can predict that rather well by now. What I do want is the sharp eye and the pointed objection. Of course, I shan't weep if somebody tells me I've done something well, either. But well or ill, I welcome some indication that somebody is paying attention.

The suggestion of Aldiss, Brunner and others that somebody sponsor a magazine of professional reviews has been tried, under the editorship of Lester del Rey. It went through two magnificent issues and then died of the sheer weight of effort involved. (And also of the hostility of some writers to anything but praise, a point Aldiss invokes.) What else are we going to do to get this kind of criticism? I don't know, Mr. Brunner; I wish I did. I think making fandom bear the burden, as Fred Pohl proposes, is the wrong answer entirely, and I don't say so academically; I tried it, as Wm Atheling Jr, and I'm about to try it again, but at best it's a half-pint way of filling a hogshead. Maugre Fred Pohl, I believe that the best way those who care about the matter can approach it at the moment is to tell the editors of the professional magazines that they have drastically cut us off from our audience -- first, by dropping their letter columns (or devoting them to Science Discussions, or what Pohl calls, Gott soll hueten, Letters about Life); and second, by grossly misconceiving the uses of their s-f book review columns. I would not let any editor tell me that his first duty is to what he thinks he readers want, simply because I know -- I apologize for this formulation, but there is no other honest way to put it -- that one of the things his readers want is me. It is not the book reviewer's fault that he is incompetent. It is the editor's fault that such a man is employed, and that the book reviewing is conducted upon so idiotic a basis.

Furthermore, I do not believe for a minute Fred Pohl's contention that most of his readers never mention a letter column, any more than I ever believed Horace Gold's pretense that he had polled his readership on this subject. I will be convinced only by an opportunity to examine the letter file of GALAXY, and that will happen perhaps one day before the Last TruTp, but no sooner. I am wholly familiar with the slippery public relations evasions which have always been employed to promote GALAXY, because that is precisely the kind of thing I have been doing for a living, for far bigger enterprises, since back in the days when Fred was doing the same thing for POPULAR MECHANICS and Horace was running up 5 million words of comic-book balloons. This is not an ad hominem criticism of either man, but only a public notice that such techniques founder, sooner or later, on the fact that other people besides the editors of GALAXY are aware of them.

As an example, consider Fred's accusation that I keep changing my grounds for my aversion to non-fiction reviews in s-f book review columns. "Changing grounds" is a dirty term in logic only to those who know nothing about logic -- and Fred knows a great deal about logic; he is here exploiting his readers' presumed ignorance. I did, and I do, object to reviews of popular-science books in s-f book review columns, on the grounds that the reviewers are largely incompetent to undertake such reviews. I did, and I do, object to such reviews on the additional grounds that they delay the reviewing of science-fiction, which is a proper subject for such a column, to beyond the point where the books being reviewed are on sale. I have not shifted my grounds; I occupy both grounds; Fred cannot invalidate either one of these arguments by pointing out -- as is true -- that I also espouse the other. But he can, perhaps, confuse

the matter by calling two supporting points for the same argument a "shifting of grounds." (Charles Wells, who is interested in my unreal unicorn, might take it from here.)

I have no special objection to organized lying. I, too, make a large part of my living at it, both by day as a public relations counsel and by night as a fiction writer. I don't think one can run a family very well without it, either, though this is a much more delicate task. But on a question of substance, such as this matter of feedback between writer and reader, I don't take kindly to an attempt to run a Fool's Mate on me, as though the editors of GALAXY were the only people in the world who know anything about how to play chess -- or want the rest of us to think so. It's not that difficult a game, Fred.

It might be noted, just incidentally, that the kind of p. r. that has been lavished on GALAXY since its inception -- consisting mainly of the pretense that GALAXY is and always was the best of all possible s-f magazines and can never do any wrong -- is and always has been both incompetent and ineffective. Good editing, which is what Fred is beginning tentatively to apply now, may very well bail the magazine out of the deep difficulties it has been in for years, and this I will applaud loudly. Strident promotion won't, and neither will silly insistence that there is nothing wrong and never was.

Incidentally, nobody should take the rather churlish tone of the foregoing as indicative of anything but my naturally churlish nature; Fred has been a friend of mine through 25 years of strident disagreement.

THE POSSIBILITY THAT HEINLEIN really and truly doesn't like to write has to be faced; nor is it incompatible with the fact that he writes with obvious gusto. He has expressed for himself an attitude which is true for me, too, though it took me many years to realize it.

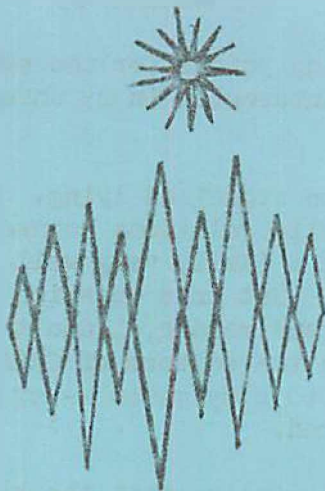
My theory is that most writers are compulsives; they do it not because they enjoy it -- how could anybody really enjoy working that hard? -- but because they have no choice. (This is why a common question of youngsters, "Should I become a writer?", can't be directly answered. If the questioner is free enough in his own soul even to pose the question, he probably isn't going to become a writer.) My impression of years' standing that I enjoyed writing disappeared when I realized the nature of the "enjoyment" involved; the real fact is that I never feel more than half alive except when I'm writing -- in short, it's not a pleasure but an addiction, directly comparable to an addiction to morphine. The stuff doesn't give you any real kicks, it's just that once you're hooked you feel miserable without it. The fact that some writers are more dedicated craftsmen than others is part of the spectrum of learning to live with the addiction, and furthermore, persuading the public to pay for it. (Morphine costs money; writing costs time.)

This may seem like a terribly gloomy analogy, but actually I don't feel at all gloomy about it; there are subsidiary benefits, such as egoboo. There is also the thought that with enough care and craftsmanship, you may someday manage, if only once, to transform the curse into a monument. This sounds like hoping for a miracle until you observe, on the shelves of your own library, that it's been done before -- miraculously often, in fact.

--James Blish

.....  
 "A writer is a delicate organism."  
 .....

THE  
VIEW  
FROM  
DOWN  
UNDER



by  
JOHN  
BAXTER

"The British sf magazines" observed Buck Coulson in YANDRO 110 "are the best in the world" and though it is an almost overwhelming temptation to disagree with him and spark another of those interminable "Grumblings" arguments, on this occasion I must defer to Buck's opinion and admit that, in my opinion, he is absolutely right. The three British Nova Publications magazines, NEW WORLDS, SCIENCE FANTASY and SF ADVENTURES, are so far ahead of their American contemporaries in every category from binding to distribution that comparison is downright embarrassing. This is hard for most fans to swallow, I know, but perhaps a review of a sample issue of one of the series might illustrate just a few of the qualities that make these magazines the most interesting, consistently literate and (perhaps most important) financially stable in the sf/fantasy field. Let's consider SCIENCE FANTASY #52, dated April-May 1962.

SCIENCE FANTASY is the bimonthly backup to the big money-spinner NEW WORLDS, and it alternates with SF ADVENTURES, the space-opera and action magazine. I don't have to explain the advantages of this system in terms of exposure and sales rotation, except perhaps to point out that it guarantees two new titles per month on the stands and a continuous parade of varying reading matter that will hold all but the most disenchanted customer. This makes Ted Carnell, the editor, happy, but to satisfy the reader, it's worth pointing out that each SCIENCE FANTASY contains 112 pages of solid reading -- no editorials or letter column, no ads, only the shortest of editorial introductions to each story, no Fegoots, no "Trading Post", no interior illos -- and that this sells for the British equivalent of 25¢. Additionally, the magazine is honest with its readers. It seldom prints novels, as the Nova definition of a novel is anything over 40,000 words. In this particular issue, there are two novelettes. One is 25,000, the other 20,000. It's dated April 1962, and that's when it came out on the stands. It wasn't printed in January, released February and remaindered in March as most "April" issues of the American magazines are. The cover says SCIENCE FANTASY, and that's what it prints -- science and fantasy in equal quantities. No whimsy, no symbology, no half-assed detective yarns dressed up with a fairy or two, no poetry. Just good solid reliable stories that repay the customer for the money he laid down. To illustrate...

One hesitates to open a review by recommending unreservedly a story which begins with a dragon sitting quietly under a tree in 20th Century Britain, if only because this is one of the hoariest hooks in "100 Good Plots and How To Write Them." The only possible justification I could have for doing so would be that the writer had done something new and radical with the idea. In the case of "Father of Lies" by John Brunner, that is a claim I can make with some confidence. A great many things this yarn is not -- completely believable, consistently well-written and logical -- but it's certainly original. On principle, I'm against giving involved plot outlines in a

review, but in this instance I see no other way of illustrating just how well Brunner has dealt with his creaky theme. Briefly, a group of young university graduates stumbles on a 120 square mile area in the Scotch countryside that has somehow been frozen in the middle ages, and which appears to be slowly regressing into a fantasy world inhabited by dragons, ogres and other hangovers from Arthurian legend. Inside the area, no modern mechanisms work, but the investigators carefully explore it armed with axes, knives and the like. Following a stray tourist into the area to rescue her, one of the men finds that the whole place is kept in statis by a super-intelligent but insane mutant who is obsessed by the Arthurian legends, and in a suitably bloody and grotesque climax he kills the mutant and rather fearfully brings the medieval world back into contact with this contemporary culture of H-Bombs and advertising.

Those are the bones, but my summary is as indicative of the complete story as if I said that "Stranger in a Strange Land" was a story about the colonization of Mars. However, at least it illustrates that this is a new and strange beast that Brunner has brought into the quiet and ordered world of modern fantasy. Not since the days of FANTASY FICTION (we'll not invoke the tired old shade of UNKNOWN WORLDS this time) has such uncompromisingly fantastic material been published in a professional magazine, nor have we seen such spectacular writing. Perhaps the summary is bare, but fleshed out, this is a compelling story. The ogre "nine feet tall, naked with a horrible animal nakedness, its skin showing dirty pinkish-grey through the matting of hair."; a twisted tumbled medieval village sprawled around the base of the gaunt castle; the silent sunlit horror of the fields choked with unharvested grain, edged by overgrown roads and wild hedges; in the castle, amid the flyblown mirrors and his insane courtiers, the mutant sits, drinking the sickly cordial that to him is wine, dreaming horrors that become real in the world outside, waiting for the knight errant who will one day claim the dusty Siege Perilous at his side. Through this jumble of reality and fable, the characters move like ordinary people, bumbling about and tripping over things in their ineptness and fear. They discover that life in the middle ages was not only uncomfortable and unsanitary -- it was completely inhuman by their standards. And that killing anybody with an axe is not as easy as Prince Valiant makes it look. These are real human reactions. They show Brunner has given this theme the benefit of thought as well as imagination.

Unfortunately, thought and imagination are no substitute for genius, for which reason "Father of Lies", while entertaining, is not especially brilliant. There are lapses of movement where the story lies down and appears to die for a few pages-- a little less "cliff-hanging" and fewer principal characters might have remedied this particular fault. Most annoying of all is Brunner's habit of under-writing, of describing fascinating things in part only, and of failing to explore fully the richest veins of imagination while other less worthwhile facets are polished until they almost blind the reader. How much better this story would have been had the description of the fantasy world and its villages and people been a little more detailed, and the high-points -- rescue of the girl from the dragon, the battle with the ogre, the climax in the castle -- been played down more. There's lots of cake, and lots of cherries, but precious few ordinary currants, and no brandy at all.

What would you say if I praised a story dealing with Romulus and Remus and how they founded Rome with the help of a dryad and a faun? Well, better jot it down because Thomas Burnett Swann's "Where is the Bird of Fire?" is such a story and I will willingly go to bat for it as the most literate fantasy of the last five years. Despite the apparent juvenility of the theme, this is an extremely mature story written with great skill, carefully documented and quite convincing. Romulus and Remus did exist, and they did recapture the city of Alba Longa against overwhelming odds for

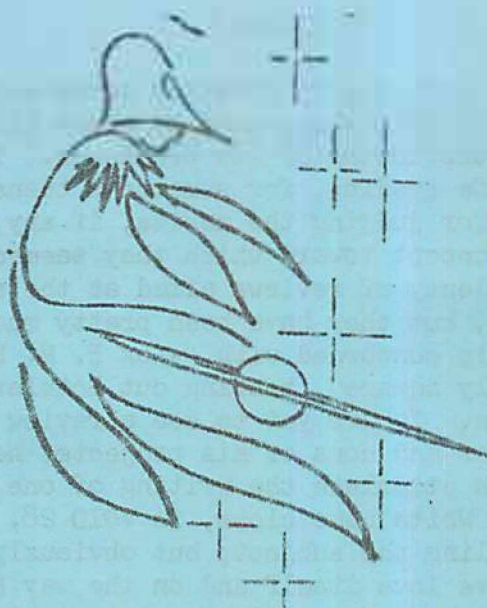
no special reason that historians can put their finger on, and can you prove that a dryad couldn't lead a flight of bees into a city to confuse the enemy, or that fauns didn't exist back in the days of Etruria's twilight? Just asking.

Actually this story doesn't belong in a magazine like SCIENCE FANTASY. It's too mature, too measured for fans of contemporary sf, and many will no doubt find it dull. It has that quiet formal charm which characterized the fantasies of E.M. Forster, and which one still finds in the work of Durrell and Graves. Gently, precisely it tells the story, and as quietly goes, leaving behind a subtle aftertaste that is always with you. The images blur and the story is forgotten, but you remember the feel of the thing, the writing..."Where is the bird of fire? In the tall green flame of the cypress I see his shadow, flickering with the swallows. In the city that crowds the Palantine, where Fauns walk with men and wolves are fed in the temples, I hear the rush of his wings. But that is the shadow and the sound. The bird himself is gone. I have the feeling that there is more to this story than is immediately apparent, but I have neither the ability nor the referents to explore it fully. Perhaps it is not deep, but it hints at depth, just as it hints of the greatness that fantasy can attain in the hands of sufficiently talented artists.

By contrast, the final short-short, "The Problem" by Claude and Rhoda Nunes, illustrates just how trivial poor fantasy can be. Thankfully, it is very short indeed, and I won't burden you with a description of its inept plot and hopeless tag-line. It may come as a surprise to those who have read the foregoing that I believe some British fantasy is poor. Well, quite frankly, a great deal of it is bad, though the percentage is not as great as that in the American magazines. The rates are low and the competition strong, so Ted Carnell invariably gets stories that are both long and at the same time well-written. He has a coterie of writers around him who are sufficiently friendly and (if you'll pardon my use of a redundancy) idealistic to sell him material at lower rates when they can, with a little tinkering and some concessions to their ethics, make a mint on the American market. In ASF and Fy&Sf, you'll see the slick stuff, the glossy meticulously-constructed little pieces that tick like a watch, but for the provocative stories, the bloody bawdy hell-for-leather action fantasy and the ideas that are worth at least a second thought, you have to go to the British magazines. --John Baxter.

WHO SAYS A GOOD NEWSPAPER HAS TO BE DULL? (conclusion): Eliot, and one of England's most distinguished astronomers, Fred Hoyle. ... It ran as a seven-part serial (the last several installments doubled the BBC's audience, and, it is estimated, were seen by 80 percent of the British viewing public--a figure that our tired-rerun moguls might ponder), and is here presented rewritten as a novel. :: In quality, as a tv play it doesn't match the Quatermass series and as a novel it doesn't match Mr Hoyle's own earlier works: 'Ossian's Ride' and 'The Black Cloud.' Its leading characters are a girl security agent and a surly and difficult young man who is a radio telescope scientist, and one can't really work up much interest in their personal affairs. One can't get excited about the menace, either --it's another of those international cartels run, as usual, by a bald, cigar-smoking, tough, prosperous and guttural German. :: But from the moment at the end of the first chapter when a message, in coherent form of dots and dashes, reaches the Earth from the middle of the Andromeda constellation 200 light-years away, the reader is caught. Without spoiling the fun by giving away too much of the plot, one can mention that the scientists, working on the advice from outer space, create a partly-human being, a girl whom they name, of course, Andromeda, and who has been described by one British television critic as 'a computer-designed nymphet in a Greek nightie.' She appears in the plot at about the time that those viewer figures began to rise to the 80 per cent mark. :: By popular demand, she has returned to British television screens. Another Hoyle-Eliot serial, 'The Andromeda Break-through' began on the BBC a couple of weeks ago. Think what we're missing!"

## THE FIFTH COLUMN



by  
WALTER  
BREEN

Now that Bergeron has brought back not only the atmosphere and topics but many of the original personnel of the old VAPA mailings -- James Blish, Virginia K. E. Blish, Robert A. W. Lowndes, Alva Rogers, Harry Warner, and so forth -- in yet another way doing his part to fulfill the prophecies Speer made in the prologue to the final INNUENDO, I feel it's about time someone explicitly gave the fact prominence. Whether or not one takes seriously the speculations of Dick Lupoff about "N-ninth Fandom?" or the exultations of Redd Boggs that we live in "the best of all possible fandoms", it is true now -- as does not seem to have been the case a few years back -- that in fandom is at least one vehicle where one can be as intellectual as one pleases, on science-fiction or any other topic, without fear of being shrugged off as too serious or too mundane. And fandom's enthusiastic acceptance of Wrhn as this vehicle has gone so far as to make it #1 on the FANAC Poll by a margin of nearly two hundred points over the #2 fanzine. If this means anything, it presumably means that at least the eighty-odd fanzine fans who named Wrhn on their ballots are endorsing the idea of having this kind of discussion in fandom.

What I expect to be writing here will, therefore, sometimes deliberately recall the comments and reviews found in the VAPA mailings; subjects touched on, or inspired by, material in previous issues of Wrhn. An unkind soul might say that I was simply trying to escape the blue pencil facing most writers of letters of comment, and he would be partly right, but in this column I expect to elaborate on some ideas at greater length or detail than would be feasible in a mere letter. One should be prepared for the occasional rebuttal and the perhaps more occasional polemic. Judging by the response to my article on Heinlein ("The Stranger and the Critic", Wrhn 14), rebuttals may well become a necessity, and I could do worse than to begin with a few, both to published criticisms and to some of the letters which failed to get printed.

BLISH IN THE PAN: James Blish flatters himself if he thinks my article ("The Stranger and the Critic" was Bergeron's title for it) was even primarily intended as a rebuttal to his own position; I said quite explicitly that I was making excursions on aesthetic, religious and sexual aspects of "Stranger in a Strange Land"...and that my rebuttals to Blish's conclusions were in passing. I was, and am, more interested in exploring implications than in perpetrating polemics. What Felice Rolfe and others consider "digressions" are in fact just such explorations of themes suggested by the Heinlein book, and I hope others may later on take up some of these themes among others as points of departure for articles. (Your cue, Harry Warner.)

Blish's handling of the promiscuity question seems calculated more to cut off discussion than to provide clarification; more to prove his own allegiance to official morality than to encourage questioning of its premisses. This may prove him safe company, and his writings safe reading, for someone's teenage daughter, but it does not establish fair ground for judging the merits, if any, of Heinlein's gropings, or of the "expansive love" concept toward which they seemed to me to be moving. I grant that there have been plenty of reviews aimed at the sexual material in "Stranger in a Strange Land", but they have been pretty much aligned along party lines, and most of them are primarily concerned with -- as F. M. Busby put it -- proving that their writers are "safely square", bearing out Rotsler's old contention that fans by and large are squares. I have yet to see a review of this Heinlein book which adequately deals with the pros and cons of his projected new morality. I had hoped that my article might perhaps stimulate the writing of one, but if it has been written, I have not yet seen it. Ted White came close, in VOID 28, in chiding Heinlein for insufficient honesty in handling the subject; but obviously much more can and should be said, both on nonpossessive love itself and on the way Heinlein handles the topic. In particular, if James Blish has any sound arguments in favor of his apodictic denial that "the abandonment of sexual possessiveness is an index of maturity", I wish he would marshal them in the pages of Wrhn.

I rather regret Heinlein's decision against commenting on material appearing in Wrhn, as it pretty much precludes confirmation or refutation of my suspicion concerning the "contrary motion" between "Stranger in a Strange Land" and "Venus Plus X". Had Heinlein, for instance, not read the latter before writing his book, one would have to seek elsewhere for explanation of the parallels between them. But in the absence of such a disclaimer, the parallels are too numerous and, to my mind, too far-reaching to escape notice and comment, despite Blish's attempt to pooh them away by dragging EEEvans in by the heels.

The list of ethical imperatives may possibly seem trivial to one to whom the outgrowing of sexual possessiveness is no index of maturity; but attempting to live up to even half of them has proved in practice anything but trivial, as the ex-inhabitants of numerous utopian intentional communities based on roughly similar principles can testify. These eight imperatives are, if anything, far more demanding than the ten commandments. The latter indeed can be kept without more than minimal changes in an essentially crass materialistic orientation: they insist principally on adherence to certain specified external forms of behavior, the only internal change ordered being renunciation of desire for someone else's chattels, human or otherwise. But the eight imperatives I elucidated from the Sturgeon and Heinlein books call for no less than a complete revaluation of all materialistic values, a reversal of personal orientation; and this is not to be faced with sang froid. It is therefore small wonder that both Sturgeon and Heinlein stacked their cards by building in these imperatives respectively via biological wizardry and the Unitive Way.

Both Blish and Larry McCombs point out a seeming contradiction in the Heinlein-Smith ethic, arising from its toleration of adepts' use of violence against wrongnesses. But comparative history of religions shows that this has not been felt as a contradiction in practice. In Judaism such violence was employed alike by Jahweh (e.g. against Sodom), by adepts under direct supervision of Jahweh (against murmurers and enemies), and by the entire tribe at Jahweh's orders (involving in several instances genocide on threat of punishment for sparing even women or children). Nor is this exclusively a Judaic situation: the Bhagavad-Gita is represented as having been a dialogue between Arjuna the Unsleppng and his charioteer the Divine Krishna (a sort of Hindu counterpart to Christ), on the eve of an exceedingly bloody battle resulting in victory for Arjuna's side, largely owing to the valor of Arjuna and his divine charioteer. And examples could be multiplied in Islam (Blish even mentioned

Mahomet) and Christianity (where mystics preached crusades, etc.). Heinlein's use of murder as a tool of a religion is therefore consistent with preachment and practice for at least four thousand years. The contradiction, if any, is the responsibility of the religious leaders; but surely where it was brought up, it was resolved by some such argument as the necessity for a hierarchy of values, or the choice between greater and lesser evils, etc. Whether we approve of any such rationalization is not relevant to the consistency question.

As for the equation between Heinlein's "Thou art God" and the Hindu "Thou art That", affirmed by me and denied (without supporting evidence) by Blish, I cite in confirmation of my view the Svetasvatara Upanishad, in which the formula "Thou art That" appears in contexts interpretable only as meaning "Thou art God". In the Katha Upanishad and several others the epithet "That" is applied to God; and the meaning, consistent through all these, is clear: God's creating the universe consisted in his self-dismemberment into an infinity of parts, every human being therefore being part of God, sharing the divine spark. (This is apparently what Heinlein had in mind: "Stranger in a Strange Land", p. 140.) The point is too obvious to a student of the Upanishads to require further elaboration; one need not bring in, as did Blish, long-forgotten Huxley popularizations, which in all fairness I must confess that I never saw.

If this group of excursus constitutes "thinking for the author", then Blish and I disagree as to both the definition of that phrase and the intent of my article.

MINE EARS HAVE HEARD THE GLORY: Most readers seem to have misunderstood my point in discussing the nonprogrammatic quasi "story" in Mahler's First Symphony. The work has no literary content, despite the (later expunged) reference to Jean Paul's "Titan", and the moods I elucidated from pointing out its relationship to some of Mahler's earlier songs do not constitute a Program in the sense that Richard Strauss's "Heldenleben" and "Don Quixote" have Programs. Harry Warner's skepticism about the sincerity of the Mahler work betrays only his lack of familiarity with the biographical data (the disastrous love affair and subsequent rethinking of all Mahler's earlier assumptions, after the first two movements of the symphony had been drafted but before the 1884 song cycle quoted in the last two movements) and Mahler's own writings. Bruno Walter was one of Mahler's closest friends for the last twenty-odd years of the composer's life, and his memoir of Mahler, based on this close association, should be convincing testimony: The first symphony (completed 1888) was "conceived as a personal creed" (p.102); it was Mahler's "Werther" (p.120); it "reflects the stormy emotions of a subjective experience" (p.135). He also quotes Mahler's remark after a performance of that symphony, December 1909: "The Funeral March and the storm that follows are a flaming indictment of the Creator!" But as for the claim that it is "program" music, in the sense of describing nonmusical scenes the way that Strauss's orchestra describes Quixote charging into the herd of sheep, Bruno Walter denies it categorically: "If 'program music' is the musical description of extramusical processes, he (Mahler) never wrote it." And, "What happens is that a mood born of recollection and of present feeling produces themes and effects the whole shape of the musical development without breaking the musical context. Thus a self-contained composition becomes a personal message from the heart." (p.120) This could apply as well to the Mozart G minor Quintet or to any number of other works, equally nonprogrammatic, in which the composer has revealed in catharsis his relived emotional states with unusual clarity -- the "different kind of quasi story-telling"\* (see next page) to which I referred in my article. I do not pretend to say that this is what Heinlein had in mind; but this represented my exploration of

one of the issues suggested by "Stranger in a Strange Land" -- and I value the book for being a stimulus to thought -- which is, after all, something Heinlein intended it to be.

As for Blish's claim that I was completely in error about operatic libretti, this obviously requires more substantiation than a flat "wrong at every point and all down the line" dismissal, and it is perhaps significant that neither Lowndes nor Warner attacked me on this point. Warner's remark that many judge opera libretti out of context as though to judge play backdrops by the standards of "great paintings" is true but not relevant: I was not referring to the quality of the libretti as pure literature, but as theatre in which one of the conventions is that action is stopped for arias or ensemble numbers without causing the viewers to cease suspending their disbelief. The questions that can be asked about a libretto are, accordingly, these among others: Is the dramatic action paced in such a way that the interruptions for arias do not seem arbitrary or forced? Does the entire gestalt induce and sustain suspension of disbelief? Is the denouement consistent with the mood established earlier? And on a more technical level, does it have enough possibilities as stagecraft to help the composer rather than hinder him? Does it, for instance, provide convincing opportunities for music to become part of the total action, music whose characteristics can enhance the prevailing mood, underline character development, help get the viewers involved in the drama, etc? Questions like these provide some basis for rational judgment of libretti. By these, even something as preposterous (by "realistic" drama standards) as "The Magic Flute" comes off fairly well; and it is worthy of note that Mozart on two other occasions gave up on partly completed operas because of the badness of the libretti. Despite "The Magic Flute", in other words, there is a degree of absurdity in a libretto beyond which even a master of first rank cannot make a successful opera out of it. It may well have been Schubert's ability to set even a catalogue to music that got him stuck with hopeless thud and blunder like "Fierabras" and "Alfonso and Estrella" (not to mention "Rosamunde"); doubtless he saw the dramatic absurdities in these, but tolerated them even as he (and the audiences) tolerated the absurdities in the successful libretti of the day, from Metastasio to da Ponte. On this point I recommend to Blish's attention Sir Donald Francis Tovey's "Stimulus and the Classics of Music", p.370, and his "Franz Schubert", pp 116 and 132, in the pb "The Mainstream of Music", respectively confirming my positions on Mozart and Schubert and the reasons for operatic failures.

OUT OF EARSHOT, OUT OF MIND: A perhaps more useful categorical schema for music than that proposed by Lowndes may be devised as follows: construct a tetrahedron RJFK with the longest edge H-K, the others about equally shorter. Let H represent "Higher" music, the music of what sociologists call "High Culture" -- so-called "classical" music from, say, the 13th century to the present day. F stands for folk music; J for jazz; K for Kitsch, defined as popular music stereotyped in form and concocted to order as a commodity for a known market. Any given piece of music can be represented as a point somewhere on or within this tetrahedron. Intermediate forms are plentiful: popularized "classics" would be on the line HK but very much nearer the vertex K if not actually on it; some Broadway show tunes, e.g. those of Leonard Bernstein, would be on that same line H-K but somewhat nearer the middle or possibly nearer to the H vertex; light music (e.g. Sibelius's Romance in D-flat, Massenet's

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\* I might suggest that here (even as, on a larger scale, in the Oresteia) is the earthly equivalent of Heinlein's "series of emotions arranged in tragic, logical necessity" (Stranger, p.92): one need not assume, with Heinlein, that it is too alien a concept for a human being to grasp; indeed, this assumption is a grave defect in Heinlein's, or any, aesthetics.

Scenes Pittoresques, etc.)--and almost the whole John Berry catalogue, alas! would come on the same line. Similarly there are intermediate forms between H and F (lush settings of folktunes, etc.), H and J, J and K, etc., so that there would be pieces locatable on the faces or within the interior of the tetrahedron; but there would be much clustering at the four vertices. Lowndes's "just barely music" is clearly K.

The quality of a piece of music is independent (for the most part) of its location in this schema. However, the extreme low quality in H does not often get heard any more as soloists and conductors are often if not usually unwilling to program such items (who today plays any of the enormous output of Joachim Raff, for instance?). For entirely different reasons, the extreme in high quality for K or F is almost or quite unknown; apparently the level of authentic greatness requires values not native to those genres. One such value is apparently ruled out in K and unthinkable in F: I mean that summarized by the term inexhaustibility -- whereby a sensitized listener can hear the same work a hundred times or more and each time find new meanings, put there by the composer, not earlier apparent.

But regrettably something much like Gresham's law tends to operate here as in economics and human biology: to the average listener -- and some not so average -- music tends to function in the home as a mere filler-in of silence or background to conversation, whether it appears by itself over the radio or as part of a routine western movie on TV. Therefore, music which makes demands on the listener is often tuned out in favor of less taxing, "lighter" stuff. Listening habits acquired with this washed-out pap get carried over to the hearers' confrontation with even Bach, Beethoven and -- God save the mark! -- Bartók. T.W.Adorno's classic study "The Radio Symphony" showed, twenty years ago, how even Beethoven is listened to as though he had been writing light music; through the constricted range of dynamics, timbres and frequencies (and, I would add today, distance and separation effects) available in ordinary radios and all but the most elaborate hi-fi rigs, then as now, what one gets is not the Eroica but simply information about the Eroica -- information consisting of a few more or less singable tunes and filler in between their successive returns: but this is no more than one gets from "lighter music" and K, and the distinctions between Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, movie soundtracks, and glamorized versions of popular songs (with Singing Strings or whatever the "in" gimmick is this month) are obscured and to many hearers altogether unimportant. If you doubt me, scan your radio dial, or read Boggs's or Donner's diatribes against the programming on seven so-called good music stations -- regardless of locale, the selections run heavily to what can only be called "lighter" music. I conclude that the station managers -- save perhaps on Pacifica Radio's WBAI, KPFA and KPFA and possibly a few university FM stations -- choose records in full awareness of the kind of audience and the kind of superficial hearing the latter give them. Where does this leave the man really appreciative of Josquin des Prés or Dowland or Purcell or Bartók? It leaves him in the concert hall (if he has been lucky enough to get tickets) or tinkering with his stereo rig -- or, if his name is Redd Boggs, fuming vainly at the station managers, but doing nothing to become completely independent of their dictation. --Walter Breen

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THOSE DECEPTIVE AUTHORS  
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"I have news for Indiana's Own Buck Coulson, like where he says here, "If Poul Anderson, Christopher Anvil and Randy Garrett can keep /Campbell/ supplied with enough good s-f until writers like Mark Phillips, Pauline Ashwell, David Gordon and Larry Harris mature, he'll have his stable of high-quality writers again." Someone should have told Buck that 'Christopher Anvil' is one of Pauline Ashwell's pseudonyms, and that Poul Anderson is 'Mark Phillips'." Avram Davidson in BASTION.

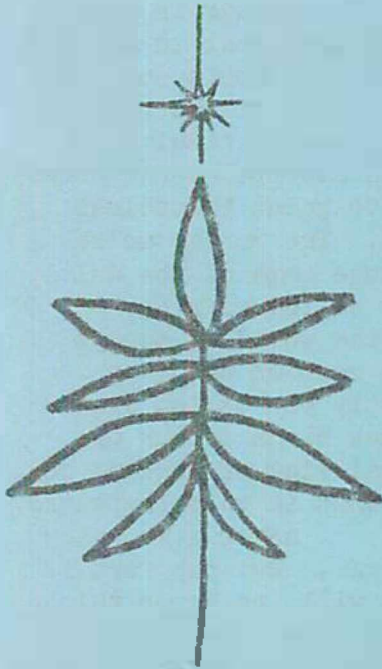
# MAIL WARP

ISAAC ASIMOV: Come on, now, no one could possibly be naive enough to believe Heinlein when he says he doesn't really like to write. Writing is a purgatory no man would endure unless he likes the sensation of bleeding. As for myself, I am chained to my typewriter by invisible bonds that are all the stronger for being invisible. :: It is not fair to say I like to write. I write because it is the only thing (barring one other generally unpublicized activity) that I have no choice but to do. Not writing brings on "withdrawal symptoms" that are very like those I have read of in connection with narcotics. :: All this I believe to be true of Heinlein, too. In years past I knew him personally and rather well, and I am convinced that writing was and is the easiest thing in the world for him and that there is nothing (possibly barring the generally unpublicized activity afore-mentioned) that he would rather do. :: As for William F. Temple, I don't know him, and I can't explain his not really liking to write. Perhaps he is kidding. :: What Heinlein was really saying when he said he doesn't really like to write -- is that he doesn't really like to write what he doesn't really like to write. Which may mean long letters to fan magazines or short letters to fan magazines or playlets to be performed in grade school or textbooks on quantum mechanics. :: Why not? Heinlein is a successful free-lance writer who can publish every word he writes for publication. This means he is freer from pressure than anyone can possibly be otherwise. He has no boss but his own desires, for even his editors will take care not to offend him; therefore why should he write anything unless he feels like writing it. And if he feels like, why that's another matter -- that he likes to write. :: As for me, I will write short letters to fan magazines anyway, because I like to. And Jim Blish will write interminable ones because he likes to. We all do only what we like to -- lucky us. (45 Greenough St., West Newton 65, Massachusetts)

BOB LEMAN: My failure to comment on your #13, and the extreme lateness of this comment on number 14, has not been the consequence of a fit of pique over your article on me and the HCUA hassle, as you may have imagined. It is simply due to the fact that my fanactivity has been literally nil since last September. I have been atrociously busy, and things seem unlikely to improve. :: Lack of response on my part may by now have let this controversy die a natural death, and perhaps that's as well. I've read that H.L. Mencken, in the days when he was outraging the booboisie in THE AMERICAN MERCURY, used to receive tons of letters which violently disagreed or equally violently agreed with him. Mencken had postcards printed, which he used to reply to both kinds of letters. The cards read: "Dear Sir: You may be right. Sincerely, H.L. Mencken." :: My inclination is to bow out of the HCUA dispute with that same statement. The initial fine frenzy of the argument has been lost with the passing of time, and I pretty well set out my own point of view in the two pieces I've published about the matter. I daresay some people drew the inference that I was cowed and defeated when I failed to send you a rebuttal to be published in #14, but I hardly see how I could in good grace have addressed myself to your main thesis, that my mind is so minute an object that it is scarcely discoverable, and that hence my ideas need not be taken seriously. Rebutting this allegation would either have involved my taking as the subject for debate "Resolved: I have too got a mind" -- which would have made me feel damn' silly -- or my shouting, "You're another!" which would have accomplished nothing at all, except possibly the creation of ill-will. The debate appears to have fizzled to a stop, and I rather think it's as well. :: I must say, though, that I'm touched and flattered that someone was enough concerned with my writings to devote so large an amount of labor to studying them and doing the research for rebuttal. Also, I want to thank you for the immense compliment you paid me when you said, "Many of his passages verge on the Perlmanesque..." This takes much of the curse off your main thesis, because I have long admired the writings of S.J. Perelman just this side idolatry. (I assume you're talking about S.J. Perelman; as spelt, you may be referring to Jack Perlman, society editor of the TUNKHANNOCK GAZETTE, in which case I withdraw the thanks.) :: Number 14 is quite up to standard and, as always, is a pleasure to read. Not least in

interest was Boggs' eschatology leading off "File 13". This cry of despair is most illuminating; it is a precise expression of the sense of futility that must in the end seize the believer in the liberal line. The liberal's whole clutch of goals and values (it cannot be called a philosophy) has at its bottom the notion of the perfectability of man. Now mankind is, by and large, composed of dolts, asses, nitwits, boobs, clotpolls, numbskulls, poltroons, warlovers, pacifists and assorted other undesirable types. These dolts, asses etc. will inevitably contrive to paint themselves into a corner, and have done so since they came out of the trees. The corner we're currently in is no doubt more serious than its predecessors because some of the dolts, asses etc. have espoused a really spectacular piece of asininity called Marxism, which has driven them to undertake a jehad to force the rest of the world to accept their asininity, and they intend to insure the conversion of the rest of us by having recourse to unspeakably powerful weapons. The situation may justly be called dire. :: But it shouldn't surprise anyone, and it shouldn't cause such black depths of despair as Boggs' keening reveals. To those who base their total view of mankind on the doctrine of original sin, this kind of behavior is exactly what is to be expected. Men are prone to error as the sparks fly upward, and they have never since they lost their tails failed to make the human predicament a ghastly one. But the fact is that even if nuclear war does come (it is not inevitable that it will, as Boggs thinks) life -- and mankind -- will go on. A reversion to pre-civilization is conceivable, but the race will survive. In terms of the total story of mankind the results of such a war will be no worse than a famine in the Tigris-Euphrates valley 10,000 years ago. And I am surprised that Boggs, who approvingly quotes Asimov's remark that Sputnik I should be viewed as a triumph for Mankind rather than a reversal for our side, and who thus apparently takes the long view, hasn't taken note of this. It is, admittedly, very cold comfort, when you're persuaded that you're going to be atom bombed at any minute, as Boggs is. (257 Santa Fe Drive, Bethel Park, Pa.)

THEODORE STURGEON: Many thanks for Wrhn 15 and the previous issue. I am overcome with astonishment at the ability of y'all to produce so much. This is over and above the fact that there's such a high percentage of un-crud that I'm tempted to revise Sturgeon's Revelation. (90% of everything is crud.) :: Maybe you'd run the enclosed. My disorder in re letter-writing ought to get wider circulation, as balm for those I've injured, and I'd appreciate your help. The defect extends to the point where, having dittoed it, I find myself unable to mail it out: "I begin with an apology. I end with one. In between, this entire 'letter' is an apology. But it is time and past time that I make this explanation to you (and you and you.) This first 'I'm sorry' concerns the way this is written. It is no compliment to be sent a duplicated letter. All I can say is that it's better to get this than nothing at all. :: Next I must explain about the tone of the letter. Since it is being sent to some old and dear friends, some loved ones, some interested strangers, an enemy or two, and a good number of business people, it must seem odd to some, strange to some, wrong to many. Please accept it in the most tolerant and generous spirit possible to you. I doubt very much whether I'll be able to do this again, let alone doing it in different versions for different kinds of people. :: For some years now I have been unable to answer my mail. I say 'unable' and I mean it: I do not mean unwilling, reluctant, or uncaring. I most importantly do care. Let me illustrate. Once a friend, more persistent than most, ended a series of unanswered letters with a sheaf of self-addressed postcards, so that all I had to do was to write a line on one and drop it in the mail. I put one of these in my typewriter and worked hard -- really worked -- for two and a half hours to write even a word to him, and failed. Example 2: Once when I badly needed money, I had on my desk for more than three weeks a business letter the gist of which was 'sign here and return and we will send you \$250'. And it took me that long to do it. :: I cannot explain this. I certainly cannot excuse it. And I do not take it lightly. No one will ever be able to calculate how much it has cost me -- not only in money, but in friendship and good will. I know I have offended, hurt, and even damaged a good



number of innocent people because of it. The fact that I can't help myself in this disability, however, does not mean that I can claim no responsibility. The fault, in the truest sense of the word, is mine: the guilt for it is mine, and I assure you the burden is heavy. And now I can state in essence what I want you to know: If I have not answered your letters, or if in future I do not, it is not because I don't care. I do care. If you feel I have singled you out for this inexcusable treatment, you are wrong. I have done it right across the board. If I have any unfinished business, or any obligation from courtesy to cash, with you, be assured that I have not overlooked nor forgotten it, and that I will do my utmost to discharge it. (Woodstock, New York)

HARRY WARNER: The review of "La Dolce Vita" equaled my expectations fully. But I reacted to the film in a totally different way from Virginia. There was no episode that I found unrepulsive and I wouldn't care to have participated in anything that occurred in the entire film. I wish she had had more to say about the title and the possible clue that this may offer to any underlying single message intended by the movie. If it isn't some literary reference that would be familiar to Italians, I have assumed that it must be ironic: a commentary on the fact that everyone in the film is blessed with either good health or lots of money or plenty of talent or fine looks, and deliberately messes up his chances for enjoying this splendid life through an obsession with some individual or object. The most striking moment in the entire film for me was the instant when the extreme closeup of Steiner's wife took over the screen. I sensed instantly that this was someone different and important, and the remainder of the film justified my foreboding, because she turned out to be the only sane person and totally decent individual in the entire mob. Maybe the child-girl who offers Marcello apparent salvation twice could qualify, but the latter hasn't been tested and risen above the temptations, as far as we are told. :: The very day that I read Redd Boggs' column, the mailman brought a large parcel addressed to Mrs. Harry B. Warner, Jr. I opened it, although I'm saving most mail for the unhappy eventuality that someday there will be such an individual who might like to open it herself. It turned out to be a generous sample of a new type of sanitary napkins. I hated to throw away anything that the manufacturer was kind enough to send me. But the old New England rule that I normally follow was only partly effective in this case -- "Wear it out, use it up, do without" -- and then it suddenly struck me that maybe these would be just the thing I need for cleaning the heads and roller on my tape recorder. They seem to be substantial enough and just the right thickness to go down into the little cave where these objects live and spread about their good work of carbon tet or denatured alcohol. :: Somehow I feel that some excellent minds have encountered a bit of confusion on procedures and purposes in this discussion of how writers can hear what readers think of their stories. The desire for reading comments is understandable, but I don't see why it should necessarily be connected with the existence of a letter column in the prozines or a fanzine devoted to reviews of the magazines and books. It shouldn't be an overpoweringly difficult project for the editor of a prozine to volunteer to cut up the letters of comment and stuff all the paragraphs about each story into an envelope for transmitting to the writer. Or the NFFF might want to undertake such a project, if the editors turned over the letters of comment to a club committee for distribution. I have the most serious doubts that there is enough comment-worthy stf. appearing today to justify a publication specifically devoted to reviews. If you attempt to cover all the stuff as it appears, while it is still on the newsstands, you will be so rushed that the publication will be superficial and obviously done in a hurry. If you take your time and publish several months

after the material has been published, all your readers will have succeeded in their desperate attempt to forget the 98% of trash that fills the prozines and paperbacks. :: I have never seen any semblance of logic in this belief that the preferences of the letter-writing readers differ from those of the non-letter-writing readers. I suspect that editors adopt this belief as a result of fear of their jobs. If they assumed that the opinions in letters are like the opinions of all the magazines' readers, they would be terrified for their pay checks, as soon as reaction was unfavorable to an issue. If they assume that the letters do not reflect the opinions of those who buy the majority of the magazines, the editors can say confidently to the bosses that too much faith cannot be put in these letter-writing fans and the recent decline in circulation is caused by the situation in Algeria, not the degenerating quality of the fiction, poor proofreading, and thrice-tested plots. It is certainly an attitude that is unique in the publishing field, to the best of my knowledge. The Hagerstown newspapers circulate some 30,000 copies daily, from one-half to one-third the circulation of most prozines. If as many as three readers of the local newspapers take the trouble to write about some topic, it causes a convulsion in the editor's office and publisher's office, on the theory that there must be a thousand individuals thinking the same way for every one who bothered to write. A congressman with a half-million constituents will listen very attentively if a hundred of them write him letters advising a specific course of action. It is also customary to put into office the individual who has received the majority of votes at an election which may have attracted only one-quarter of the registered voters; under the prozine theory, the people would really want the other guy, since those who are silent think differently and they are the real majority. To the best of my knowledge, no effort has been made to find backing for this unique hypothesis of the prozine editors. The only statistics remotely associated with it were those Moskowitz drew up from a poll taken at the second Nycon, and they were hardly representative of the letter-writing and non-letter-writing groups involved in prozine opinions. On the other hand, we have the conclusive evidence of survival. Of the half-dozen prozines surviving today, three are those who ran one-two-three in the fans' preferences. Only three of the thirty or more to which fans were largely indifferent have stayed alive.:: Nancy's parody parodies were wonderful. (423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland)

BRIAN W. ALDISS: Your remarks about "Last Year At Marienbad" were interesting; everything about this film is interesting, not least the discussion it has caused. I have cuttings of several English and American reviews plus some stills from the film and the book by Alain Robbe-Grillet, which I read before seeing the screen version. This is a useful, helpful thing to do, by the way. It prepares you for the fact that director Resnais and author Robbe-Grillet see a different meaning in the film, and for the fact that neither of their interpretations squares wholly with film or book. :: Resnais says that the seduction did take place last year at Marienbad -- or was it Friederichsbad? -- despite the woman's denials. Robbe-Grillet, on the other hand, says that the man made it all up. :: Take Resnais' aspect of the truth: Then the bold sequence you mention, where scenes in the bar are interpolated with fluttering white shots of increasing duration and frequency (the first is a brief candle indeed: 1/8 of a second) of the woman A in her bedroom, must represent A's memory, suppressed but struggling to light. :: Take Robbe-Grillet's aspect: Then this same sequence shows not A's memory but her imagination as she toys with the thought of seduction while the man X is saying, "One night, I went up to your room". :: We cannot distinguish whether these shots are representing memory or imagination. Nor are we meant to. For clues to interpretation are deliberately placed so that they lead both ways, or neither. :: One example of the way this is done is, of course, that we are told that M, the man with A, may possibly be or not be her husband. An example of a different sort of clue placing is this: A and X sit in one of the hotel rooms, talking though sitting apart. She wears a dark dress. The following shot shows her in the garden by the stone balustrade, wearing a light dress. Then we are back in the hotel room, the conversation

appears to continue uninterrupted, but now A wears the light dress. :: This may be delightful, but it baffles meaning. Your telepath would understand it in terms of logic no more than we do. The whole film can be comprehended only as an essay in ambiguity. :: One critic almost expressed this idea by saying that *Marienbad* was a typical example of contemporary art-surrogate; that a puzzle had been substituted for the mystery of true art. Such an opinion is possible only if one searches for a literal meaning ("what's in the script") and ignores so much else. Ignores, for instance, the symbolic elaboration of the hotel decor -- that iccd-over gaiety that the commentary calls lugubrious -- which echoes the implicit question of whether these lives approach uselessness or art. Ignores the transcendent performance of Delphine Seyrig, who can look ugly or lovely, lifeless or full of passion, at will. Ignores, too, the resourcefulness and originality of the filming, by which one certainly includes the sound track. :: It's an absolute revolution of a film. Having seen it when it arrived in London some months ago, I remain obsessed by it. You say that it is difficult to imagine a more elaborate story told by such a method; there I'd agree. In fact, *Marienbad* does little more than explore a situation. This needn't be surprising if you have read any of the anti-novels written by the French school of which Robbe-Grillet is a leader. :: None of them -- I've read half a dozen -- are "enjoyable" in the cake-eating sense, but they do rid themselves of a lot of the ridiculous old novelistic furniture of the "Eyes glaring, he said between clenched teeth" variety. One of the liveliest of them is Michel Butor's "Passing Time", which has a beautifully worked out eccentric time scheme. :: It seems that sf writers could be helped by authors like Robbe-Grillet and Butor. You can't write anything very revolutionary or startling (as we try to do) in a worn-out narrative technique. Drunk on *Marienbad*, I wrote an anti-novel, but so far no publisher has shown himself particularly eager to publish it. I have tried to use the fruits of this experiment in sf, but nothing has jelled yet, though I have a couple of interesting flops lying about. :: I particularly enjoyed Budrys' "Rogue Moon" because he had something of the new technique -- only a glimmer, but it was there, mainly because he nobly refused to explain everything. I'm sure it's one of the secrets of success: let your reader guess a bit; happen his guesses will interest him more than your certainties. *Marienbad* is dedicated to this principle. :: While we're on the subject of mighty films, has anyone seen "Matka Joanna Od Aniolow", translated with one eye on the Polish and one on the box office as "The Devil And the Nun"? I tell you, these European films each contain enough meat for a march on Moscow. (24 Marston St., Iffley Road, Oxford, England)

CHARLES WELLS: Virginia Blish's article reads like the critical essays of "Hamlet" one reads in beginning English courses. It is not wrong that it does; "La Dolce Vita" is one of only two movies that I have ever seen that deserved to be treated with the exhaustive criticism that Shakespearean plays undergo. (The other was "The Red Shoes.")

Several things in what she says bother me. Partly this is due to the fact that I see the symbolism of the picture in a rather different light than she does. It struck me when I viewed the picture that the climax, the knot that tied all the strings together (except one) was the final party at Fregena; here we see the sweet life turned sour, if I may be forgiven an obvious metaphor; here we discover what the free, hedonistic life can become when the joy that is so necessary to that kind of life is lost. This is not a parallel with the Eden story, for there innocent happiness was lost upon the discovery of good and evil; here the hedonism of the sweet life is arrived at in full knowledge of good and evil; there is no innocence; the distinction between good and evil is known, but is no longer considered overriding. To put it another way, we have lost our innocence; we have discovered evil, and therefore good; we have passed through the period of churchly asceticism and bourgeois virtue, in her apt phrases, and through the period of throwing off the Virtues, the period of iconoclasm which is specially marked by excess and guilt that is most plainly exemplified by the twenties in the United States. At the opening of the movie, we are at the

next stage beyond that: there is no more guilt because evil is no longer regarded as important. The dichotomy is no longer Good and Evil, but Joy and Emptiness.

And the importance of the movie to modern life is that this, our new answer, is flawed, just as was iconoclasm before it and Victorianism before that. The Mencksonian, iconoclastic Twenties was pierced through with guilt, guilt deriving from the immediately preceding overthrow of Victorianism; Victorianism may be regarded, if you will allow a distortion of history, as the primary reaction to the discovery of good and evil -- the attempt to eradicate evil, just as the twenties embraced it. Our new way, the way of freedom, of the sweet life, dismisses good and evil as unimportant; it seeks joy; it finds an emptiness and absurdity in life because of the breakdown of communication between people, and attempts to do something about it by sharing joy: and in what is joy more fully shared than in sexual love? And, as I say, "La Dolce Vita" tells us that this way, the way of the post-war world, carries the seeds of its own destruction, too. Not that it can fail -- of course it can, primarily by a breakdown in communications symbolized most poignantly by the final beach scene, which strikes me as more of a coda or postscript -- but that succeeding, it can still go wrong. If the joy that is shared becomes perverted then the very sharing, which represents the success of the principle and not the failure, results in the destruction of the humanity of the people involved. Innocence is untenable; "churchly asceticism" is unnatural, iconoclasm is nihilistic, and now the new way, the sweet life, is self-destroying. Is it self-destroying because it is pointless? because it is impossible for essentially evil man to maintain joy indefinitely unsullied? I don't know; the movie does not say. But that, in sum, is why I put my finger on the final party scene as the key to the movie, with the last attempt by the country girl at communication across the sea as a sort of endpiece, a last gasp of the philosophy that dominates modern life as a sort of answer to the existentialist dilemma.



I hope that Mrs. Blish is not implying that the idea that Man is not fit for love until he has learned to love himself is original with Fellini. I first heard of it with Eric Fromm ("The Art of Love") and I'm not sure it is original with him. But it is certainly the first time the idea has been an integral part of a movie.

Felice Rolfe's talk about a "growing love for math" is significant. As a math major, I sometimes envision the day when beauty in mathematics will be regarded as just as proper a subject for criticism as music or literature. In calmer moments, of course, I realize that this cannot come unless at least the brighter of our children grow up with a familiarity with mathematics that resembles their familiarity with art and music and a good story. And even then, there is an almost insurmountable handicap in the fact that one must study math for an unfortunately long time before the beauty becomes apparent. Music, painting, and literature all have something else going for them; music, the lushness of its sound; painting, the fact that colors and forms produce pleasurable responses in people; and literature; the twin fascinations that it tells a story (and hence is involved with life) and that words can be beautifully used. In all three of these, the vehicle itself is beautiful, so that the listener/viewer/reader is carried into an understanding of the spirit of the art with a great reduction in effort. At least, this is true for me in music and literature; I am the first to admit I do not have any real understanding of painting, perhaps my eyesight is bad. But, as far as I can tell, in all three of these disciplines the essential nature, the quintessence, or what have you, of the art is somehow separate from the medium. The medium or vehicle has put its indelible stamp on the work, of course; music goes through time and painting does not; literature is explicitly involved with life and music only implicitly, if at all, and so forth. But the "spirit" of

the particular art, that which we sometimes call taste, which one musician is referring to when he says another musician is not only a good technician but is "musical", is somehow separate, distinct from the vehicle, while at the same time utterly dependent on it. I don't know whether this makes any sense at all. Is there for you, as an artist, something like an artistic taste or spirit which you can recognize instantly in the works or even the comments of someone else, which is not instinctive but which requires a capacity to learn which all do not have, and which is an attitude of mind rather than strictly knowledge about form and color and whatnot? There is, I think, such a thing in music and literature.

Well, this is why the beauty of mathematics is so uncommonly recognized. It has no vehicle. It is purely conceptual and as a result one is not led into it by a more superficial kind of sensual beauty, as form and color leads one into painting or as sound and sonic tension lead one into music. The people -- so rare -- who appreciate it have studied mathematics originally for some other reason -- because they needed it to understand physics or something, or because it looked like an attractive occupation -- and hence have had the motivation to get through the two or three year dry period before the beauty becomes apparent. (Some gifted people have seen the beauty early and never need any other motivation). I have often wondered what amazing results we could have if some gifted musicians or painters or writers could be induced by some magical means to study mathematics intensively for a couple of years -- positively induced, not forced into it. It certainly would be a wonderful thing. (190 Elm St., Oberlin, Ohio)

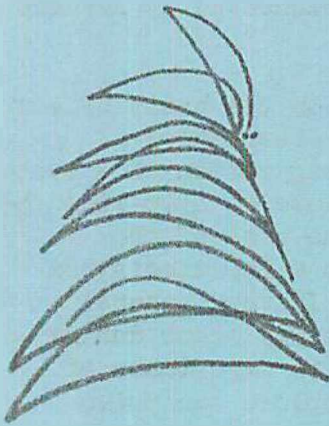
**JOHN BAXTER:** Your little critique of "L'Annee Derniere A Marienbad" was one of the finest pieces in this issue. I really envy you your excellent choice of word and phrase -- it's a skill that I haven't even begun to pick up. I'm not entirely sure that I agree with your final evaluation of the film, ie. that it is a great distance ahead of its time. Filmically speaking, it is; the methods of editing and direction are startlingly original, even compared with outre pieces like Resnais' earlier "Hiroshima Mon Amour" or, if it comes to that, anything by the extremists like Bunnell or Cocteau. However, looked at as a work of art rather than a mechanism, it shows up in a somewhat different light. The film appears to me to be more or less an extension of fiction written by its scenarist Alain Robbe-Grillet and his contemporaries Mauriac, Simon et al. There is the same concentration on the real meaning of a seemingly unimportant act that motivates books like "Jealousy" and "The Marquise Went Out At Five," the same demand on the viewer to realize the importance of single images because of their vital implications. In "Jealousy," the entire action revolves around a squashed cockroach on a villa wall. In another of Robbe-Grillet's books, the focal point is a slice of cold tomato. "The Marquise Went Out At Five" graphs the mental reaction of a number of people to a beautiful girl walking through a crowded square. In "L'Annee Derniere A Marienbad," the squashed cockroach becomes a ludicrously light-weight plot -- "probably the simplest ever put on film," as you say -- but the approach is the same. Resnais and Robbe-Grillet have attempted to paint a full-length three-dimensional portrait of an instant in time. I don't feel that they succeeded, but certainly they produced a very fine film and broke more fresh ground than Fellini, Antonioni and Visconti put together. All considerations of "art" aside, Marienbad is an historical film if only because it represents the first occasion on which a scenarist and a director have worked in complete collaboration on a production, not only discussing and elaborating the theme but actually combining the two talents of authorship and direction. The original script was not only laid out as dialogue -- it had, according to Robbe-Grillet, "numerous specifications as to editing, composition and camera-movement". In addition to this initial blueprint, both men worked continuously on the film, comparing notes and changing things around when either felt that the most was not being made of the material. If only Eisenstein could have had the same sort of rapport with his scenarist as he did with his cameraman Eduard Tisse,

and all three had worked on a film in the sort of collaboration pioneered by Resnais and Robbe-Grillet. A big if, but intriguing.

"The Star Dwellers" hasn't been released out here yet, but, on the basis of your review, I might just arrange to have a copy sent out. As for your observation "I suppose it is my liberal training that makes me rise at the suggestion of a system that's only open to those...who can afford it", you might have cause to over-ride the effects of that training if you read a little monograph called "The Rise of the Meritocracy" by one Michael Young. As far as I can gather, it was a PhD thesis, expanded and knocked into book form for the English Penguin Press. In very general terms, it's a study of the possible developments in education that may occur during the next 50 years, with particular attention paid to the decrease in importance of exclusive private schools (which no doubt you deplore) /I don't deplore exclusive private schools, but I would deplore their decrease in importance. --RB/ and the concurrent rise in the number of public schools grading children through IQ tests. The end result is a strictly stratified society where the high-IQs make the laws and do the work while the stupid spend their lives as indentured servants and labourers. The sting in the tail of all this is that within a generation or two of this "ideal" society being set up, it falls apart because intelligent parents of stupid children use their power to push them into higher echelon jobs rather than see them descend to the levels where they rightfully belong. The moral, if you want to call it that, is that the apparently unfair system of grading by wealth is in reality no more unfair than any other. Parents with power, be it financial, social or mental, will always want to pass at least some of that power onto their children even if their children don't deserve it, and a sensible society, like the one in Blish's story, will fall in with this. /All systems are corruptible, but one based on an ideal seems more desirable than one based on a dollar-sign.--RB./

I was all set to blaze away at Virginia Blish's evaluation of "La Dolce Vita", but after reading "Reflections From A Silver Screen" (a hideous title) I don't dare. /The title was mine; want to take back that compliment in your second sentence?--RB/ Mrs. Blish is so obviously on top of the subject that it would be almost suicidal to contest any part of the article. Undoubtedly this is one of the finest pieces of film criticism that I have ever seen either inside or outside the professional film reviews, and its quality seems heightened by the fact that the writer is neither a professional critic nor a keen cinema-goer. She sees so much that I missed, understands a hundred statements that to me seemed ambiguous and equivocal, appreciates every nuance and, in general, shows an almost unnatural sensitivity for the director's subtlety. I can't help thinking that she understands "La Dolce Vita" more than Fellini does, perhaps because she came to it fresh, with nothing more than an enquiring mind and critical skill that amounts at least to genius, but possibly to something more rare -- empathy. As you know, I thought the underlying purposes of the film went no further than a rather complex religious symbolism, with perhaps some suggestions of a more subtle social criticism beneath the obvious points made by the surface story. Ha. After reading Mrs. Blish's exposition of all these plus five or six more that I never even noticed, I'm going back to SCREEN NEWS for a few years.

It is with great pride and satisfaction that I claim to have come across a book which, for sheer obfuscation and general fuggheadedness in its approach to sex education, beats anything Redd Boggs ever dragged out of the 10¢ bin at a Salvation Army Book-stall. This masterpiece of circumlocution is entitled "Man And Woman" A Study", compiled by some British GP around the turn of the century whose name has thankfully escaped me. When last I saw it, a fellow 12 year-old had the thing carefully stowed away in a cunning recess within easy reach of his hand from any part of his bed. This was before I discovered the Kama Sutra, so that the book came in for a lot of attention from both of us when I unearthed it from my friends's fathers's Index



Expurgatoribus. After finding out what the thing was all about, we hurriedly turned to the Contents Page and ran through the list of illustrations. There were the usual hordes of curious medical terms that, graphically depicted, looked like nothing more than those "Find your way from the cross to the outside of the maze and win a prize" things that usually clog the puzzle pages of kid's magazines, but at the end came the curt title "Coitus in normal position between male and female". The pages went over like a thunderclap, and when the smoke cleared we looked down at the relevant page to see -- a blank. Underneath the carefully enclosed space where the illustration was supposed to be, the writer had explained "Due to the extremely private nature of the act described, and the possibility that Untutored Persons may gain access to this volume, the illustration listed above has not been included". This strikes me as the most peculiar piece of textbook writing that I have ever come across, and the combined shock of disappointment and astonishment left a scar on my soul visible to this day.

According to TIME of May the something-or-other, at week's end, manufactures of bomb shelters are feeling the draft (see Business) and many have gone back to swimming pools (see Sport) and presumably left the population of the US to its own devices in the case of Armageddon (see Religion). This means, among other things, that the old story about the man who found himself staring down the muzzle of a shotgun when he tried to go to earth in the hitherto Friendly Neighbourhood Shelter may not be quite so funny as we think. It also raises the question of whether the Government should start a scheme to set up community shelters in case of war. But most important of all, it leaves Redd Boggs with 500 gross of sanitary napkins on his hands. No thank you Redd -- I appreciate the offer but they're just not worth 98¢ a box to me.

Walt Willis is also lightweight this time around, but good nevertheless. I admire his ability to get the essential meat out of a complex event like the Irish Revolution, to disregard conventional narrative and give you the feeling of history, the immediacy of it to those who were there when these things happened. His remarks about the propaganda songs of the revolution years and the fact that his father had to lie on the floor of the tram on his way home from work mean a great deal more than the yards of tedious facts and figures that were pumped into us at school. As does his mention that his daughter is, at the moment, violently anti-British. This is perhaps the most interesting of all, because it bears out something that I've thought for a long time -- that the Irish-English struggle was a "good" war, one of the few that have flared up in the last half-dozen centuries. It was fought more on emotional than economic grounds, for one thing. Most wars are sparked more by a clash of financial interests rather than sincere ideological conflict, for which reason they are usually dirty sordid affairs that reflect little glory on either side. It is seldom that one finds a war which really captures the imagination of a nation and inspires it both to deeds of bravery and feats of intellect. Where, before or since, (with the possible exception of the French Marquis) has there ever been a guerilla action as brave as that fought by the Irish against the Black-And-Tans? Has any other war produced such a burst of intellectual brilliance, ever sparked such magnificent writing? Walt mentions Yeats, but there were Behan, O'Casey and O'Flaherty, all of whom gained something from The Troubles just as Auden and Hemingway were in some way tempered by the Spanish Civil War. It proves, I think, that war is not necessarily bad nor fruitless, and it seems heartening that some of the beauty of it has been instilled into the mind of the daughter of an obscure Irish civil servant. (Obscure to mundane, that is

Lowndes: Well, if Lowndes' comment that, even if they had read enough literature to compare Merritt with Tolstoi and Eliot, "youngsters" who wrote letters to the

magazines did not qualify as meaningful critics -- if all this isn't intended as "a slam" at fans, then I'm glad he didn't really get out the big guns this time. Exactly what sort of knowledge does he think is required to criticise a sf story? It seems to me that any person who has even heard of Tolstoi and Eliot, let alone read them, should be able to point out the more obvious errors in a magazine story and make sensible suggestions on ways in which such errors could be avoided in the future. Mr. Lowndes would appear to be an editor who wants his letter column to be a kind of unpaid criticism department. His criticism of fan letters, as far as one can make out from his somewhat fragmentary remarks, is that the writers did not (a) like the stores he liked, nor (b) write with the technical facility that one would demand of a professional reviewer. Lowndes attributes these "failings" to immaturity on the part of fans, yet it seems more logical to explain (a) as honesty and (b) as unwillingness to give away good material for nothing.

Aldiss: Brian mentions NEW WORLDS' letter column "Postmortem," but goes into little detail about it. A pity -- undoubtedly it is the most refreshing department in any prozine published today, and as outspoken a series of opinions as has ever been printed. Where else could you find pro writers slamming each other without censorship or editing? Where else would you find an editor confident enough to publish nearly three complete unbroken pages of rather brutal criticism of his choice of stories and cover art? I'm a reasonable example of the average NEW WORLDS reader, and my record to date is more than 4000 published words in "Postmortem" spread over a period of six months. It is little short of miraculous to find an editor in this day and age who is prepared to give that sort of space to an ordinary fan. In addition, Ted Carnell has invited me to do a Guest Editorial for NEW WORLDS on the current fan attitude to science fiction, accepted same and paid ~~me~~ a word for it. This is hardly enough to retire on, but as an indication that there are still editors who care about fandom it is astronomically valuable.

Nancy Rapp's folio was beautiful. Haven't seen anything so funny in years. :: Now the letter column: Blish's letter makes me cringe. He sounds like the sort of correspondent that one would gladly give up ones file of mint UNKNOWNs to possess. In re "Gulf". Jim mentions a postcard from Heinlein claiming that Virginia was the only reader who understood the story. Well, maybe I'm still sensitive from the battering I took on "La Dolce Vita", but this strikes me as a pretty damning admission on Heinlein's part, inferring as it does that he wasn't able to make his point in a way that was intelligible to the average reader. I missed the point of the Fellini film -- everybody but Mrs. Blish apparently missed the point of "Gulf". But exactly who is at fault in these cases? There seems to be quite a solid foundation for a suggestion that it was Fellini and Heinlein rather than the people who failed to appreciate the nuances of the work. Assuming an artist sets out to expound a particular philosophy or make a particular point, is it not his function to make this thesis intelligible to as many people as possible? (Admittedly many artists do not set out to make a point when they write, direct or paint, but Heinlein and Fellini are rather obviously proselytizing in all of their work, and in their case I think it is reasonable to assume that they are hunting converts.) Surely then it is the artist and not the viewer who has failed when a work of art does not receive the appreciation that the maker hoped it would. What exactly is the point of writing a story like "Gulf" or making a film like "La Dolce Vita" when you know that the majority of those who see it will not understand what you are getting at? I'm not trying to denigrate Mrs. Blish's fine article -- intellectually she could eat me for lunch -- but I find it difficult to agree with her inference that the uncomprehending viewer is inferior to the super-sensitive artist.

Harry Warner: The J.D. Salinger story is "For Esme - With Love And Squalor," and it runs more or less along the lines that Harry lays out. It's amusing to see it bracketted with Flemings' "From Russia With Love" - two more unlikely bedfellows never

existed. :: One can hardly blame Shaw for the drawbacks of the "musicalization" of his plays "Arms and the Man" and "Pygmalion", because in both cases Shaw had nothing to do with the libretto, staging, casting or music. "The Chocolate Soldier" was completed and ready for performance long before Oscar Strauss ever got in touch with Shaw to settle the matter of musical rights, and it was only after sustained pleading on the part of Strauss's collaborator Jacobson that Shaw allowed the play to be produced. In relinquishing the rights, Shaw demanded that the few scraps of pirated dialogue be removed from the musical and made it clear that if either Strauss or Jacobson ever attempted to connect "Arms and the Man" and their musical comedy in print, he would "come down on them at once." Really there is no connection between the two works. "The Chocolate Soldier" started out as a musical based on the Shaw play, but after Shaw had gone over the libretto and removed all signs of his passing, all resemblance ceased.

The fact that "great dramas almost never can be set to music without drastic revision" is true enough, but this doesn't mean to say that a good opera can't be good drama as well. It might be interesting to see what would happen if a capable modern dramatist applied his talents to opera. Apropos of Shaw, in his correspondence with R. Godling Bright he often brought up the subject of opera, and it seemed to be his intention at some time or another to work on an opera or musical comedy. The Savoy Opera offered him a commission and carte blanche to produce a musical (diplomatically D'Oyly Carte made it clear that he didn't have to use Sullivan if he didn't want to.) but Shaw turned it down. This was in 1894. Apparently they kept plugging away at him for years after that, but it did no good. A couple of other producers, among them George Edwardes, offered him work as a librettist but he showed no interest until 1907 when, in another letter to Bright, he remarked that he was "rather keen" on an offer that he had received from somebody named Stuart to do a musical. The twist was that Shaw didn't want to do the libretto - he intended to write the music! Naturally this didn't come to anything, but what an odd musical that would have been.

Alva Rogers: The difference between "Starship Troopers" and the Smith space-opera is purely a matter of approach, but it's a hell of a difference. Heinlein was expounding a philosophy -- Smith was merely writing interesting fiction without any thought of converting his readers. Clearly Heinlein intended his book to be taken as a serious and valid speculation on a specific area of human activity, and in books of this kind it's reasonable to assume that the writer had at least a partial sympathy with the viewpoint he was expressing. At the other extreme, Smith was generalizing about the entire expansion of the human race and, despite the accent on bloody war in his books, the depth of field is too vast to allow of any sharp focusing. One can infer a certain enthusiasm for violence from Smith's books, but none of them is a serious exposition of the writer's philosophy as is the case with "Starship Troopers".

Fritz Leiber: Fellini may very well be the successor of Bergman and Cocteau insofar as, like the two you mention, he is a philosopher working with film, but I doubt that he will ever achieve Bergman's reputation as an artist and technician. Fellini appears to be a deep thinker, but artistically his work leaves much to be desired.

Fred Pohl: It is a trifle hard to reconcile Pohl's remarks on letter columns in GALAXY and WRHN with the editorial of the May '62 IF which, unless I read it wrong, is an eloquent plea for more interesting letters in the prozines. Sturgeon is described as scratching his ass and suggesting languidly that maybe the fact that there are no new "great" writers around is because they don't have meaty prozine letter columns to cut their teeth on, for which reason they never get into active fandom etc etc. Later in that same issue, Sturgeon writes a puff for a competition that the magazine is launching. Dewy-eyed fans with more enthusiasm than sense are offered the chance to win free subs to IF in return for (Can it be the weakness of mine eyes that shapes this monstrous apparition?) a letter containing a logical scientific extrapolation or

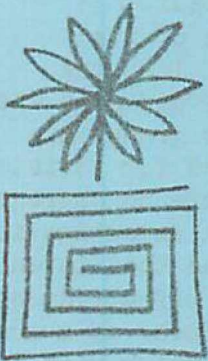
speculation about the near future. Maybe Fred 'n Ted are just looking for free plot material, but it seems more likely that they are trying to encourage reader interest in the magazine via published discussion. Yet he is apparently agin it from all angles if one can believe his comments in GALAXY and Wrhn. Somebody here is crazy, but I won't mention any names. (Box 39, King St., PO, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia)

**SAM YOUNG:** The Blish piece was, of course, interesting, but suffered from a flabbiness which prevented it getting to grips with its taut and masterly subject. She reads all kinds of things into the film, and yet misses the obvious. For instance, commenting on the seven nights and seven dawns, she says: "like the hills of Rome?". It does not take much critical insight to realize that the provenance is religious rather than geographical, and that the seven derives not from Rome but from Revelation: the

Seven Churches, seven gold lamps, seven stars, the seven seals, the seven angels with seven trumpets and the seven disasters they heralded. As to the actual end of the film: "Rev. 20:13 -- 'And the sea gave up the dead which were in it.', Rev. 13:1 -- 'And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea.'" :: She misses a similar point at the end where she talks of Marcello mistreating "a poor plump peasant-pheasant -- riding her like a donkey and affixing feathers to her dampened skin". The scattering of feathers is one of the established symbols for the Holy Ghost, and is used by Bunuel in "Viridiana" in much the same way. :: Nor is it only the religious side that she fails to come to grips with. She manages to ignore the political, also: Fellini is by conviction a radical left-winger, and a great deal of his message is a blistering satirical attack on capitalist values. I don't feel myself there is any ambiguity about the

ending: Marcello has had his moment of choice, and has failed. Just as, in the opening scenes, the noise of the helicopter's engine drowned his attempts to communicate with the sunbathing girls, so now the primal noise of the sea emphasizes that he has cut himself off from innocence and hope. Fairly well meaning as he is, as most of us are, he is condemned along with the way of life which he typifies. I have some programme notes in German, from the time I first saw the film, in Zurich two years ago, which end: "Aber das reine Gesicht wird ihn immer wieder mahnen. Ob es ihn retten kann?" Well, the pure face may haunt him, though one doubts it somewhat, but anyone who believes that it is going to save him is being wildly optimistic. Marcello, the archetype of capitalist corruption, is doomed along with it. The hope for the future lies in the peasants, the working masses. :: I am sure this is Fellini's conscious message but, as Virginia Blish points out, since he is a great artist there is a multiplicity of under- and overtones. Marcello himself is a superbly realized character. His two avowals of love (for the one to Maddalena is as deeply felt as the one to Sylvia) are cries of desperation, of loneliness. The film, on this level, is a dissertation on loneliness: all the characters suffer from it except Paola, and even she has a wistfulness which hints in the same direction. Compare Antonioni's "La Notte", which fumbles around the same point wearily and boringly. (England)

**FM BUSBY:** Fifteen pages? That's not too-- restrictive. :: Certainly GMC's attacks on Willis were grotesque to the knowledgeable reader in the light of fact; they were not, however, "obviously" grotesque to persons who had no other source of information on the matter, as was the case with Bob Leman when he swallowed the hook (likely you have the early '58 GEMZINE containing Bob's letter and can check his own declaration of prior ignorance therein ;I've seen it but do not have a copy so cannot quote). Therefore I felt you were unfair in downgrading the man on this count, and cited the case as a horrible example of the perils of arguing to highly disparate readerships. I could kick myself for not nailing it down in the very same paragraph that "playing Willis to your GMC" referred only to the comparative size of readerships rather than carrying any personality-parallel implications; this delimitation seemed clear to me



from previous and adjacent context but is by no means so unmistakable (I find, rereading) as I assumed at the time of writing. Yeh, I could kick myself, all right, except that I do not want to start any more bleeding from that cutlass-wound you dealt me on this point. Touche and like that! :: My recalls of the Acheson-Korea thing had nothing to do with Nixon, and focus on a specific discussion of a then-current morning newspaper item in June 1950; the time is solidly fixed within a week or two by the date of the initial invasion and personal circumstances as being before July 1st; the place is a specific section of my work-area at that time and the circumstances are a sunny midmorning. Oh sure, I read/heard a few things on the matter before and after the day of the incident that pinpoints it for me. But your newsfile researches indicate that most likely I got a faulty impression at that time that the issue was a recent Acheson speech rather than a 5-month-old one. OK, lacking evidence to the contrary, I must accept the probability that I've been maligning poor ol' Acheson all these years (well, now and then, that is -- it's hardly a fulltime career) on that point. :: "Existing laws well fortify the United States against undemocratic change of its political system, therefore I can see no point in the prying of the HUAC into the activities of people who have broken no laws. Do you?" Yes, I do. Since I disagree with your premise I can hardly agree with your conclusion. When individuals or groups are systematically taking advantage of loopholes in existing law there is need for revision; I feel this applies to Communists as well as to tax-evaders, and I've heard no outraged screams on any organized level at the abuses occasionally reported in tax investigations I think that where loopholes allow evasion of the intent of the law, and that intent is itself worthy, those loopholes should be plugged. Don't you? (The effectiveness of HUAC is not at issue in this comment, since I've already said I'm in favor of a more effective apparatus for devising a legal structure that would hold water with regard to the unique threat of an enemy agency masking itself as "just another political party"; I feel the basic problem is one of semantics rather than investigative in nature, but nevertheless it is of value to keep up to date on just what the buggers are trying to do to us lately. Propose a workable Better Method and I will be with you 100%, but I do not buy it that the Fire Department can substitute for a good Arson Squad.) (2852 14th Ave W, Seattle 99, Washington)

RB: This letter was answered during the course of personal correspondence. That makes at least one person who doesn't mind greatly disparate readerships.

REDD BOGGS: Thanks for the egoboo on the last "File 13," which was very delightful. I'm particularly impressed with John Baxter, who seems to be the best Aussie fan in years, maybe of all time, as far as typical fannishness goes. Most of the Aussies were a bit stodgy and sercon till his advent.

JAMES BLISH: I had planned not to bring up "The Star Dwellers" again, but some of "Putnam's War" is impossible for me to resist. I agree with you and Lowndes that I haven't met Heinlein squarely on the crucial question. I don't contend that RAH's questions are easy or that I have all the answers. I did want to show that the impression "Starship Troopers" gives, that it has all the answers, is false. On that crucial question, at present I have to agree that there are some conditions under which men must fight. :: Evidently you are a little behind in your astronautics reading, or you'd neither have credited me with the invention of light-pressure sailing, or expressed doubts about its practicality. To cite only a few examples, it was discussed at some length by Willy Ley in GALAXY, and later appeared in that magazine in a Cordwainer Smith story, "The Woman Who Sailed the Soul;" and you will find a two-page bleed color picture of a regatta of such ships in a Dec. 1961 LIFE, with the notation that they are already on the drawing board... Light pressure does indeed act on everything, regardless of whether it's caught in a gravitational field or not (in fact I can conceive of no object in the universe not caught in such a field-- though if I were under orders to look for one, I suppose I'd start in Southern

California). The surface area of the object isn't critical per se, as you suppose; the critical relationship is area vs. mass. Even if the object is in a "gravitational orbit," as you first propose, light will influence it; the orbit of Vanguard I was quite appreciably altered by light pressure within a year, though that vehicle, you will recall Krushchev taunting us, was no bigger than a grapefruit.... It's true that there are light sources in every direction, but the amount of pressure each can exert varies inversely as the square of the distance; hence if I am sailing by Solar light I am not going to worry about being blown off course by even so brilliant an object as Rigel. Where's your high school physics, man?.... You will also remember that I set Langer to sailing inside the Coal Sack, where the amount of nearby-generated energy is exceptionally high, and most energy from outside cut off.... Yes, indeed an object driven by light should eventually approach the speed of light, but only in an infinite amount of time, since as the distance between skiff and source increases, the rate of acceleration declines toward zero. :: The 1935 signals referred to in the book were a series of echoes or repetitions of commercial radio broadcasts, which have never been satisfactorily explained and eventually were just swept under the rug. They are discussed in the same 1961 paper in NATURE which first proposed the existence of a Central Galactic federation; you can be sure that I never tire my own imagination when I can get a member of the Establishment to do the work for me. Even that working method cost me no mental effort; I just had to notice "blish" in the middle of that word and I knew they had to be on my side. :: What constitutes a "juvenile" is strictly a matter of the individual publisher's definition. (A word in that sentence will show you how painlessly it occurred to me to become a writer, too.) Putnam's laid down only these restrictions: Hero to be a teen-ager; no overt sex; no cussin'; hero not to sass his elders, even where he disagrees with them (which is allowed). Otherwise I could do anything I liked. I didn't find these limitations at all onerous. :: Felice Rolfe: Granted that my reference to engineers' esthetics was an over-generalization; nevertheless, I continue to insist that the standard of taste attributable to the writer-engineers in s-f has been markedly low, and that almost all the writers involved have the same mannerisms and the same failings in this area. To rattle off a few names, I give you EESmith, Heinlein, GOSmith, G. Harry Stine, and L. Sprague de Camp; of these, only de Camp is not interchangeable with the others on this count. I think four out of five is a large enough majority to support a generalization.... What on Earth would an "amateur engineer" be? :: Willis: I have encountered that bit about "Ring a ring of roses" before (the US version is "Ring around the rosie", probably just a corruption) and it sounds logical. But if it remembers the London plague, why do German children also play the game? ("Ringel, ringel, Rosenkranz, / Ringel, rein..." which I make "Chaplet, chaplet, crown of thorns, / Chaplet pure...") The tune is exactly the same, or close to it: v. the last scene of Wozzeck; yet here the game seems to "remember" a considerably older event. :: Michael McQuown (unpublished): This letter echoes a number of published ones in the assumption that writers either have secretaries of their own, or get the benefit of the publishers. Neither is true. I don't know a single s-f writer who has a secretary; some occasionally take on a public stenographer for a single special job, but they all open their own mail. Letters to authors c/o the publisher are forwarded unopened to the author. Incidentally it's better to use a book publisher than a magazine publisher for addressing purposes; because book publication requires a contract, a book publisher usually has a more up-to-date address for a given author than a magazine may have. :: I have only just put my finger on something I knew was bothering me about "Putnam's War": it is on pg 11: Your complaint that both RAH's book and mine make "constant reference to the Old Times...we don't often meet teenagers, or even our contemporaries, constantly sprinkling their conversations with biting indictments of the political and social conventions of, say, 1850..." If your immediate (physical) contemporaries are anything like most of mine, they seldom talk about anything but shop, automobiles and baseball. This after all is why we become fiction writers and fanzine editors, desperately firing our notions into another sort of vacuum. I do, however, have a few associates among whom this sort of

talk is frequent. This part of your complaint seems simply to say that people with a sense of history are rare -- which of course is true. But they do exist. To which, and more importantly, I should like to add that your complaint is primarily the complaint of a bachelor. The allusions to past customs which you find unrealistic are common coin in most families -- even if the references cited and the lessons drawn therefrom are sometimes grossly biased, the habit of criticizing the past is much more commonplace than you credit it with being, especially as a didactic device for the benefit of children...which is, after all, how I was using it in "The Star Dwellers."

RB: Since you concede that a sense of history is rare, you seem also to be conceding that a book full of people possessing this quality must immediately be seen as unrealistic. I may be a bachelor but not so far removed from my childhood that I've forgotten that there was little critical comment on the past for my benefit -- as a matter of fact the more typical attitude I encountered was that if it was good enough for my father it was good enough for me -- as support of this I cite the fact that Vermont has never gone Democratic in a national election. Of course, Vermont is hardly typical and I'm told has the highest rate of insanity in the country, which may account for its politics. :: Since I've always felt it's better to fall off a limb than remain ignorant I'm not sorry I climbed out on it in "Putnam's War". Naturally, just after the issue was mailed out I started encountering references to light sailing even in my drinking glass. Were there any evaluations to determine whether the alterations in the Vanguard orbit might have been caused by variations in Earth's gravitational pull?

LEE HOFFMAN: I think a little introduction to me might be in order so no one will be confused as to the authority whereby I sit in judgement of "Last Year At Marienbad". I'm a lowbrow. I catch an occasional (you should pardon the expression) Art Movie, but have never learned to understand them (or whatever it is one does about them). I get my kicks from pre-post-war films -- "Dawn Patrol," "The Sky Brides," "King Kong", Frank Capra comedies, etc. In short, I'm a Richard Barthelmess fan. So I think I saw Marienbad more from the point of view of the average schnook off the street than most of the members of the audience. I saw it superficially, with eyes accustomed to the cliches of the motion picture industry. I was an Egyptian. :: After having seen the picture I considered my reactions and decided that the foremost one was a sense of disgust with the two protagonists. A couple of sicker characters I shouldn't want to know. I felt somewhat as if I had been crawling like a maggot through a pair of decayed minds. Somehow the only real relief was the stolid stoic Other Man, whose mind I didn't squirm around in. (Perhaps it is a Good Thing we're not a race of telepaths yet.) :: As far as the technique went, the departure from the cliché was certainly radical, but not (to me at least) an approaching of reality. My real world of the mind is somewhat different -- thought is too damned multi-dimensional -- the primary shortcoming of the film as a portrayal of thought is its dimensional limits. Sure, they juggled time, they intermixed obvious thought-fantasy with what might have been reality (or all imagining). But in my own mind I have a concept of which of my thoughts relate to what I believe to be the real world, which are memories, which present reactions, and which fantasies -- and all are involved with assorted side thoughts -- double, triple, etc., exposure thoughts, connotations, an awareness of the temporal order of events past, and such. The motion picture being limited to two senses and (more important) to a linear existence in time (regardless of its content and technique) is stuck with being unable to capture the whole of the thing. :: Like the Egyptian, I saw a different rendition of depth than I was accustomed to, but still I only saw a projection in fewer dimensions than the actuality it portrayed. :: And what I saw was a perspective on the same canvas from two points of view -- two horizons, two individual vanishing points, muddled together with times when it was difficult to tell which might belong to which point of view. :: As to the startling use of film techniques, the sheer novelty of being so startled, I think, tended to detract from whatever the makers of the film were trying to do (unless, of course, it was to startle me with

their uses of film techniques). The sudden brilliant flashes of memory returning (or was she simply losing her grasp of reality -- going mad?) were quite startling and they conveyed their message with a scream. But the fact that it was done by washing out the film rather than flooding the set with light, disturbed me. :: I do agree with you, though, that the photography and composition were, for the most part, magnificent, and the flowing motion of the introductory footage quite effective. :: Finally, on a callow note: it didn't strike me as a love story at all, but rather as a seduction, pure and simple (you should pardon the expression). I never saw a woman look much less in love with a man she is running away with than that chick did in the closing scenes. (basement, 54 E 7th St NYC 3, NY)

VIC RYAN: Blish's objections to the word "promiscuity" (as having "pejorative overtones") are well-founded, I think. Like group marriage, it's the syntactical spawn of social science, and probably has no basis in reality. One can forgive Heinlein's treatment of the matter, then, but not his parallels from within our society. Further on, Blish makes the point that philosophy has been strangely missing from science fiction. It's an accurate point, but one easily explained; good philosophy can't be presented 'cold'; it must have roots in logic, and such planting is generally inductive to excessive wordiness (as far as the plot and characterization go) -- which, in turn, is inductive to an editor's blue pencil. If something is going to be cut as being wordy, why write it in the first place? (2305 Sheridan Rd., Evanston, Illinois)

BILL DONAHO: Of course as someone pointed out in the letter column this time, Burroughs is mighty thin stuff. All he does is to give you an outline which you fill in for yourself. A Burroughs reader is doing much of the work himself in a sort of guided day dream. This makes him just the thing for imaginative children and adolescents. Adults usually demand that a writer does much more of the work -- and rightly so of course. And today when I reread Burroughs I am not filling in his blanks so much as I am dredging out of my subconscious the tales I wrote in collaborating with Burroughs way back in the distant past. :: But on the other hand much the same charge could be leveled against science fiction in general. Some years ago a friend of mine -- also a graduate English student and with a background remarkably similar to my own -- and I were discussing science fiction. He couldn't understand why I read and liked the stuff. We then thoroughly discussed and probed our attitudes to literature in general and to certain specific science fiction books. We finally decided that I liked science fiction and he didn't because I was willing to do a lot of work in reading a story, fill in characterization and background on my own and he wouldn't do these things. In watching myself since then I've had this amply confirmed. In fact when I'm reading for sheer entertainment -- and certainly 99-44/100% of my sf reading is for entertainment -- I even prefer stick figures and not much characterization; that way I can invest the characters with the characteristics I choose. :: This is why I find the apparatus that both James Blish and Walter Breen brought to bear upon "Stranger In A Strange Land" to be highly amusing and even somewhat slightly ridiculous. Both were for all practical purposes collaborating with Heinlein in producing a different book and each can with justice claim that the other was off somewhere in cloud cuckoo land. The critical apparatus is somewhat cumbersome and doesn't really work too successfully on anything except serious literature. One can count on the fingers of one hand all the science fiction titles, mainstream or otherwise, which are worthy of serious consideration as literature -- oh all right, throw in the toes too. "Stranger In A Strange Land" is certainly not of that company. Of course Blish may say that it is useful to point out why a science fiction novel is not worthy of such consideration, but I would disagree. As far as the reader is concerned, you know before reading the review (or the book itself) that a science fiction book is not serious literature and the whole critical apparatus seems as silly as using an elephant gun to shoot flies. If--once every decade or so -- a piece of sf appears which is worthy of consideration as serious literature, use the critical

apparatus then -- if you must. As far as the writer is concerned I doubt if such deep analysis of such shallow work can be of much help. Anyhow criticism useful to writers is seldom of the same type as that explaining the inner meaning and significance of a work to the reader. Of course they may enjoy reading this type of "criticism" -- I do myself. I hope both Blish and Breen keep on doing it. Their thought processes and erudition are interesting even when they don't seem -- to me at least -- to have much to do with the subject under discussion. Asides are always interesting. :: As a product of the English department of one of our better universities I am somewhat suspicious of the whole critical apparatus anyway. It can be used well and usefully, true, but on the other hand even intelligent and perceptive people will wind up in some peculiar conclusions. Why just recently in DISCORD we had Walter Breen devoting several pages to proving that a novel wasn't a novel. It was a well-written article, but chiefly interesting as a literary exercise. People will continue to speak and think of Canticale as a novel. Fortunately art is extremely varied and viable and refuses to be bound down by the rigid rules of the critics. (Berkeley, California)

NICK DECKINGER: After the current fiasco with Major Walker's testimony before the congressional committee investigating muzzling, I don't think that Welch or the John Birch Society will be looked upon too highly by any but the most ignorant. Walker, who's considered to be a prime example of the straight-forward dedicatedness found in the JBS sounded like an uneducated schoolboy, suffering from an acute paranoid condition, ready to blame everyone and everybody for his ills. The culmination of the investigation, when he suddenly lashed out at a reporter who had merely asked him a question displayed a true side of his character; using physical violence to squelch any attempts at drawing the truth. I suggest the best thing for Mr. Walker would be a long stay in a comfortable mental institution, where he'd be completely at liberty to prepare the inmates for the inevitable communist overthrow through their devious intervention. And this is the sort of man who commanded the troops for a considerable length of time overseas? I find the prospect frightening. :: The concept that Resnais toys with; that of time being a plaything to be

used for effect as well as meaning, is not unique. Maya Deren, who died recently, and was a renowned experimentalist in films delved into the same idea, as early as 1943 in her short "Meshes of the Afternoon". In this piece time was twisted in upon itself thrice, in each instance the viewpoint was altered, as subjective reality was shown to be some tenuous, indefinable facet. Two years later she made "Ritual in Transfigured Time" another short exploring the complexities and intricacies that time wove, and how these very complexities could be loosened and almost banished. :: Redd Boggs has provided me with some delightful moments in his devastating review of Dr Kendall's book which certainly deserves wider mention than a mere two pages in Wrhn. The good doctor seems to advocate every possible thing that is harmful and bad in the concept of proper understanding of sex, and how a man like this ever became a doctor in the first place is a complete mystery to me. I'm surprised he simply didn't state that human birth is due to the machinations of the stork and let it go at that. (31 Carr Pl., Fords, New Jersey)



RICHARD KYLE: I think the main thing Pohl's remarks prove is that editors run their magazines the way they think they should, and the individual reader be hanged. And it's really the only way of doing the job. All the good editors -- or, anyhow, almost all of them -- in the fiction field have pretty well pursued such a policy. They have to, for readers seldom know what they want until it's in black and white before them. And afterwards all they can say is that they want more of the same, which of course they don't. Or not for long. The big trouble editorially is that the editors lose

touch with the desires of their audience after a time, they become too sophisticated for their readers (out of sheer exposure to the medium they're working in), and usually end up publishing a very fine magazine that tends to be dull or a flashy-cheap job that is edited down to the masses. The circulation figures are unhappy in either case.

Redd Boggs is Redd Boggs. He is one of the finest writers I've encountered anywhere. And if his humor is of a gently bitter, gently sad, kind, it is the only humor of its kind to be found. It's worth the price you pay to read it.

The first part of "Accidentals and Nomics" was very clever. :: Of course, if you change the initials and dates around a little bit, it applies as much to the western and the detective as it does to the sf story. All three forms arose at about the same time, all three endured similar periods of development (although of varying lengths), and all three are in just about as lousy a shape today. Except for a half-breed of the Pines publications called RANCH ROMANCES -- a quarterly consisting substantially of reprints -- there are no western fiction magazines being published today. Although ELLERY QUEEN's and MANHUNT outsell ANALOG and GALAXY, the detective books in general are no better off than the sf magazines, for the rest of them have circulations as low, or lower, than F&SF -- last year a couple of them had circulations only a good stone's throw from Palmer's FLYING SAUCERS. :: All fiction magazines are in a slump. BLUEBOOK, ARGOSY, ADVENTURE, BLACK MASK are all dead, even if their names have lived on. And the magazines are in a slump because almost all fiction writers are in one, and have been for twenty years. :: The real question, I'd think, is not what's killed sf, but what is keeping it alive. For in actual fact, sf has improved its competitive relationship with the mystery and western since WWII. Only a few years ago there were no sf paperbacks being published, while the market was flooded with mysteries and westerns. The hardbound publishers almost never published an sf book. And critical acceptance of sf, even though it is very low, does exist -- fifteen years ago only sf fans knew what "science fiction" meant. :: So, while the adventure story, the sports story, and (except for RANCH ROMANCES) the romantic love story have sunk without a trace in the magazine world, the sf story has risen steadily higher. It may be that like a rat on a sinking ship it has merely climbed to the top of the mast, but that's something only time will tell. And it would still be interesting to know the reason why.

"The Harp That Once Or Twice" was the best piece in the issue. Willis can write.

Lowndes and Aldiss on letter columns merely touch on what I suspect may be the most valuable aspect of a lengthy readers' column to the writer. :: Actors prefer the legitimate theater because they can sense the audiences' awareness of them. Put a soundproof screen of one-way glass between the audience and the actor and all the pleasure of performing would be gone -- or almost all of it. It isn't the applause that draws actors to the stage, for often a performer in a small part draws no applause that's really his alone, it's the attention, the attentiveness, the audience gives the actor while he makes his statement about the character he plays (and consequently, about life in general). Unless a writer is extraordinarily successful, the only signs of attention his statement receives are the letters he gets in the mail, or the few words of a book review -- or the letters of a magazine readers' column. :: ... I think it was the mention of the writers' names, the acknowledgement that they existed, that attention was being paid to them, that may have made those old letter columns valuable to the writers (and there was something about the mere recitation of the names that made them interesting to the readers). It wasn't the applause, because they didn't always get that, or the criticism which was the next thing to worthless, it was the attentiveness with which their work was received -- for every hack has a bit of serious writer in him. Or a bit of ham. :: I wonder what the simple statement at the head of a letter column, "We would like to hear from readers who have never written to a science fiction magazine before," would do? It might be worth trying. (95 West Gilman St., Banning, California.)

GEORGE W PRICE on Wrrn #14: Cheers for Jerry Pournelle's defense of the legitimacy of the House Un-American Activities Committee. I read so much total nonsense about this committee that it is welcome to see someone who is not a rigid conformist to the liberal line.

Mr. Pournelle is at some pains to refute the argument that "exposure" is not a legitimate objective for HUAC. I agree with him, but would like to propose another reason why Liberals are usually so hot to abolish the Committee rather than to merely reform it. I suggest that they oppose the HUAC not because of its methods, but because they do not really, deep down, believe that there is anything to investigate.

Much of the trouble is semantic. The Communists call themselves a "party", therefore the indiscriminating Liberal mind grants them all the rights and privileges of a political party. It follows that attacks on the Communist Party are regarded the same as would be similar attacks on the Republican or Democratic Parties. Rigorously reasoning from his false premises, your Liberal does not want to see a Communist "persecuted" for his "political beliefs". Now all of this overlooks the obvious (well, obvious to me, at least) fact that the Communist Party is not a political party in the normal sense. It does not subscribe to the limitations of the democratic political process which the normal parties accept. The Communist is not just somebody who is a little further out to the left; he no longer shares our universe of discourse at all. The difference is that membership in the Party involves a commitment to the use of illegal means in order to achieve illegal ends. The operations of the Communists are no more to be tolerated in the name of freedom of political beliefs than is human sacrifice to be allowed under freedom of religion. An enormous quantity of obfuscating balderdash about political beliefs and civil liberties will be blown away when we understand that the Communist Party is no more a political party than is the Mafia or the Cult of Kali.

Liberal opposition to the HUAC also arises from the fact that modern Liberalism shares certain philosophical basics with Communism. Important: I am not accusing Liberals of being "communist sympathisers". I do not believe that they really understand these philosophical similarities or their significance.

The similarities are (1) Moral relativism, i.e., the belief that there are no fixed and eternal standards. In the Communists, this appears as "The end justifies the means". (2) A bias towards collectivist economics. Your solid left Liberal cannot understand how a free market system can be anything but chaotic. This is partly ignorance; he does not understand the workings of the price system in allocating resources and determining production. It is also a failure to understand how many men thinking independently can solve economic problems more efficiently than could a single centralized controller. This brings us to the next similarity -- (3) A thoroughgoing contempt for human intelligence. In the Communists it is obvious, in the Party's selection of itself as the "vanguard of the proletariat" doing all the thinking for the "masses". In the Liberals, it takes the form of a penchant for the Welfare State. I submit that the Welfare State, no matter how warmly sympathetic it may be, is based on the notion that your "common man" is too damned stupid to take care of himself. He needs Big Daddy in Washington to do his thinking for him.

With this in mind, it is not hard to understand why so many Liberals view Communists with a certain toleration. The Liberal tendency is to see domestic Communists as at least having their hearts in the right place, although deplorably extremist in their methods.

As a corollary to the above, the Liberals display a sort of schizophrenia with regard to domestic and foreign Communism. They are able to recognize the danger from

Russia and China, because they see this as Russian and Chinese imperialism. But their philosophical weaknesses blind them to the essential role of ideology in unifying and inspiring this imperialism. Hence. Liberals can prosecute the cold war abroad (however ineffectually), and simultaneously blither about domestic Communism being no danger, ignoring that the Communist Party USA is not an independent organization, but is just another segment of the international apparatus.

After saying so much about the similarities of Communism and modern left-liberalism, it is only fair (said he, with a vicious grin) that I should mention some differences. I think it boils down to this: The Communist follows the logic of collectivism to the bitter bloody end, while the Liberal pulls back whenever said logic leads him to anything too obviously inhumane. Or we could put it this way: The Communist knows that you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs. The Liberal kids himself that you can make an omelet without breaking eggs. The Conservative (like me) knows that you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs, and since the "eggs" are human lives it's better to go without the omelet. And we don't want omelet anyway. (873 Cornelia Avenue, Chicago 13, Illinois)

FREDERIK POHL: Let me help clear up some of your confusion. I agree that it is considerable. :: A statement concerning the sort of mail offered for publication in letter columns cannot be interpreted to mean the mail addressed to GALAXY. GALAXY has no letter column. In the case of the statement you quote, it can be read as mail sent to IF's Hue & Cry, which I intended, or perhaps as the aggregate of mail sent to both magazines -- in which case the statement is still true, since IF's letter-column mail forms far the greater proportion of the mail received from all readers. (In volume; not in interest.) The statement that I had at one time received only one letter asking (no: threatening) for a letter column applied only to GALAXY mail. It said so, specifically, in so many words, even in the short extract you quoted. Therefore the two statements cannot be contradictory, since they are not talking about the same thing. Do you understand that much? Good. Now try this next bit. :: "The bulk of mail" does not mean "ALL mail." "All" means "all". "The bulk of" means only a part, albeit a major part. Also, "into two categories" does not mean "into two equal halves." My children fall into one of two categories, boys and girls, but three of them are girls and only one is a boy. :: Bearing these facts in mind, please recalculate your little arithmetical jape. You will find that it is totally sense-free. :: I should perhaps interpose some review questions here, but I think you will be able to puzzle out the lesson anyway, so let us go on to the next point. :: That is your juxtaposition of a sentence from one source to the effect that I don't think fan letters are of much general interest with a sentence from a second source to the effect that as an editor I warmly appreciate receiving fan letters, so that you may reach the conclusion that I must be a damn liar because I can't possibly mean that I really value receiving comments. :: This conclusion is only possible if it is also true that I believe anything of interest to me as an individual must also be of interest to the world at large. I do not hold this belief. If you hold it, as it seems you must, I will gladly pity you if you wish, but I will not accept responsibility for Your beliefs. :: So I can mean that I value receiving comments. I do value them. I find them all interesting, and I have found many of them very helpful. :: However, I am not representative of the bulk of GALAXY's readers. Neither are you. What interests you and me -- the plumbing behind the scenes, so to speak -- need not interest some tens of thousands of readers who never heard of Bergeron (and a somewhat smaller number who never heard of Pohl, or of Blish, either, or don't remember it from one day to the next if they did, since their relations with science fiction are limited to the casual purchase of magazines on a newstand), and who care not a hoot in hell what Bergeron or anybody else thinks about last month's issue. :: Does this aid you in your "difficulty in finding a consistent position" in what I say? There were contradictions, all right. But the contradictions are in your head, friend, not in what

I wrote. :: I will grant you one thing, though, My conjecture that you, as editor of Wrhn, were not interested in discussing what goes on in the prozines may have been in error. If so, I have two defenses to offer: First, that a careful examination of the contents of every issue of Wrhn I have ever seen, previous to the present one, shows that you may or may not have been interested but you sure didn't show it. Second, that a conjecture, it seems to me, may be offered on almost any subject, provided it is labeled as such. I did label it as such. The word I used to describe it was "conjecture." :: All of this, of course, has nothing to do with the central point of my letter. You have succeeded in obscuring that quite completely. Allow me to return to it for a moment: The thesis that science-fiction magazines owe their writers book review and letter columns is preposterous. If anyone doubts this, I will gladly supply arguments (on the one condition that you allow your readers to form their own opinion of their validity, instead of yours); but I don't suppose from the other letters in this issue of Wrhn that anyone really cares that much. :: Science-fiction magazines owe nothing to anyone but their readers, except for the general debt that any publication owes its contributors: to present their views without major distortion. I can see where this last point might be a little hard for you to take in, though. (Galaxy Publishing Corporation, 421 Hudson St., New York 14, N.Y.)

RB: My unexpressed personal conclusions had nothing to do with you being a "damn liar" It's surely conscientious of you to bring up the point, however, and if you're bothered by doubts about your honesty (I'm not) you'll enjoy Jim Blish's column this time. :: If I succeeded in obscuring the central point of your opening letter, the obscuring was only in your mind. The letter is there, intact, and I'm sure I don't flatter my readers by assuming they can read what is in it, see that there are other points in it that I didn't comment on, and arrive at their own conclusions. If you think I obscured the central point of your letter in the minds of my readers, then I can only suggest that you have under-estimated them. :: As for your central point: that "the thesis that science-fiction magazines owe their writers book review and letter columns is preposterous", I thought comment on that could better come from the writers to whom it was addressed. Apparently no one felt called upon to answer it, because no one advocated it: the whole thought originated with you in the next thing to a conjecture (your favorite form of thinking, it seems). Immediately following your little bit of distortion about Blish "changing his grounds" we find, "However, I think there is a concealed postulate to which I do not subscribe. The postulate is this: That it is the obligation of science-fiction magazines to teach science-fiction writers their trade." The only obligation science-fiction magazines have is to survive and if survival involves also keeping writers interested and happy then the choice is up to the editors -- there are worst things than survival, I guess; like letter columns and book reviews of science fiction. You don't demonstrate the postulate from Jim's column -- the only place it seems to arise is in your letter. If you care to supply arguments against your thesis, I'll print them. It won't be the first time we've heard a GALAXY editor addressing his mirror. :: By the way, why do LIFE, TIME, NEWSWEEK, SATURDAY EVENING POST, McCALL's, HARPERS's, THE NEW REPUBLIC, THE NATIONAL REVIEW, etc, all have letter columns? I trust it's not because the majority of their readers want them -- or even notice them -- but to let their readers know they are being heard. I haven't noticed any national uproar to eliminate them. Please see Harry Warner's remarks on this matter earlier in this department. :: "a careful examination of the contents of every issue of Wrhn /you/ have ever seen" couldn't have gone very far since in your opening letter you confessed that you didn't "know what most of the letters in Wrhn are about". Of course you might not have known what they were about even if you'd seen every issue -- we can't help that. Offer as many conjectures as you like, but please take care to label them. :: On what basis does a publisher choose an editor? And since you are "not representative of the bulk of GALAXY's readers", what confidence can he have that the magazine you'd edit would appeal to them? And how can you edit for a readership you never hear from? (I know

you hear in dollars and cents, but how can you be sure your casual purchasers aren't changing all the time and presenting an audience largely untried on previously popular fare?) Your statements that you value receiving comments but feel Wrhn's hypothetical decision not to review prozines is right because "it wouldn't be interesting...for both of us" still appear contradictory to me, inspite of your defense of the "conjecture". Try clearing up the contradiction instead -- there's nothing on this point to do with letter columns. Of course it's possible that you can enjoy letters but the bulk of your readers may not. I never said otherwise. But it's not likely that you lose interest in them just because they appear instead in Wrhn, or is it? :: When I see that I'm wrong, I'm delighted to admit it. My conflict over your statement from GALAXY that you'd received only one letter re a letter column in the past few months and the statement from your letter that the bulk of your letters fall into one of two categories ("why don't you print more letters") confused your two editorial capacities. Apologies, I've never seen an issue of IF and your letter was on "Galaxy Publishing Corporation" stationary.

THOMAS DILLEY: Re Busby's question, "Answers, anyone?": I think someone ought to print the entire mailing for general distribution, but that's selfish curiosity, not helpfulness. Actually, as long as anyone would print one extra copy of it all and send it down here, I'd be happy. /Why not just get on the waiting list and buy the current mailing?--RB/ (Box 3042, University Station, Gainesville, Florida)

SETH JOHNSON: Totally disagree with "The View From Down Under" on page 38. If Kennedy were anywhere near that ethical and scrupulous he would never have permitted Cuba to be invaded with the active aid and connivance of American Army and nation. Frankly I think Kennedy is trying to chase with the hounds and run with the fox at the same time and of course by the very contradictions inherent in such a deal is getting his fingers burned every once in a while. Trying to please both the radicals and the Birchers just won't do. You have to take your stand somewhere and fight for it or go under. Or accomplish nothing. I'll grant you however that Kennedy is a most brilliant and ethical man. :: Don't think letter columns belong in the prozines, but wonder if it wouldn't be a good idea for the pro publishers to issue house fanzines to be mailed to letterhacks writing in to them. This would mean many more letters, and letters generally dealing in criticism of their prozines, which is what they want. They could even include genfandom in their mailings if they could obtain the names and addresses. And the contents would be just a letter column with perhaps some BNF doing editorials and comments on the thing. Would also be an excellent place to publicize fandom without boring the general readers of the prozine. (339 Stiles St., Vaux Hall, NJ.)

JACK SPEER on Wrhn #14: "The Grand Inquest of the Nation" is a high-sounding title, but what it usually amounts to is one senator, given absolute discretion by his overburdened colleagues. :: Pournelle does not explain why the reason for his opposition to federal aid to education stops with the national government and does not extend to control of education by the state legislatures, which are in general filled with men of lower caliber than Congress is. He might answer with references to pluralism, divided power, etc; but his real reason, though he may not realize it, is that state legislatures are more limited in their money-raising powers and more easily influenced by conservatives. :: His discussion of fit extensions of the investigative power reminds me of the ACLU's article on horse thieves, which proposed that non-horse-thief affidavits be required of all taxpayers, and of all persons exempted from taxation. (Snoqualmie, Washington)

ALSO HEARD FROM WERE: WALTER BREEN, LARRY HARRIS, MICHAEL L McQUOWN, BILL PLOTT, BERNARD MORRIS, TOM ARMISTEAD, GREGG CALKINS, PHIL HARRELL, RON WILSON, ROSEMARY HICKEY, EDWARD WOOD, AL WOOD, ROBERT E BRINEY, NANCY SHRINER, WARREN DE BRA, JACK L CHALKER, BETTY KUJAWA, and DICK SCHULTZ.

Comments on SAPS mailing number 59:

SETEBOS --Owen Hannifen: Lanctot's fascinating articles on Mescaline are almost enough to overcome my chagrin that this magazine wasn't originally intended for distribution in the mailing. Lanctot does a brilliant job of evoking a Daliesque reaction with descriptions of surrealistic perceptions, or was all that because I had the idea it took place in Vermont; I find it difficult to imagine anything more unlikely. Has anyone described the more distorted Picasso's while Mescalinated?

YET ANOTHER PUBLICATION -- Owen Hannifen: Without a doubt the most eye-opening publication in the mailing. Was the author of the reprint sent a copy? I'm sure Sam would be delighted to know that one of his more judicious pronouncements is being studiously preserved in the Fan Press. I haven't encountered anything quite like this since that mackerel in the moonlight several years ago.

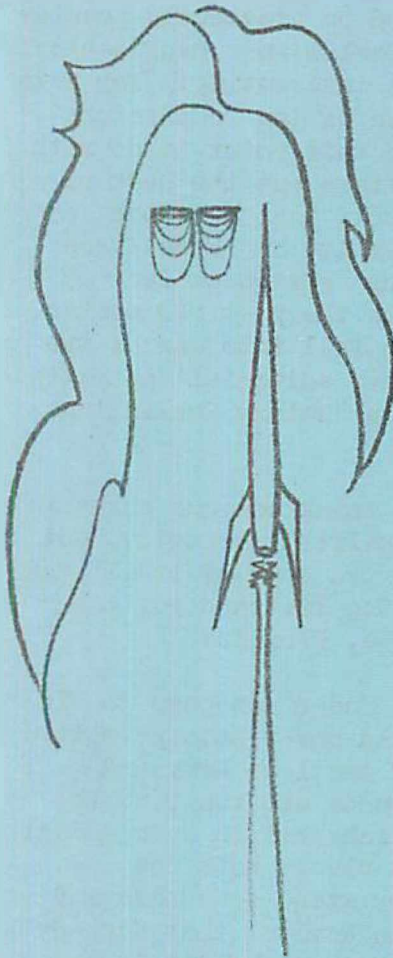
THE DINKY BIRD -- Ruth Berman: the recipe reminds me of my long unfulfilled impulse to devote a very small section of a few editorials to a department called "The Fantasy Bachelor". I rarely cook for myself, but when I do I usually survive so the food must be good. This issue I'll content myself with suggesting you drop a few pork chops onto a sheet of tin foil, add ten or so teaspoons of soy sauce, a few sprinkles of ginger, a crushed garlic clove, pepper, no salt, and let broil until it drives you mad with temptation

OUTSIDERS -- Wrai Ballard: Dispite your attempts to supply the needle and thread, I disagree with the contention that SAPS is a Sewing Circle Society. :: So Nan Gerding was "fighting for honor and decency" in NANDU 28! I wondered what that was all about. Alas, her sallies were misguided:

I was only trying to point out the trend from SAPS to FAPA-- not rape her. Odd though, Wrai, that with your passionate interest in SAPS (and your delight that so few want to change it) that you let pass Nan's assertion that the organization has in it "ineffective jabber, comment on comment on comment on comment, filling pages which could easily be put to much better use." Nor did you comment on Art Rapp's observation that "inconsequential rambling...fills all to much of the bundle nowadays...some more ingenious ploy is needed than to chatter about your social activities and minor acquaintences. It has been done too frequently to hold interest any longer." And I'd be pleased to see a reaction to the Gerding opinion I cited last Wrhn that "SAPS exerts pressures on its members to conform or else", but I'm not holding my breath. Apparently some things are too good to change. :: Funniest line in the issue was your assumption that "Quo Vadis, SAPS" meant that I was (or I might be) "modestly assuming that because /my/multitude of skills, guest authors and a large and readable zine caused /me/ to collect the largest number of points in the ballot, it was more than just an appreciative gesture to /me/as an individual publisher." Is this ego-centric delusion also the basis of Nan Gerding's, Art Rapp's, Walter Breen's, or Terry Carr's critical remarks on SAPS or are such aberrations only likely of people with whom you chose to publicly acknowledge your disagreement?

THE PILLAR POLL: Many thanks to those of you who saw fit to entrust me with a second term as president of this organization. I shall do my best to continue conducting myself in whatever manner I please, inspite of the fact.

## DISSONANT DISCOURSE



SAPTERRANEAN -- Walter Breen: In what publication will your reprints of "the AAAS conreport and trip-report to the Heinleins'" appear? :: I intended to use an enigmatic scrap of music in each issue until I stopped getting guesses on what piece it was from. The time has come; no one mentioned last issue's selection. :: The comments on collectives on page 31, lines 4-5, Wrhn 12, were John Berry's not mine. True, I didn't recall them, but Wrai attributed them to me. Harmless but confusing. :: Forgive me these painfully inadequate comments on a fine issue, Walt. Come to think of it, they're fairly in character.

COMPREHENSIBILITY EVALUATION OF SAPZINES -- Lee Jacobs: Indecipherable.

SPACEWARP -- Art Rapp: "The Purple Dawn" is a welcome reprint, but the only comment it inspires is I'd very much like to see Redd do a similarly complete history of QUANDRY and Wrhn. Boggs once wrote me he "hoped to comment on all issues of Wrhn since its revival", but I may have foolishly suggested he forget the chore when he contributed "File 13". And if it's any incentive I'd be pleased to reciprocate with a history of SKYHOOK. Perhaps that will speed Redd into writing The Wrhn Story -- if I promise to forget the offer. :: "Pitiful Puppets" was interesting for its philosophical musings on time. "Time is illusory, a falsity brought about by consciousness and the senses -- any given moment in the future never arrives" probably made me realize the ultimate lesson of Marienbad is that time does not exist: there is only the present and memory and imagination. :: Perhaps the appearance that "nowadays there seems a far lower percentage of potential contributors" is deceptive. Any editor who can make his fanzine an attractive forum should not lack contributors no matter how many other editors are competing with him. There was a time when VOID, HYPHEN, HABAKKUK, and XERO were all producing some of the finest and largest issues of fanzines ever seen and with remarkably little overlap in contributors -- and fandom still contained other fine writers who were not representative of any of those titles -- Boggs, Tucker, Breen, Busby, Lowndes, Aldiss, Purdom, Baxter, Rapp; surely enough, just with these named, to produce a commanding fanzine without looking to the contributors of the giant publications mentioned. I would say an "attractive forum", from the standpoint of the potential writer, would be a firm editorial hand, publication at regular intervals, good reproduction, open circulation, and a generous letter column. The most successful editor will be the one who can anticipate the desires of the writers he's interested in; the fan who can do this can create a fanzine people can't resist writing for. :: Thanks for the comments on my writing; they're all the more appreciated for being so rare. But I should disabuse you of the notion that it's polished "thru many a preliminary draft". The initial composition is done slowly and deliberately and heavily blue penciled as variations on particular phrases occur. These mailing comments, for instance, will then be set aside, in that form, for two weeks to a month and then retyped on second sheets. The second typing involves shocked discoveries of what was said and the editing. I stencil from that version. (I can't understand people who can do three or four versions of the same article: my aim is to express what I want to say as clearly and as well as possible; I don't think numerous variations would appreciably raise the quality of a given piece, but I do think practice and care over a period of time will.

SLUG -- Webber: Enjoyed. DIE WIS -- Schultz: The art continues to improve.

COLLECTOR -- Howard DeVore: I am not so much for the Fan Awards as I am for the idea of a regularly scheduled annual poll of fandom. I think it should be as complete in its categories as the SAPS, FAPA, or FANAC polls. But I don't particularly like the idea of solidifying the accolades in the form of plaques or statues -- I'm only interested in them as an annual recording of a changing consensus. The FANAC poll, when it appears, is in effect our fan awards and if it could be depended on there

would be no need for additional polling. The problem with it, however, seems to be that Terry Carr's tour de forces, THE FANNISH I & II, have set such a high standard for it that with even the best intentions it comes out very late or not at all. I expect this year's edition to meet the Carr standard but there's no reason why future editions couldn't be a simple (say 25page) report if someone with the energy of a Breen or Carr can't be persuaded into making it a life's work.

HOEGOBLEIN -- Terry Carr: As usual, the purest gold in SAPS is to be found under the Carr label. (By the way, I never got around to applauding the opening paragraph of your letter in KIPPLE with its marvelous take-off on GMCarr. Clap, clap.) :: It was refreshing to see clear-eyed comments on NANDU 28 that were obviously written by someone who hadn't automatically disengaged his intelligence and critical faculties when it became apparent what an embarrassing performance it was. :: Why do you discount the SAPS' claim on Wrhn because of its large circulation and in effect concede the claim on the Kemp annuals by countering their example with similar items from FAPA? WHO KILLED SF had twice its SAPS distribution and contained less reference to the organization than any issue of Wrhn. WHY IS A FAN? circulated/printed 182 nonSAPS copies. SAPS' claim on Wrhn (whether they like it or not) is as valid as FAPA's to Skhk or GRUE. Wrhn is intended for SAPS because it functions as the vehicle for fulfilling my activity requirements, but of course it's not produced specifically as an activity requirements publication nor as a publication "for SAPS" (using the term to imply something more than an organizational arrangement). It's produced for Richard Bergeron and would be the same fanzine if it appeared in OMPA, N'APA, or FAPA. When you discount SAPS claim on it by pointing out that its "contents are primarily non-SAPish" I assume you have reference to topics and forms of publishing that are molded by a specific group of members. As far as I'm concerned, the Spectator Amateur Press Society is a traditionally arranged constitution serviced by a single individual for a number of fans. Any form of typical content arising from so liberal a structure will depend on the natural popularity of a few members and this is perfectly all right, but the fact that I prefer to guide my activity into forms currently or, indeed, never typical of SAPS is no indication of whether or not it's intended for the apa. (An aside: typical content as the result of evolving consensus is fine but typical content deriving from subtle pressures, ingroup jokes that produce the feeling of being in or out for "improper" activity, and other techniques that can be passed off as "fannish hyperbole" if attacked (the sort of thing Nan Gerding denounced) are more typical of a conformistic society than a free society. They're more typical of a Sewing Circle than an Amateur Press Society.) :: In the context of "Quo Vadis, SAPS", more important than whether or not FAPA currently "has it over SAPS at least 2-to-1" (your opinion) would be what long range effects an organizational setup have on quality in the apa. To answer Rapp's question on the basis of the last 10 years the question then becomes "What has SAPS had to compare with the super Hoffman publications, Skhk, GRUE, BIRDSMITH, STANTASY, HORIZONS, LIGHTHOUSE, KIEN BOTTLE, FANTASY JACKASS, PAMPREY, etc?" This, of course, is like asking "What does SAPS have to compare with some of the best fanzines of all time?" FAPA has it over SAPS at least 10-to-1 (my opinion; not the opinion of the president of SAPS, who remains neutral in all this).

SPELEOBLEIN -- Bruce Pelz: I was surprised at Nan Gerding's attempt to resign from the waiting list. Apparently she doesn't have the time or doesn't want to belong, but, by god, don't let her catch anyone initiating discussion to change an organization she can't/won't join! :: I was worried that my fan memoirs might have to be more subjective than most. Since I've kept most fannish doings on paper, material describing social contacts and fan club type politics will be at a minimum or non-existent. But Spicer complained of the first chapter that I'd written "more about Burroughs' old story than about Bergeron".



PSILO -- Jane Gallion: Sorry, I don't have access to a tape recorder so comment addressed to me on tape would be a loss unless the spool can be played at a public library. Can it?

IGNATZ -- Nancy Rapp: Kennedy may have taken Illinois with the smallest of margins, and thus all of that state's electoral votes, but Nixon did the same in California with a slightly larger margin and, if I recall correctly, Nixon took the state from Kennedy in a matter of some days.

THRU' THE PORTEHOLE -- Bob Smith: You can see how seriously I took that sub-title, "Australia's answer to Warhoon." When your prize writer John Baxter offered to do a column for me, I immediately accepted! I trust John will continue "The Wilder Shores" for you -- I'll certainly feel guilty if he doesn't. :: I've seen both "Seven Samurai" and "The Magnificent Seven" and much preferred the former. Don't miss "Roshomon" if you have a chance to see it. :: Baxter's book reviews continue fascinating -- I'd like to see his comments on "Picasso's Picassos." :: Harry Warner might be interested in knowing that Art Widner also sent Wrhn a cover as well as a lengthy letter (over six pages) of comment on THE VINEGAR WORM as a reaction to "The Mind of Robert Leman."

THE FIRST FOUR YEARS OF THE GREAT WAR -- Cal Demmon: "A \*Press\* Checklist" is notable for your wonderfully original fanzine titles. Who ever heard of titles like THE WONDERFUL SINGING RABBIT OF GLENNY DRIVE or THE SPIRIT OF HORSE CREEK? :: "You can't divorce the kind of Person you are from the way you sound in print is a good topic for a debate. Your own mention of "far-away-pay-no-attention-to-personalities" ideas which you've seen in some fanzines indicates that some at least try and I recall the title of a long ago article in FAPA, "Which Of Your Fan Friends Are Their Real Selves in Print?" After meeting Pete Graham, Terry Carr and Ted White, I wasn't able to read their material for some months without an annoying mental image of the person actually vocalizing the words. Ted's writings are quite true to himself but I found Pete and Terry more quiet and less dazzling than I'd expected them to be. Alva Rogers wrote recently that he's formed a mental image from Wrhn of the kind of person I am and this amused me immensely for I don't think I convey my actual personality here at all.

AVON SCIENCE FICTION READER -- Ed Meskys: All this speculation about who I might be gave me the earliest sensation; it's rather like reading one's own obituaries. I'm certainly not going to submit passport photos and finger prints to anyone just to prove that I exist but the detective hunt in ASFR and elsewhere and a couple of letter writers who wonder who I am does illustrate the tenuous contact with reality that fandom has. Evidently I was a bit blunt in commenting on this matter last issue because shortly after the issue went out I received a DNQ (!!) letter from Lee Jacobs apologizing for giving the impression he didn't think I existed and hoping he hadn't caused me any fanish embarrassment. He hadn't.

ENGRAM -- Gary Deindorfer: Very good! And don't worry on my account if your mailing comments tend to the tendentious. I prefer them that way, but perhaps that's because I've had ample opportunity to become addicted. :: Your appreciation for "the spark, the wild, almost frenetic air, which the present day SAPS seems to have" doesn't seem to be borne out by the examples of SAPS activity you commend. I blush prettily when you "point to all of the material" in Wrhn as the epitome of what you'd like to see more of, but I don't recall ever seeing Wrhn described as wild and frenetic;

or "Walter Breen's mailing comments in mailing #58, and, in general, the fan-zines of Terry Carr, Les Gerber, and F N Busby" either.

PLEASURE UNITS -- Gordon Eklund: Noted and appreciated; a good title.

WAZLING STREET -- Bob Lichtman: Deindorfer has improved so rapidly that he must now be counted as one of the best of the young fannish writers.

MEST -- Ted Johnstone: Down with that inferiority complex: these are some of the best comments on Wrhn in the mailing. :: Your comment on the Blish column was precisely the objection I noted when it arrived, but I don't think I put it into print anywhere.

SPY RAY -- Richard Eney: I seem to have been instrumental in leaving the ground somewhere three feet beneath you in a couple of places last Wrhn. Since you suggest that your reaction in one instance must have been "Creeping Paranoia" we can safely tip-toe pass that up to The Richard Nixon Case. I hate to leave you shrouded in mystification but the form of Nixon's smear wasn't what started the feathers flying between the Busby's and us. One of the few living survivors thinks it started with Elinor's request that I prove that Mrs Douglas wasn't soft on communism. "So show me where she was ever hard on communism" was a phrase heard in Seattle. If you have a spare week you might reread the entire body of discussion -- starting with "The Freedom of Opportunists" in Wrhn #46, January 1960, and Leman's comments on that. You should be able to draw a thesis from it that will refute the idea that SAPS is for Communication. Personally, I'm willing to drop the whole matter if Richard Nixon is.

EGOBOMBSHELLS (in order of appreciation)

(1) "After The Atom" by Joe Kennedy, (2) "The Delving Press Reprint Publication" by Owen Hannifen, (3) "Brian Aldiss" by John M. Baxter, (4) "Coughing in my Pocket" by Calvin Demmon, (5) "The Purple Dawn" by Redd Boggs, (6) "Confessions of an American Mescaline Eater" by James Lanctot, (7) "The Wilder Shores" by John M. Baxter, (8) "Machiavelli" by Art Rapp, (9) "Comprehensibility Evaluation of SAPzines" by Lee Jacobs, (10) ATom's cover on Hobgoblin.

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SCIENCE FICTION OF THE FUTURE  
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"Advertisers generally like to emphasize that their ads are factual and trustworthy. But one advertiser, Hoffman Electronics Corporation, frankly acknowledges that its new campaign is pure fiction.

"Through its agency, Carson-Roberts, Inc., the Los Angeles electronics manufacturer is running a series of double-page spreads containing science fiction stories. The stories were written expressly for the campaign by well-known science fiction authors. In the present issue of FORTUNE MAGAZINE, for example, Hoffman Electronics is running a story called "Mirror", by Fritz Leiber. Ads also are appearing in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN.

"At the end of its ads, Hoffman Electronics inserts a short commercial that Hoffman produces advanced electronic equipment for defense systems and industry as well as consumer products such as television or hi-fi sets.

"Is the agency worried that some readers may confuse the fact with the fiction? Not at all, says Carson-Roberts. Instead, the science fiction angle should vastly increase readership of the ads, says the spokesman."

The New York Times, May 1, 1962

