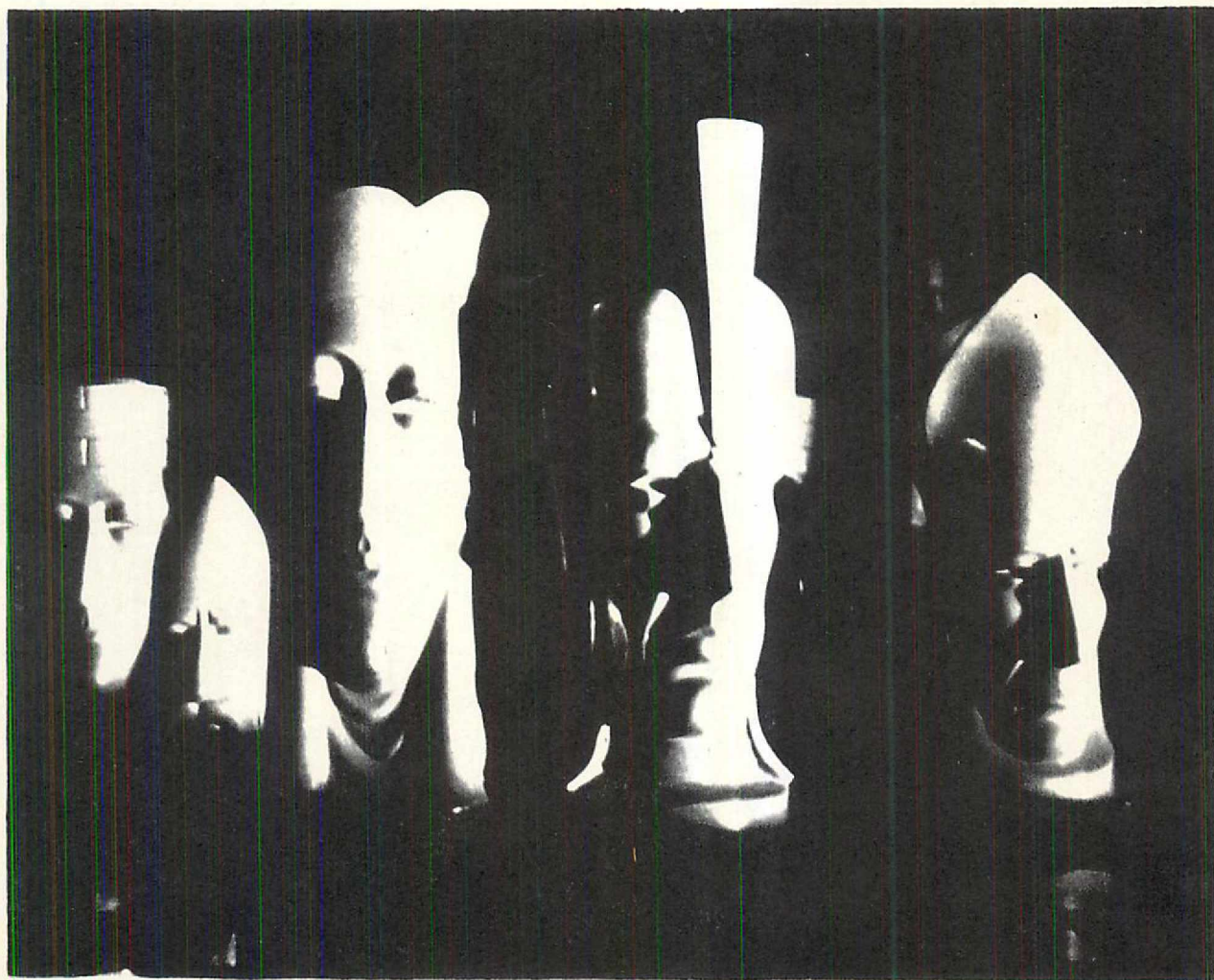


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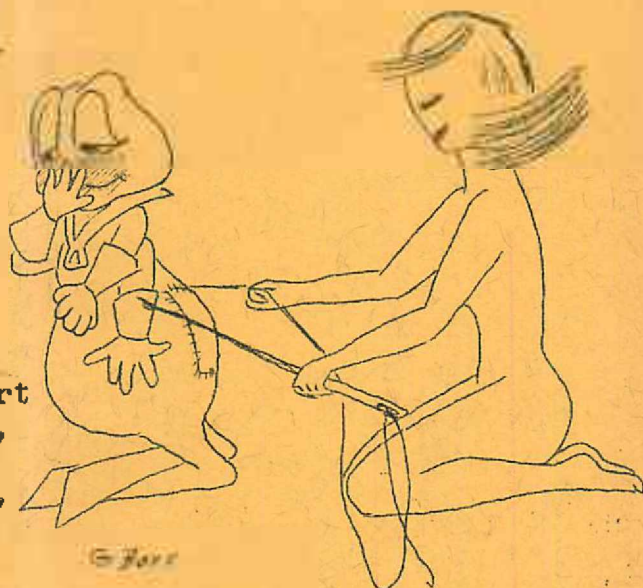




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Busy, Busy, and all such similar saws...it never snows but it blizzards. Running our biggest issue of the year isn't enough; all the other roofs cave in at the same time -- at least the job I ran for Don & Maggie Thompson cut Yandro down to size and made me actually think of it as a small little fanzine. 500 copies - Lordy! Thank whatever gods there be I don't have to assemble that...

Also this time around I'm having fun with a new piece of stencilling equipment -- new to me, at any rate. Speed-o-print advertised a "silk sheet" in their catalogue, complete with usual glowing praises of the sort of work one could do with it. Always a sucker for such things, I bit and was quite pleased with the outcome. I halfway expected no more than an expensive drawing plate, but it turns out to be a piece of bleached stiff silk, and indeed is dandy for shading in solid blacks ... and I would highly recommend it.

Actually, when an advertisement says it will enable you to achieve solid black, you should take it with a small bucket of salt. What you achieve is a reasonably solid dark grey....that's all I've ever been able to achieve myself with my old technique of over and over and over again with a large ball stylus and patting and poking the tenuous fibers of the stencil into place and praying they'll hold together long enough to mimeo 200 plus copies.

The silk sheet gives pretty much the same effect, slightly smoother -- and is much less likely to end up with the center of the black area peeling off the stencil and plastering itself to the roller or a sheet of paper.

It's an expensive gadget, but worth the price. For a change, I found a bargain.

For some sadistic reason, this is the season when catalogues and shops start featuring spring and summer items. This is a vagary of the female clothing industry I have never appreciated and never will; to get any sort of decent selection, you must buy a winter coat in August and summer blouses in March. Bah. Although there are happy rumors that at last the shoe industry is starting to design out those idiotic pointed toes on women's shoes.

Being a type with peculiarly built feet, I'm especially annoyed at fad fashions in shoes. In clothing, if I don't care for the current chemise, "little girl look" or whatever other alleged fashion is current, I can buy several yards of material and sew myself something plain, unfashionable and comfortable. With shoes, it's a different matter. If you didn't care for pointed toes or "sensible" shoes, too bad. If you just wanted something quite ordinary to cover your feet and get you from one place to another without carving your toes on broken glass, well,

lotsa luck. One of the prime examples of the stiletto rage fell in on me last summer, when I tried to buy some ordinary canvas shoes for gardening. Now there's nothing less fashionable than gardening -- no heel required, no chic new pastels ... just an ordinary canvas shoe that will tie snug and keep out the dust. But every shoe of this type had pointed toes.

I don't have pointed toes. At least not in the center. Perhaps I'm built oddly, but my middle toe does not come out to a nice sharp point, and my big toe and little toe are not daintily tapered in on each side at exactly the same place. I taper sideways, as it were. So in order to find something approximating a fit, I buy shoes a half to a full size too large. They don't fit properly, of course, but at least my toes can wiggle.

Tales of how our great grandmothers ruined their anatomies lacing themselves into five-sizes too small corsets get no sympathy from me. My feet would be just as ruined if I stuffed them in these perambulating poinards.

What's with the royal "we"? Back when John Glenn was making his big splash and having his press conference, I found myself a bit unsettled by this constant reference to "we". At the time I shrugged and decided Project Mercury was running this Go Team Go business down to the wire, that no one was to show off or claim individual glory -- everything was to be a joint effort.

But Glenn recently resigned from the Marines and made a press statement about getting out of the service, joining the Royal Crown Cola Corporation ("The Favorite Drink of Astronauts!"), and this statement, too, was rife with "we's", when he couldn't possibly be referring to Project Mercury.

And Glenn's not the only case, not by a long shot. I've noticed all sorts of people, public, private, and fannish, using this terminology. Is it creeping organizationism, a subversive smothering of individual pride for group effort, and campaign to make every man royalty, ... ?

Couple of issues ago I mentioned with glee "The Man from U.N.C.L.E.", and received several "and how" comments from readers. Wishing to be a good little booster and help the producer show his sponsors that there really were people watching the show after all, Neilsen or no, I sent a fairly reserved letter to Sam Rolfe, the show's creator; I merely said I liked the show, wished them success...

So a few weeks ago back in the mail came a very hush hush form letter from Rolfe, explaining that I was now registered as an operative and liable to be called up on hazardous duty at 12 hours notice, and to be ready. I also got a little membership card testifying to my UNCLE security clearance....the whole thing is delightful.

So if I suddenly disappear, you'll know I probably fell in a cistern or a silo whilst in the midst of performing some hazardous duty for the United Network Command for Law and Enforcement.



Today is Jan. 24, 1965, and if we get this issue out this month we'll be lucky.

James Goodrich sent in an ad for Histoires Insolites, which seems to be a French fantasy anthology. My French is exactly what it used to be (non-existent) but I can at least read the names of Bradbury, Derleth, Keller, Lovecraft, Saki, and less familiar ones like H. Calisher, K. Kusenberg, and E. Waugh (which is familiar enough, but not as a fantasy writer). Price is 13,50 francs which,

if the rate hasn't changed since my 1963 World Almanac came out, amounts to \$2.70. You can get it from Le Terrain Vague (a suspicious address if I ever saw one), 23-25, rue du Cherche-Midi, Paris 6.

There may be something in this witch business. Don Thompson sends in a newspaper clipping of an article on Sybil Leek, referred to as "Britain's best-known witch". One sentence reads, "Instead, she was in Boston at a meeting with the great-grandmother of a witch who was burned at Salem." Says she found it interesting, and I daresay she did. I would have, too.

The other day I was reading PAGEANT again (I'm addicted) and I took this quiz, "How To Tell If You're Really 'In' ". A score of 70 was tops; a score of 66-70 made you a "worldly, suave sophisticate", and there were gradually decreasing steps down to "51-55 Socially inept". My score was 33.

Another article in the same mag explained what to do about people who don't like you. The first section of the article goes on about how terrible it is to be disliked. (The author states that no one can remain happy unless he feels liked and approved by the people who matter to him, and with this I'd have to agree. But among the "people who matter", according to the rest of the article, are neighbors, co-workers, and apparently everyone you come in contact with.) Another article, in AMEROCK DIGEST, reports on how to get more work out of one's employees. Never permit competition within the group, because no worker wishes to alienate his associates by surpassing them. Instead, instill "group loyalty", and then foster competition among groups. Both articles are undoubtedly correct, but taken together they present me with even more fuel for my disgust with humanity in general. The average human doesn't have guts enough to stand on his own two feet; he needs the support of several other people to reassure him that he's really worthwhile. (Of course, the very fact that he needs the support is fairly conclusive proof that he isn't worthwhile. But he never thinks of that, and is inclined to fight anyone who points it out to him.)

Reminds me of some of these poor coal miners. I was born in a coal-mining country; southern Indiana. Dad was a farmer; he's got lots of stories about miners. That was back in the days when farms still took a lot of seasonal labor. A good many times the miners would be out of a job, or on strike, when the heavy farm seasons rolled around. Think they'd do any farm work, though? Not on your life. They'd steal, but they wouldn't work. Now we're supposed to support them because they don't have any mine work to do. Well, I've just been done out of my tech writing job in Wabash. How about you liberals chipping in to support me so I can keep on living here without having to take a different job? I don't want to move, and I can't do "my" work here, so just look on me as a small disaster area.

Of course, actually I'm staying right with Honeywell and taking on a different job; a solution I prefer to moving to a city and writing. But

the next time you're pitying some poor drunken coal miner, with his shack (with a tv aerial coming out the roof) and his six kids (that a little intelligence could have prevented), stop and ask if he really deserves your tears. I'm not in favor of turning anyone out to starve; certainly not when we produce more food than we can eat. But I am in favor of liberals realizing that there are some people who will never be useful citizens no matter how much you give them, and that a zoo gorilla has more intrinsic value to society. All you can do for people is give them an opportunity; you can't force them to take advantage of it, and there is no point in wasting sympathy on the ones who don't.

Of course, we don't have "Equal Opportunity" yet, by a long shot, but that's what we should be working for. If education and integration can be made to work properly, we won't need slum clearance because the only slum dwellers will be those who prefer filth.

I knew I shouldn't have put all my comments on the Hugos into the letter column and fanzine reviews; now I don't have anything left for the editorial.

My own collection of space stamps is far smaller than John Berry's. I only became interested in the field thru Hector Pessina's desire to swap stamps for various US items, and I still get most of my stamps from Hector, though I'm now on the sucker list of a couple of stamp companies. Contrary to John's comment, I don't specialize in Paraguayan issues; I have quite a few of them because Pessina has sent me quite a few. In fact, I don't specialize in space stamps at all; at least, not to the exclusion of other kinds. I had a general collection as a kid; when I got rid of it I kept the US stamps and a few others that I thought were particularly pretty. (Including a Mexican astronomical set which Pessina now informs me is fairly valuable to "space" collectors.) Now I'm back to it, though with more discrimination; I'm not particularly interested in just any old stamp, but I pick up sets that I find pretty or interesting. A fan can discover all sorts of associations in stamps. A Polish set of toadstools never fails to remind me of Bill Pearson's illustrations. I just ordered a Russian commemorative to Lobachevsky because of the Tom Lehrer song. (Briney, you ought to have that one.) In addition to actual "space" issues, there are things like the French stamp honoring Georges Melies (featuring a scene from one of his stf films) and the Monacan set on Jules Verne depicting scenes from his novels. An Australian stamp depicting Henry Lawson brings his "Reedy River" to mind. A Hungarian Olympic set features two stamps on table tennis, and reminds me of DeWeese's passion. Another Hungarian set showing the evolution of the sword is associated with AMRA. But the prize of my collection is an item for which I am indebted to Alan Dodd; an envelope bearing a cancelled stamp of the Duchy of Grand Fenwick. (It's so authentic-looking that when I got it in the mail right after Dodd had been on vacation, I got a nasty shock.... "You don't suppose he really found the place.....") I might add that in my own collection, space issues are mounted with the other stamps of a country, but on a separate page (so that if I ever change my mind, I can turn them into a completely separate collection). Since I don't use a commercial album, but mount the stamps on typing paper in an ordinary three-ring binder, I can file the stamps in any way I please (I don't recommend commercial albums to anyone; they are an unnecessary expense.) My "space" collection stands at somewhere between 160 and 170 stamps, which shows what a collector of modest means can do without working at it (provided, of course, he has a friend like Hector Pessina, who has provided at least half of that total). As John says, I don't collect methodically -- but then, I rarely do anything methodically.

I won't be able to think of anything else to say until after this stencil has been run off, so here's to you all until next time. RSC

THE NEW STAMPING GROUND

(title by madeleine willis)

ARTICLE BY

John Berry

To my knowledge this is the first article to appear in an American fanzine regarding the collection of space stamps, known generally as Astro-philately. Buck Coulson commissioned me to write this feature almost a year ago, but I let it ride until now, and I'm glad I did so, because the subject is so fraught with complications. The fact that you saved stamps when you were young, or still save them, is no criterion. I bashed out a few articles about space stamps in my SAPSzine Pot Pourri a year ago, when, in my ignorance, I thought my collection of about 150 was almost complete. It's took me all this time to reluctantly conclude that I shall never obtain a complete collection, because although I've managed to track down all the stamps issued to date, I just haven't got the finance to compete, and I doubt if any fan has.

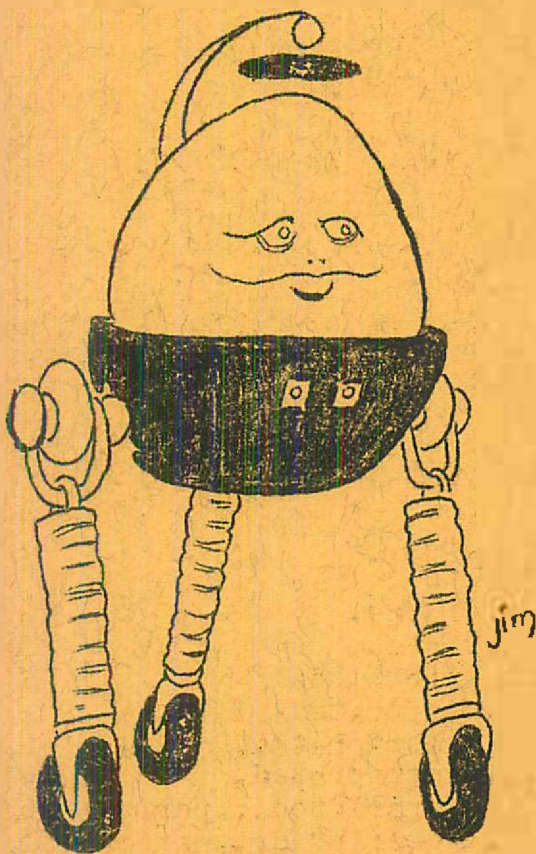
This might tend to put the completist off, and it sometimes frustrates me, but it is quite possible to garner a comprehensive collection if you know how to do it. There are many pitfalls the unwary fan can stumble into...I've stumbled like mad, and I would like to put on

record the lessons I've learned so that if any of you do decide to save space stamps, you can save time and money as well.

It is no use me preparing a list of stamps required. In one day it could be out of date. To give an example, at the beginning of December 1964 I had 800 space stamps carefully laid out in two expensive albums. One of my techniques is to obtain lists of latest issues from several dealers, and on receipt of these lists a few days later I found that nigh on 100 new issues were ready and waiting for me. More about that later...

You'll be asking yourself...why?...why collect space stamps?

It is disappointing to me, but I don't know any fans who collect space stamps in any methodical sort of way. Coulson tries to collect most of the Paraguayan issues, and one or two fans seem to be on the fringe, but as I've stated before, I would have thought most fans would be collecting like mad. I've always been interested in travel, which I thought, wrongly it seems, to have been the inertia behind fanac. Astro-philately fills several needs. I'll



try and tabulate them:

- a) It provides an almost complete record of space travel from the orbiting of Sputnik 1 in 1957.
- b) It provides visual data, in colour, of the faces and equipment of the astronauts of Russia and America.
- c) It gives, in surprising detail, technical and physical details of the construction of satellites and the rockets firing them.
- d) In lesser detail it provides pictures and data of men behind space travel, such as von Braun and Goddard.
- e) It provides colour close-ups of the planets in our solar system, and of the trajectories of the satellites orbiting them or photographing them.
- f) It provides pictures and dates of the animals sent up before the first man.

g) It provides the collector with hours of instructive entertainment.

h) It provides the collector with a new schematic field which I feel will eventually become the most important branch of philately.

i) It provides the means of shrewd investment, because judicious buying of mint sets of space stamps can give a handsome profit in a few short years.

j) It supplies the collector with a challenge... when to buy, what to buy, how to buy, and most important of all, how to find out what to buy.

I could go on, but it's no use trying to con any fans into collecting space stamps if they've no interest... But if any of you would like to know a few facts about the incredible ramifications of Astro-philately, read on....

If it was just a matter of buying new sets and putting them in an album it would be dry as dust, except if you have the initial interest, as I have. But there's nothing simple about saving space stamps. Let me give you an example. Take a hypothetical general issue, particularly by Russia or Paraguay... this is what one set CAN consist of: -

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1) | Six mint stamps | perforated |
| 2) | Six used stamps | perforated |
| 3) | Six mint stamps | imperforated |
| 4) | Six used stamps | imperforated |
| 5) | Six used stamps | overprinted... perforated |
| 6) | Six mint stamps | overprinted... perforated |
| 7) | Six used stamps | overprinted... imperforated |
| 8) | Six mint stamps | overprinted... imperforated |
| 9) | One or two miniature sheets | mint... perforated |
| 10) | One or more miniature sheets | used... perforated |
| 11) | One or more miniature sheets | mint... imperforated |
| 12) | One or more miniature sheets | used... imperforated |
| 13) | One or more miniature sheets | mint... overprinted... perforated |
| 14) | One or more miniature sheets | used... overprinted... perforated |
| 15) | One or more miniature sheets | mint... overprinted... imperforated |
| 16) | One or more miniature sheets | used... overprinted... imperforated |

On top of all this, there are special issues of stamps on stamps, issues of the same stamps with different colours, and half of an issue overprinted later to commemorate a minor space happening.

The most obvious initial problem, therefore, is how to obtain a complete list of all the space stamps available. There is a simple answer to this, in my experience. It is impossible to obtain such a list. Even if you refer to the most efficient stamp catalogue in the country it could be 250 stamps behind by the time it sees print.

The only answer to the problem is to frequently (and by this I mean at least bi-monthly) obtain as many lists as you can from reputable stamp dealers, more and more of whom are concentrating on astro-philately. A perusal of these lists will be most revealing. Perhaps on only one list in a dozen will a certain set be shown. On many of the lists prices will vary, as will the apparent numbers of stamps in the same sets. I'll give an example of this, as it's a mite bewildering. Many of the Paraguay issues are of 8 stamps. Many catalogues only list the five low value stamps, as these are invariably cheap. I've got lists which state: 'PARAGUAY...Space set (5 values) complete'....when there are in fact 8 stamps to the set. Invariably the final three high value stamps of the set are very expensive, and the less reputable dealers, trying to make a sale, omit any mention of the high value stamps. To counter any sly move on the dealer's part (and also to give you competitive prices) try and get as many price lists and catalogues as you can. I always send for at least one dozen...and I still think the odd stamp is evading me.

Remember that the lists and catalogues you send for will not all deal specifically with space. Many dealers prepare lists every month of new issues, and it is sometimes bewildering searching through these pages for space stamps, especially when a new month has a prolific mass of new issues. A recent case in point is this advertisement I saw in a several page catalogue: - 'ALBANIA.. 'Riccione' overprint, (2 vals)'. To the uninitiated space stamp collector this is mere drivel, but a month or so before BULGARIA had also issued a 'Riccione' overprint to commemorate a space conference, and therefore I knew it was necessary to obtain the two ALBANIAN issues...and in fact they are two 1963 space stamps overprinted.

One very vexing problem is determining where to draw the line...is a stamp 'space' or isn't it? If you're a new space collector, dismiss the idea that a stamp is either space or it isn't.

There are several sets issued which feature a space motif in only one or two of the stamps. Your worthy editor, Mr. Coulson, in correspondence to me about this subject some months ago, asked me if I'd yet got the PARAGUAY space ambulance?

Never having known the existence of the stamp, I set to frantically searching my lists until I hit PARAGUAY 1964 RED CROSS (4 val). The set wasn't expensive so I sent post haste for it, and sure enough one value depicted a Dyna-Soarish space vehicle with a red cross on it. For some reason the dealers of space stamps didn't mention this stamp and haven't to date. Now this is a space stamp, but it is only symbolic of a space vehicle; it doesn't represent any known or planned ship. In fact, the artist had so little imagination that he copied a Dyna-Soar drawing. But I suggest it should definitely go in the collection.

Another stamp I hit accidentally the other day was a 1933 BELGIUM issue...a very drab, rather large stamp, an unattractive brown in colour, commemorating Prof. Piccard's stratosphere balloon flights of

that period. Weeeell, I put it in.

A few years ago FRANCE issued a stamp to commemorate Jules Verne, and the stamp, besides depicting his visage, also showed a space ship of rather primitive design. I put it in my collection.

RUSSIA has issued various such stamps from time to time; for example the 1958 Tunguz Meteor, the one which hit Siberia -- wasn't it in 1908? I say this is a space stamp.

ALBANIA has a 1964 issue (1 value) 'Phases of the Moon'...not much trouble about this one, definitely yes.

MEXICO issued a set in 1962, a 40¢ 'Century 21 Exposition', showing the Seattle Space Needle and two interposed and rather ghostly gear wheels. One list of space stamps I have features this, but I wouldn't include it. Strangely enough, though, HAITI issued a set of stamps (8) in 1962 also commemorating the Seattle Space Needle, and on top of the needle, just nosing around the top of it, was a little space craft. I included this.

The DOMINICAN REPUBLIC is a teaser. In 1959 it issued a set of stamps, perforated and imperforated and two different miniature sheets, commemorating the Melbourne Olympic Games. Overprinted on these sporting epics, which haven't the remotest connection with space, is a very small IGY symbol and the words 'Ano Geofisico 1957-58'. The IGY symbol features a little world with a Sputnik racing around it, and a thin line drawn to show the orbit. Now there are many stamps which I consider to be space stamps bearing this symbol which I've included in my collection; and although it rather goes against the grain to show a mass of perforated and imperforated stamps featuring racing yachts, to give but one example, I feel that these issues must be included. This is a very borderline case, and it depends on each individual's interpretation of how he wants his space album cluttered up with what he may consider non-essentials.

There are many other cases such as these, all of which I have an up-to-date note of, and which I can list if there is sufficient interest.

My method of dealing with the set which isn't completely space is as follows: --

ROUMANIA issued a 1963 set (6 values) 'Space stamps on stamps' commemorating the Universal Postal Union. Two of these stamps have no connection with space whatsoever; the other four are bona fide space. So I've included only the essential four, scrapped the other two (in fact I gave them to my son) and wrote in my album: "The other two stamps in this set do not feature a space motif, and have not been included".

It all boils down to the individual collector; his own whims and fancies should take preference over what any one else considers as a 'yea' or 'nay'....

I think the most important problem, and one which must be carefully considered before mounting is commenced, is in what order you are going to collate the stamps. There are several different methods, each of which has good and not so good features. Personal idiosyncracies might make a fan evolve his own personal method of displaying his stamps. But basically there are two standards, and I think it most probable that the collector will decide that one of them is for him. But which?

A) This system is to place your stamps not in country order but in "event" order. Start off with SPUTNIK I (1957) and then place in this section all the stamps issued by every country which commemorated this event. There aren't too many here, but consider VOSTOK I, Yuri Gagarin's first manned space flight. You could easily fill 20 pages in

your album with stamps from many countries commemorating this monumental event.

The major disadvantage with this layout is that your Miscellaneous Section is going to be mighty big, and secondly that you must feature many different countries in each section; for example, you'll have dozens of RUSSIA sections, because this country, the most prolific space stamp issuer, has issued stamps for every major space event it has introduced.

My own system is: --

B) Arrange your stamps via countries, and place your stamps in their order of issue.

The advantages here are that providing you know your year of issue you can speedily refer to any stamp you wish, and also you have each country as a separate entity and can quickly tabulate how many stamps that country has issued and for what event. You will have no extensive Miscellaneous Section to plod through, and if you did require to do what the A Scheme does for you (i.e. - discover what each country has done to commemorate any particular space event) you merely refer to the year of issue. There is a serious disadvantage here; RUSSIA, again, for example, issued a stamp to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the launching of Sputnik I -- unless you knew to look at RUSSIAN 1962 issues, therefore, you would miss a 1957 Sputnik I stamp. This isn't an isolated case, by any means.

There are many sub-plays, too. I personally don't like to make my album ostentatious by adding press cuttings and photographs to feature individual space events, but I know one man who does this very effectively.

Apropos the ostentation mentioned above, I feel it advisable to put some form of notage under the separate issues. My notes are usually very brief; I merely state (for example) : -

PROJECT MERCURY

Col. Glenn's Orbital Flight
1962 issue

Too much writing turns the album into a semi-documentary on space, rather than a collection of stamps...

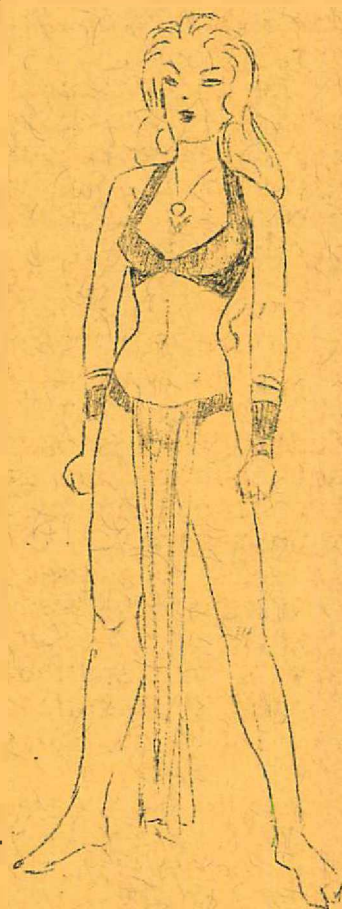
Other than saving space stamps, and American commemoratives, I don't bother too much with general issues, except for sets which take my eye. Therefore, I can't write too much about Miniature Sheets in general. I can only state that the only miniature sheet issued to my knowledge other than with a space motif is for Miss Jamaica, who was Miss World in 1963. There are probably many more miniature sheets issued, so I'll keep my comments purely on the space miniature sheet.

REG
645

Some countries specialise in miniature sheets, especially RUSSIA, PARAGUAY, EAST GERMANY, HUNGARY, LIBERIA and GHANA. Other countries do, too, but these spring to mind. I think the two most beautiful ones are EAST GERMANY's "Five Years in Space" and RUSSIA 1964 "Major Space Flights 1957-1963". They are both generally the same basic idea, that of portraying the Earth and Moon, with sputniks and rockets and astronauts and symbolic colour trails of orbits in one gory but well-planned mass over several stamps which are placed together in one block a few inches square. The RUSSIAN sheet has six stamps all of the 10k value; each stamp, if torn separately from the miniature sheet, shows one phase of one particular major space flight, and yet the cleverness of the overall design is such that if one stamp is torn off it doesn't spoil the overall scheme, and the stamp itself is a separate entity. Naturally, miniature sheets aren't designed to tear up into separate stamps.

Indeed, many miniature sheets are just one whole huge stamp which cannot be subdivided, and I really cannot see why miniature sheets are issued. Sure, it's a snazzy idea, and I said some are really beautiful, but it's a branch of philately which, if it got out of hand, could result in a farcical situation. Miniature sheets being frightfully expensive, the revenue so obtained could result in governments concentrating more and more on them and less and less on the postage stamp, which is of course where and why it all started. Miniature sheets could become propaganda machines issued by governments to stress particular achievements which they know will be impressed in people's minds -- because saving miniature sheets will eventually become as endurable a hobby as the humble postage stamp.

This is really why I am so perturbed at the lack of American issues commemorating their vast and triumphant space programme. I have almost 200 RUSSIAN space stamps (including perforated, imperforated, and overprint issues of the same stamps) and only five from America. PARAGUAY has splendidly upheld America by issuing well over 50 space stamps, all featuring American space flights and astronauts exclusively. Even some of the Iron Curtain countries have featured American astronauts and rockets, and I do sincerely feel that America has really taken a back seat in space propaganda... In future years, although people will know that America has done as much if not more than Russia in space achievement, those who don't know or who don't wish to know will certainly be conned into thinking that Russia has done the major share, with all the philatelic propaganda. Most certainly young boys, who constitute a major portion of philatelists, even if to most of them it's only a passing phase, will always regard Russia as being the primary space country, simply because all stamps from the Iron Curtain countries stress this fact. The MARINER Moon Shot should certainly have been used by America for the issue of a miniature sheet, showing the surface of the moon as taken by television cameras. Even ROUMANIA issued a large stamp showing the place names given to sites



on the other side of the moon taken by the Russian Lunik.

Frankly, the extremely meagre supply of American space stamps I think is a most serious international let-down. It's all been left to PARAGUAY, which has even issued stamps to commemorate Werner von Braun. It has been left to this South American country, many of whose population probably don't know what a satellite is, to boost American prestige in astro-philately.

In this one particular sphere of the space race, and I'm referring to Astro-philately, if you'll pardon the play on words, the Russians have licked the Americans.

QUOTES WITHOUT (MUCH) COMMENT

The following quotes are all from The Book Of Ptath, by A. E. van Vogt. They were compiled by GENE DEWESE, who occasionally comes up with this sort of thing. This might be considered an offering in blank verse.....

"His mind started from almost blankness..."

"After a long moment, his mind was still blank."

"His mind might as well have remained blank."

"Almost blankly, he went over in his mind his past attitude..."

"He stared at it blankly for a moment, then pulled it out and threw it on the ground."

"He sat there blank-brained...." /That's my favorite. RSC/

"At last, almost blankly, he climbed to his feet."

"He stood there blankly..."

"For long, the dark woman lay almost blank-minded..."

"...he was staring at her with a gathering blankness..."

"It should be getting light, Holroyd thought blankly."

"He sat blankly amazed at himself, at the very idea..."

"In an almost blank mental operation, Holroyd estimated that a kanb was one and a quarter miles."

"He said blankly, 'Have I been dreaming?'"

"But for a long, dead-blank time his painful concentration yielded nothing."

"It was a long, blank moment before he realized that the something was -- himself."

"But one man...stared in blank astonishment..."

"...L'onee had the blank sense of an exultation out of place." /??/

"Blankly, he hung there..."

"...but each must have drawn a blank response..."

"The man stared at him blankly."

After all, isn't this better than leaving a blank page? RSC

THE TREE THAT GOT IN

fiction by

JOHN PESTA

The tree would have to come down, she thought, looking out through the wide parlor window. It was a monstrosity, old and heavy-limbed, as if it had grown too tall and now bore the consequences of a twisted back. Old and useless tree...its trailing whips of leaf flailed the house on stormy nights and shook the windows, (wanting only to come inside out of the wet.)

George had agreed reluctantly with her: "And what if the sun does get in? It'd do this old room good. At least it wouldn't be the cellar it is now." With his usual half-bored expression, George had picked up his bag and gone out to the car. A week's business in Boston might brighten his cheeks. He'd probably take in the Pops with some pretty client and come home entirely oblivious to the fact that a grotesque old tree had once stood outside on the east lawn and tried occasionally to get in.

Nearly nine o'clock...the golden sun filtered through the festooned leaves making them almost transparent. They burned a fiery green. Summer in New Hampshire was still the same, would always be the same, whether she stood on the porch and looked across the way at the Weedy's old Georgian home, or sat on the stone mosaic patio that she and George had built last spring. They could cut and trim the grounds as much as they liked; it wouldn't change the breathy New Hampshire summer, aware always of new things in a rather vague sense, as it ran lazily along Cambridge Street into autumn where it stopped abruptly like a sudden rise of high weeds.

Now she stood in her parlor feeling the sun as it snugly pressed through her reflection on the window glass. Deborah was proud of herself. The figure before her was youthful: middle age hadn't taken its beggar's pittance. George was proud of her too: she knew that. It was the reason why he let her make up his mind about things like having the tree down. It was a pleasant, warm feeling to be proud of oneself.

In the parlor alone, warm and proud...it felt almost like a slow Sunday afternoon when your eyes thinly close and you fall quietly asleep on the lawn with untidy magazine sections of newspapers strewn about. The tree had grown brighter, an old emerald streaked with brown. Hardly ever had she gazed at it so closely. It was tired, as she was. It was warm. Then suddenly she was inside it among the branches, scrambling from low limb to high, fairy queen among a million leafy leprachauns. With tiny beads of perspiration standing out like lace on her silken forehead, she was witness to part of a heady New Hampshire afternoon. Thirty, thirty-five years ago? What was the feeling like to be nine and playing outside the old house? She could be gone for centuries in the many undiscovered kingdoms to be found on the wide lawn, and with no brothers or sisters she was undisputed em-

press, ruler of a thousand island empires. This was her young Saturday in a child's summer.

Dinner was early in those days. She and her parents sat around a small square table in the kitchen. Here also was a warm feeling, but somehow unlike the warmth of summer weather: rather a rippling, expanding sensation from somewhere deep inside her.

Then dinner was through. It was still daylight. But it was Saturday, the day Miss Fleming came. She always had to be reminded of her piano lesson. Somehow she never remembered, while off in her paradise of fantasies in the thick tree, that this was the day. Now she would have to change into some plain frock and loosen her brown, knotted hair and wash the grit out of her fingernails so that she might be "presentable" for Miss Fleming. Sulking was useless. After all, wasn't it at the greatest inconvenience that Miss Fleming, dear, sweet Miss Fleming, came all the way from town? But piano lessons... of what possible use were they?

By seven she had mulled herself into self-pity. The bell would ring. At the sound she would act. Hers was a set routine. Opening the large door, she greeted her instructor each week. Miss Fleming's lips rounded in surprise and ovalled the tiny figure holding back the wide portal. She half-smiled and lifted her eyebrows amid a rapid succession of foolish nods, which made her look as if she were trying to shake off the square bonnet that sat like a breadbox around her head. Tea was always offered, but rarely accepted. Choosing rather to trip off to the parlor with its white double doors and lace curtains that filled a large bay window adjacent to the piano, Miss Fleming seemed anxious to be starting the lesson.

Together teacher and pupil sat at the long keyboard. Miss Fleming would untwist her long, dark skirts to give herself more space: she might have been preparing to mount a bicycle. All her dresses were narrow and came to circles of white lace around her neck. Then they were into the

lesson, the pupil a shroud of light purple seated alongside a stern-lipped and stiff-backed teacher.

Dusk was settling outside. The lights in the parlor had already been lit, but in contrast to the bright radiance of the sun the electric bulbs were thin, counterfeit gold coins. They turned the room white and laid fuzzy shadows on the music spread over the piano. Miss Flemings would snap about C's and flats while the room became progressively colder.

The lesson lasted until eight, when the chime sounded and Miss Fleming packed up her music and slid it into a narrow, black case and left the house. Everything had changed: the parlor was dry and stiff, like parchment; the house was quiet. Her parents were in bed upstairs. Outside the tree hung like a grim, black specter without a face. A prophet,



it stood mute, looking into the house through the manuscript of darkness. Only dimly did it reflect the glow from the parlor windows. Only lazily did it stir in the waning breeze. It hung there, suspended between light and darkness, a hungry, dying, black shape of lost moments. Once, in a sudden gust of wind, its branches had leapt out and struck the windows. The tree seemed to come alive and reach out for her; seemed to try to get in; seemed to want to take her outside and have her to itself. She screamed, jumped back startled, and ran off to bed crying.



The tree was beginning to fade, here in the high sun. She caught herself standing quite still before the clear parlor glass. It was a mirror still, in which she could just barely discern the features of a rapidly fading face. There in the old tree a small girl dreamed, a shallow-faced child who once dreamed of a more glamorous life than that of wife to a Boston executive. The happy girl of years past little knew that one day she would stand alone in the parlor and watch herself sailing among the leaves. Every leaf was a kingdom, every branch a sea. Every Saturday in a long chain of Saturdays was an exploration. The face in the tree was laughing. Perhaps some night in a fierce wind it would beat against the windows of the house and try once again to get in. Then the thought struck her: today it had got in. It had captured her and pirated her away to the world of carefree fantasy and undiscovered oceans.

The face in the tree was still laughing when the workmen arrived.

SCAREY MARY
by Rob Williams

I

Scarey Mary, Scarey Mary,
Living in the cemetery.
Big eyes of red, a misshaped head,
With wire-wool hair, a vacant stare.
Dread of the dead, dread of the dead,
Scrambling through graves to get your share.

II

Scarey Mary, oh so scarey,
How your belly does grow!
Feeding on parts, like livers and hearts,
Of cadavers all in a row.

III

Mary is nimble, Mary is quick;
Mary eats things that'd make me sick.

Alfred Bester —

The Irritating Charmer

— article by — ALEXEI PANSHIN —

In his photographs, Alfred Bester looks like an amiable, well-tailored bear, but I have no doubt at all that this is misleading, simply because everything about the man is misleading. Bester is a writer of brilliant stories put together in what sometimes seems a haphazard fashion. He is a writer of brilliant stories who has written only two first-rate stories since 1956 -- and no worthwhile stories at all since 1959. He is a man who has said flatly that he is capable of honesty, but who is oddly given to saying things for the effect they will have. He is bright, sometimes overwhelmingly so, and ignorant. He is a writer of science fiction, and a critic of it, and a man who doesn't read it. He is, above all, a man who prefers charm to intelligence.

(I say "Alfred Bester" is one thing and another. This isn't accurate -- I've never even met the man. I'm really speaking of what he has shown of himself in his writing, and whether you prefer to apply what I'm saying to the man or solely to his writing is up to you. I don't care to make the separation, but if you do, go ahead. The basis for what I'm saying is derived from his three novels, two story collections, his book reviews, and his statements in *THE SCIENCE FICTION NOVEL* and Robert Mills' recent anthology, *THE WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION*. Forget about his articles in *Holiday*.)

Bester made his preference for charm clear in his 1957 University of Chicago lecture, and it seems to explain a lot about the man. He advised his listeners that if it came to a choice between charm and intelligence, they should by all means settle for charm. He might well have added, if it comes to a choice between charm and integrity, by all means choose charm, because any firm reliance on the efficacy of charm means a willingness to let integrity go by the board to at least some extent.

THE WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION, an anthology edited by Robert P. Mills, was based on a strong idea. He had a number of well-known writers choose a favorite story they had written and include a short note as to why they chose it. Bester chose no story. Instead he included a number of his unwritten story ideas, saying about his stories, "I don't like any of them. They're all disappointments to me. This is why I rarely reread my old manuscripts; they make me sick. And when, occasionally, I come across a tough that pleases me, I'm convinced that I never wrote it - I believe that an editor added it." This is a dandy statement to analyze. How much of it does Bester actually mean?

Does he really mean that he thinks an editor puts in all the things that please him in looking at the stories later? Ho, ho, ho. Not for a bloody minute, and if you did take him seriously Bester would probably take you for a fool.

When he says that his stories are disappointments, does he mean that there is a disparity between the idea he had originally and the story he finally wrote? I think this is what he probably means, and it is bound to be true, but if this is what he does mean, there seems to be an assumption that the story is inferior as well as different. I doubt that Bester seriously believes that.

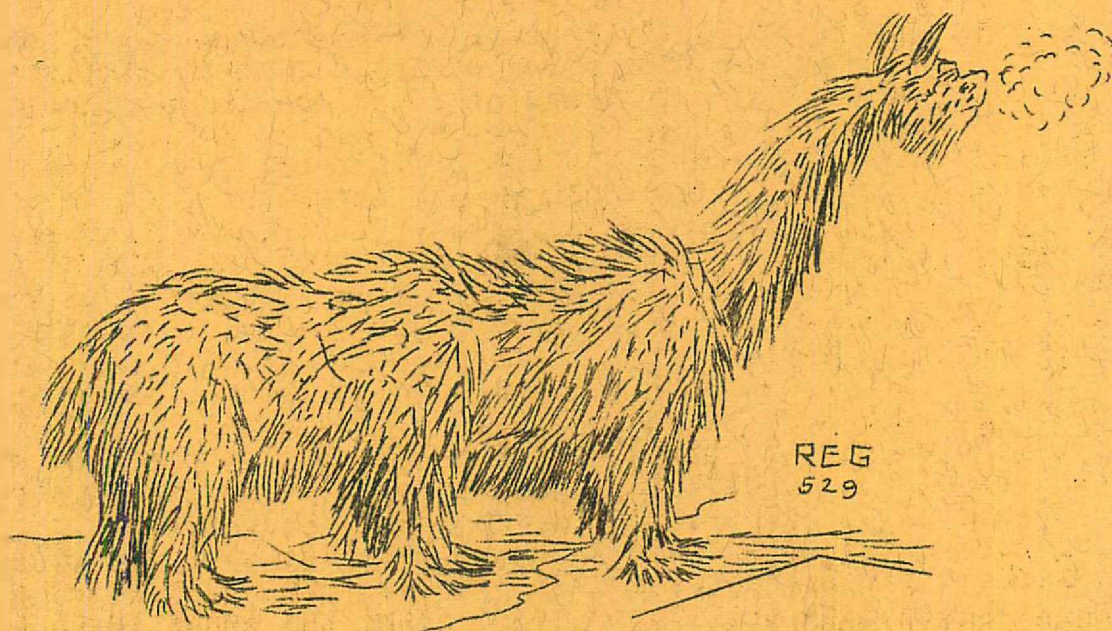
Does he mean that his stories are disappointments, that he actually does find them so bad that they really do make him sick? I find that hard to believe. It is true that his stories tend to be careless (Bester has complained of the detail the H.L. Gold used to demand in the stories that he bought), but even with their faults most of them are pretty good work. Is Bester unaware that they are admired, and with some good reason? I doubt it.

Bester is on-stage, talking, and where is the real Bester underneath? He demonstrates what seems to be humility by refusing to nominate a story as his best. He thinks them all bad. But what does he offer instead? A bunch of mumble sheets, no better or worse than anybody else's. Everybody knows how common ideas are, story ideas included, but a good story is a rare thing, and these ideas are not up to the level, as they stand, of any story Bester has written. Is it humility? Is it arrogance? What I think is that ultimately Bester doesn't care whether or not you believe what he says, both in statements like the one above, and in his fiction. He is simply trying to spin a good line, trying to be charming, and if you are sensitive to his pose of the moment, you, too, will in all likelihood be charmed. He isn't being either humble or arrogant. He has simply gone off on a weak tangent and instead of being charming, he is merely irritating.

In his University of Chicago lecture Bester said that for a period of ten years he hadn't read any science fiction to speak of (a typically charming admission, particularly since it was an understatement). His book review column in F&SF showed clearly that it was an understatement, that Bester was really not familiar with modern science fiction at all. This would explain the minor errors that plagued his column (i.e., James "A" Schmitz; calling Triangle, by Isaac Asimov, a collection of "twenty"-year-old novels, which it wasn't by half) as well as some of his odder judgments. It would take a man who has read almost no science fiction in the last twenty years to say that SLAN "holds up amazingly well" (I realize that this in itself may seem something of an odd criticism, but has anybody who might call me on it read SLAN lately?). And as moderate as my regard is for Andre Norton, to say that she is "a science fiction author of only mediocre attainment" is not true. Some of her stories, including the first one she wrote and the first one I ever read -- STAR MAN'S SON -- are quite good. I simply wonder if Bester has read them.

(In passing -- his insularity, most uncharming, extended to more than simply science fiction. To say "Oakie", even about James Blish's series, even absent-mindedly, seems to bespeak an ignorance of that part of the United States that has the misfortune to lie outside of New York City.)

Bester, in his book reviews, was not an antagonistic critic, but people tended to act as though he were to the point that Bester was plaintive ("who, me?") about the situation in his farewell column. I think this stemmed from Bester's tone. Perhaps because of his unfamiliarity with science fiction Bester tried to give his judgments a seeming measure of objectivity by writing in the first person plural. Theodore Sturgeon began his reviews for Venture in the third person



singular, but found he couldn't keep it up, and dropped it shortly. Bester didn't drop it, but continued to write "we this" and "we that" up to the very end. What Bester achieved was not an impression of objectivity (objectivity in book reviews is impossible; the most lively and fruitful method, it seems to me, is to make your prejudices clear at the outset, and then fire away) -- his "we" seemed either papal or regal, and was not charming in the least, but irritating.

Bester's lack of grounding in science fiction is clear in his novels, too. *THE STARS MY DESTINATION* and *THE DEMOLISHED MAN* derive from the science fiction of the late thirties and from modern Manhattan, not at all from modern sf. In both novels Bester is writing of heroes and villains and large one-owner corporations. These are notions that were current in 1935 pulp magazine fiction (the owner of the corporation is the real post-Civil War Robber Baron like Rockefeller and Carnegie, the man who built ruthlessly and made millions. He was adopted by the Marxists and long after he died he was handed over to Depression era liberals who were quite ready to believe in him. For a long time he was a stock element in the pulps -- this is Ben Reich and economics of *THE DEMOLISHED MAN*). The modifications that Bester made in these stock elements were not those worked out over the years in magazine science fiction. Bester hadn't read any. Instead he brought in the frenetic Manhattan world and used it heavily in developing his characters, plot, background, the whole atmosphere of his books: For example, the gutter jargon of Gully Foyle in *THE STARS MY DESTINATION* is an adaptation of the Madison Avenue jargon Bester uses in his brilliant and careless mundane novel, *WHO HE?* This is what struck us so strongly about *THE DEMOLISHED MAN* -- it was fresh because Bester was bringing in a new and original and outside approach. He repeated himself in *THE STARS MY DESTINATION*, did the same things all over again, and this may be why it was a less successful piece for both him and us.

It is no denigration of Bester's achievement to point out its source, and that is Manhattan and 1935 sf, not the science fiction that has been produced since. Bester has said that while he was writing *THE DEMOLISHED MAN* he was convinced he had a dog on his hands, and I think

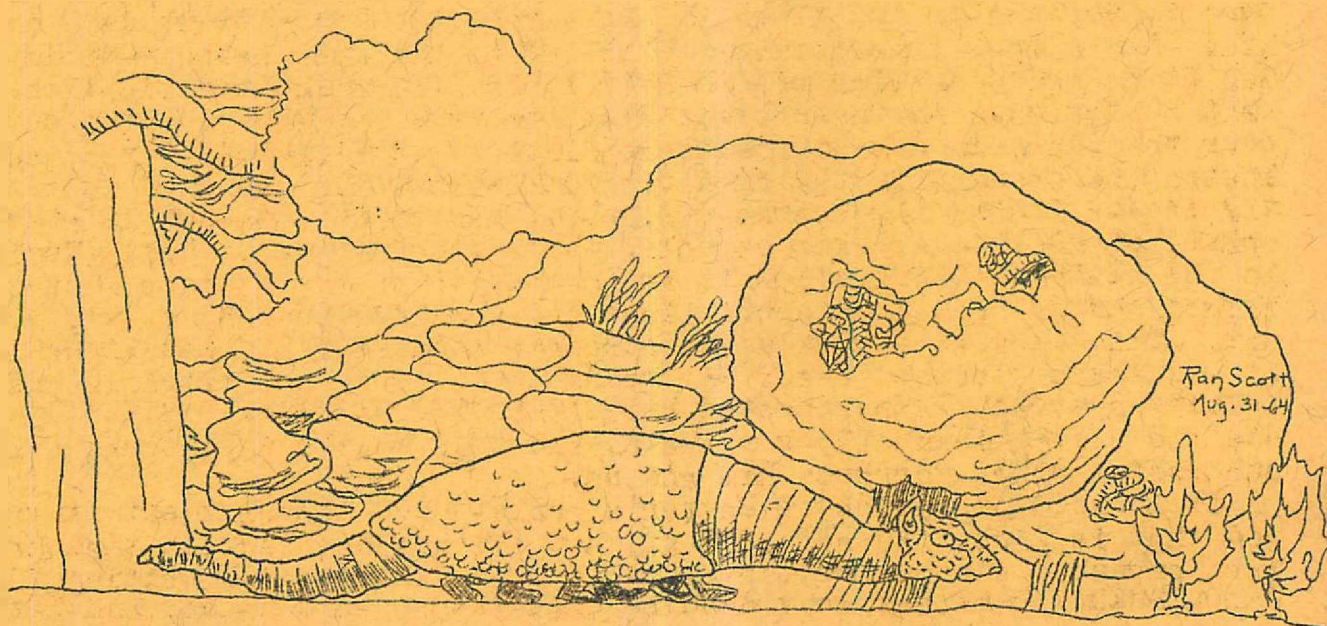
he is being at least partly honest. He had been away a long time and he didn't know how the pros were working out their problems these days so he made up his own solutions and found to his surprise that they were more than acceptable.

At his best, as in THE DEMOLISHED MAN and a good number of his short stories, Bester has combined charm and intelligence. At his worst, as in "The Flowered Thundermug" and "They Don't Make Life Like They Used To" -- two stories in Bester's new collection THE DARK SIDE OF THE EARTH -- he has tried simply to be charming and let intelligence go hang. It's a case, again, of the poseur who talks himself out onto a conversational limb and then has nowhere to go. The trouble with Bester is that too often he has made a choice between charm and intelligence, between charm and complete integrity, when there was no need to make a choice, and he has chosen wrongly. To be charming at all times is inevitably to be dishonest and dishonesty can kill a story as quickly as weak plot, bad writing, or anything else.

Bester admits he is lazy (another charming admission). If he can get himself off his duff, I'd like to see him write stories again. I'd like to see him be brilliant and charming and honest, and if he has to sacrifice anything, let it be the first two. If he does that, perhaps he can write something that doesn't make him sick in the long run. He has pronounced himself unhappy with science fiction, and not entirely without reason. Let him write something else. But I would like to see him write something other than Holiday profiles.

Are you up to it, Mr. Bester?

"Meinertzhagen then made his way back to the British lines. On the way a German askari fired at him from only a few paces range, not understanding the flag of truce. The bullet went through Meinertzhagen's helmet, touching his hair. "I went for him with my flag of truce and rammed him in the pit of the stomach, which doubled him up. I then wrenched the rifle out of his hand and struck him with his own bayonet. I was furious with him." /from On To Kilimanjaro, by Brian Gardner. We could do with more men like Capt. Meinertzhagen./



SILVER SECONDS

COLUMN FROM

Gene Deweese

Hollywood seems to have discovered a new word: Laser.

Now, if only they would learn what it means, things could work out pretty well.

As it is, take as an example, THE TIME TRAVELERS. It starts out with the substandard stf-movie family: Three scientists, consisting of one father figure (Preston Foster), one dashing-type hero figure (Phil Carey), and one figure (Merry Anders); and the stooge who just happened to wander into the lab to provide comedy relief.

The three scientists are working on a time viewer, trying to get a look into the future. It's not working too well, so they step up the power. This doesn't work, so as a last resort they attempt to "speed up the cycling of the lasers".

Cycling the lasers more rapidly not only gets them a look into the future, it blows out a few circuits and opens a "door into time". They had been trying to look only 6 hours into the future, but they end up with a door to the year 2071. (Lasers, especially cycled lasers, can be tricky little devils!)

Then, in order to provide a plot for the story, all four of them, led, of course, by the clot-headed stooge, go gamboling thru the door into the future--an apparently post-atomic future, complete with mutants. They are immediately chased by the mutants--they apparently have an instinctual aversion to mutants, else how would they know that the mutants are evil and out to get them and that they must therefore run like hell and hide in a cave?

Once in the cave, they meet the good guys and their androids. After chasing off the mutants, the good guys point a machine at the back wall of the cave. A hole appears and enlarges into a circular opening big enuf to walk through--no molten metal, just an opening, like Moses and the Red Sea. In explaining the operation of the machine, the head good guy (or girl, in this instance) say that it "alters the molecules of the rock wall, shrinking and rearranging them". The hero type scientist perks up and says, "Oh, like a laser!" And the explainer says, "Yes, quite similar." (Do you suppose Moses used a laser? Or perhaps the burning bush on Mount Sinai...?)

The good guys, it appears, are the last remnants of the human race. Earth is uninhabitable, and they are planning to go to Alpha Centauri IV in suspended animation, tended by their androids. Their underground city is, of course, constantly being attacked by mutants. The remainder of the movie is largely devoted to a tour of the city: the hydroponics section, the android factory, etc. (In the android factory, the various pieces of android are chuffling by on conveyor belts, just like a radio assembly line. Even an eyeball tray.)

The ending? Well, I'm not really sure. The mutants manage to destroy the spaceship before it can take off. The four 20th Century-

ites, however, have managed to rebuild, from memory, their time viewer-cum-door-maker. The four, plus a dozen or so of the futurites, manage to duck back into the present. But they are apparently living at an extremely accelerated pace; not only that, but they got back to before they left, so they see the four of themselves, standing in the laboratory, just commencing the experiment. Since they are living at a faster rate, they can't communicate with them nor can they move anything on the machine.

So what do they do? They look at the machine's dials, note that at this instant, it is set to 100,000 years in the future (when things started sparking back at the beginning of the movie, they did a lot of reckless cranking of dials.) They then go through the machine, presumably 100,000 years in the future. And that is the last we see of them.

But, unfortunately, not the last of that type of movie.

There is one movie that I would like to recommend, though. Despite its title (THE YEAR (or was it DAY?) MARS INVADED EARTH, and despite the cast (Kent Taylor), it is really a passable movie. It follows the standard plot line most of the way thru, but is reasonably well done. And the ending, for once, took me almost completely by surprise.

We have a haunted electric range.

This morning, Bev had just turned off the oven and one of the burners when she yelled at me in the next room: "The stove is burbling at me!" Or words to that effect. I came in and listened. Sure enuf, it was. Not the usual grunking and clinking noises it makes when it is heating up or cooling off.

I listened more closely, and could distinguish a voice amidst the burbling.

Well, I remember that our record player amplifier once picked up a ham radio station a couple blocks away. But an electric stove?

I opened the oven. Nothing.

The storage space under the oven. Still nothing.

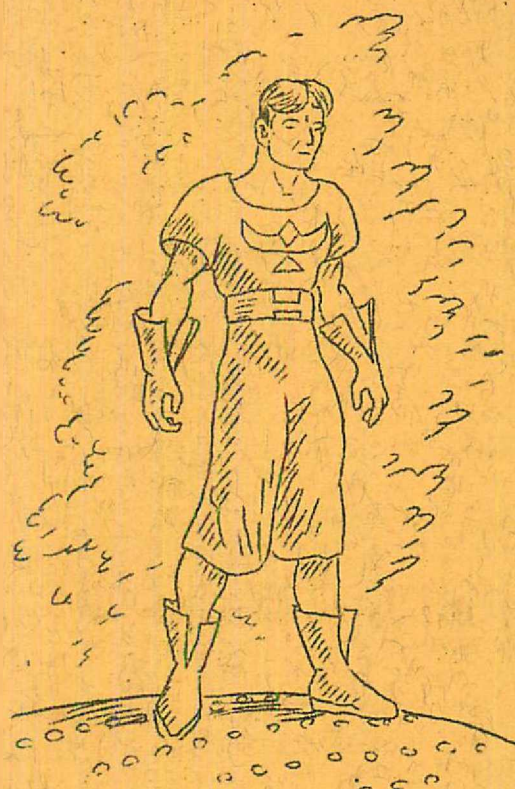
But the burbling was still there, with the voice.

So I put an ear next to the burner...and realized it wasn't coming from the stove after all. It was coming from above the stove!

You see, there's this inverted funnel shape above the stove which is apparently meant to carry away smoke, etc., and it goes up a couple feet, then thru a horizontal tunnel a few inches in diameter, and finally out thru a small opening in the wall to the outside. I went out into the yard; there was the ghost; A woman mowing the yard next door, with a small child following her around gabbling. The noise apparently came funneling in thru the smoke disposer...

Another good mystery down the drain--or up the flue.

Saw another double feature today, one, quite surprisingly, worth seeing. THE HORROR OF IT ALL is a British horror-comedy-musical with all British types except for Pat Boone. Not hilarious, perhaps, but amusing. It's all about American Boone who is trying to marry this British girl and has come to "meet her family", which turns out to be somewhat Charles Addamsish. Such as the cousin, who looks a little like Vampira and whose favorite drink is a bloody mary and favorite dessert, blood pudding. And the uncle, who has just recently invented the electric light and moving photographs. (The year is approximately 1964, by the way.)



The other half is WITCHCRAFT, another British one, this one starring Lon Chaney as the loud but rather ineffectual head of a witches' coven. In this one, an 800-year-old grave yard is being disturbed by bulldozers that are clearing the land for a housing development. And one of the graves disturbed belongs to a 17th Century witch who was buried alive and has apparently remained that way ever since. She proceeds to show the modern coven members what a real witch can do--they don't make 'em like they used to!

In conjunction with this, the ticket taker passes out to each patron, a "witch deflector". Can't you just see the witches careening off you?

Recommended reading: A FINE AND PRIVATE PLACE by Peter S. Beagle, Delta Books. If you like Robert Nathan and/or OUR TOWN, you should like this one.

Its main characters are: 1) Mr. Rebeck, who lives in a mausoleum in a Yorkchester cemetery (it has an Italian section, a Polish section, a German section, etc., because it is "nonsectarian but nervous".). Mr. Rebeck is brought food and occasional newspapers and magazines by 2) a raven who doesn't trust birds and who once spotted a seagull flying around over Iowa looking for the ocean. 3) Michael Morgan, a ghost whose body was just buried there, and whose wife is now on trial for his murder. 4) Laura Durand, another ghost. She provides half of the love interest by getting involved with Michael. The rest of the love interest is 5) Mrs. Klapper, who is alive and continually visits her husband's crypt and gets to know Mr. Rebeck. Rebeck, apparently is the only person who can see ghosts and talk with them, and play chess with them, too. The raven, however, is a thoroly cynical creature and certainly the most interesting character. For instance, when someone mentions that it's not going to rain because the birds are singing, the raven launches into a tirade against the reliability of birds: "...one morning it was all gray, like it was going to storm any minute. But I hear the little birds singing and I think, Nah, my feathered friends wouldn't be out there singing if it was going to rain. They know what they're doing. So I went out to get breakfast, and as soon as I was out in the open it rained like hallelujah, brethren. Just sitting up there, waiting until it could get a good shot at me. And those feathered bastards sang right through it."

Or on the subject of the lost seagull: "Everytime he saw water he'd go flying down toward it, yelling, 'I found it! I found it!' The poor sonofabitch was looking for the ocean, And every time he saw water, he thought that was the ocean. He didn't know anything about lakes or ponds..." And finally, when they asked the raven what he did to help the seagull, "What the hell can you do for a seagull in Iowa? I just flew away."

STRANGE FRUIT



Received and noted: DINKY BIRD 12 (Berman), RAMBLING ROAMER (Jackson), MENACE OF THE LASFS (Pelz), THE VENTURE (hmmmm...Bucklin?), SEMICONDUCTOR PRODUCTS NEWSLETTER (Klein), REPLIES, RESPONSES, REACTIONS (Mann & Kusske).

DORIE #1, BASILISK (Nate Bucklin, P.O. Box 4, Dockton, Washington 98018) Both free, I guess. BASIL is a one-shot; DORIE is quarterly. BASIL is readable; DORIE is partly so (the mimeographed part). BASIL was undoubtedly a great deal of fun to put out; it isn't so much fun for the casual reader, except for James Wright's confession of how he goosed the N3F by stating that he was a Communist and what were they going to do about it? (What did they do? They panicked; what did you expect? I vaguely recall reading his letter and thinking that they were really getting all sorts of nuts in the club now, but I can't say I was terribly worried about it.) DORIE seems mainly devoted to the editor's comments about whether or not love is pro-survival; evidently Nate has never encountered the fact that romantic love is a relatively late invention which is still confined to a minority of mankind. And a card says that VENTURE may be had from Nate for 20¢; it was put out by a high school journalism class, and looks pretty typical.

COGNATE #6 (Rosemary Hickey, 2020 Mohawk, Chicago, Ill. 60614) I'm not sure how this is distributed, but you can always write and ask. There's no price listed, so if you get it at all, it's free. This is partly comments on OMPA mailings, and partly an account of the Hickey's vacation.

QUERTY #1 (Mats Pe Wikner, Meteorvägen 11B, Rymdbyn, Skälby, Sweden - quarterly - no price listed) I must say that Meteor Street is a very fannish address. This is an international poetry zine; most of the material is in Swedish, but there are a few English verses and at least 1 German one. More material in English is requested for the next issue; go, you poets. Reproduction is excellent; I can't tell about the quality of the material.

S F TIMES, 422, 423 (James V. Taurasi, Sr., 119-46 27th. Ave., College Point, New York 11354) There's more professional news for them to print this time. H. Beam Piper is dead, Otto Binder is revived, ANALOG is going digest size, and the Hugo investigating committee needs to be investigated (I guess that last is more of an editorial than a news item). Oh yes; this is monthly and costs 15¢. It does keep you up fairly well on pro news.

DIFFERENTIAL #27, 28; FANCOM 2 (Paul Wyszowski, Box 3372, Station C, Ottawa 3, Ont., Canada - the first is irregular and 3¢; the latter is irregular and free). DIFF is theoretically "food for thought" -- tho I see he's not above descending to long puns on occasion. FANCOM is -- logically -- comments on fandom. Both are single-sheet productions; both are well done (if there's one thing I can't stand, it's a rare fanzine).

Here I have a large mess of stuff which came from Al Lewis, 1825 Green-

field Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90025 - no price or schedule. Most of it seems to concern the Hugo Awards, the WSFS, and the nasty old London Committee, and it's written by Lewis, Ron Ellik, Harlan Ellison, and George Scithers. Now I am used to convention fans behaving like middle-aged clubwomen, in being more concerned with proper organization and in jockeying for influential positions than in getting a job done. I am even used to Harlan Ellison behaving like a 6-month-old infant whose bottle has just been snatched from him whenever he fails to get something he wants. But this mess promises to be pretty sickening even by those standards. Harlan has always been an arrogant little pipsqueak, but literary success seems to have gone to his head. For the record, kiddies, several years ago a few fans decided that conventions needed a continuous guiding hand, and set up the World Science Fiction Society. This group produced two notable lawsuits, created as much bad feeling as anything in fandom before or since, and I was under the impression that it had been successfully demolished by the 1961 and 1962 conventions. Apparently not; here are several people demanding that London follow the WSFS rules regarding Hugos, as amended by the rules rammed through at the Pacificon business session. Some of them even presume to tell us what "the overwhelming sentiment of fandom" is -- drawing their conclusions from convention business sessions which the overwhelming mass of fandom never attends. Scithers remains rational; while unhappy over the London decisions, he points out that it is their convention, and they have the right to run it as they see fit. (Obviously, fans also have a right to disagree with the way it's run, but calling up the London Committee Chairman at 5:00 AM, or threatening to withhold the Hugo awards, is exceeding those rights by a good long way. Harlan says that he never said that he was getting the awards withheld -- but he never denies having tried to do so. He also says "ingratitude thy name is fandom" without specifying what he's ever done that fandom should be grateful to him. I certainly don't recall anything, and I've been in fandom as long as he has. Grateful for folding his fanzine without returning subscribers' money or contributors' material? Grateful for collecting reprint rights to numerous convention speeches and then never publishing them? Or just grateful for turning pro and getting out of our hair for a few years? I'm quite willing to admit my gratitude for the last-named.

Look, fellas. Either allow the London Committee to run the convention its own way, the same as US committees do, or take that "World" out of your damned WSFS and make it the National Science Fiction Society. And quit trying to pretend that you're the Voice of Fandom, because you're not. Nobody speaks for fandom. I know it's hard to play power politics in an anarchy, but that's what you're up against, and I dislike the idea of organizing it just to make things easier for you.

STYRACK #73 (Ron Bennett, 52 Fairways Drive, Forest Lane, Harrogate, Yorkshire, England - monthly - 6 for 35¢, or 6 for 70¢, airmail -- US Agent, me) News of British fans and professionals, plus some US fan news. I enjoy it. Hmm. Here's #72, hiding down in the stack. Same comments, except there is also an editorial on whether or not SKY is insular. What's the difference? Buy an insular fanzine; it will make you feel intellectual.

KIPPLE #71, 72 (Ted Pauls, 1448 Meridene Drive, Baltimore, Maryland 21212 - irregular but frequent - 20¢) Ted is still rolling along with reasoned and generally reasonable discussions of philosophy and politics. Very well done.

N3F Mags (Janie Lamb, Route 1, Box 364, Heiskell, Tennessee 37754 - dues \$2 per year) TNFF gives official club news; reports from the directors and the 365 bureau heads and suchlike, plus a few ads. TIGHTBEAM is the letterzine wherein members vent their spleen on all sorts of things. (It is also edited by a different member each time -- on a voluntary basis -- which I suddenly think is a shame. Stan Woolston edited my letter into a much better missive than I originally wrote, and I'd enjoy having him as editor all the time.) Numerous other N3F publications arrive during a year, incidentally.

POT POURRI #34, 35, 36, 37 (John Berry, 31 Campbell Park Ave., Belmont, Belfast 4, Northern Ireland - quarterly - no price listed) Berry is noted in fandom for hilarious accounts of military and police affairs, and for his "Goon" stories, which many fans feel are superb and which I can take or leave. Quite a few pages here are devoted to fan visits, a subject that I feel can be handled quite adequately in a couple of sentences or at most a paragraph. However, some people like them. Berry does spice his accounts up a bit with descriptions of old Irish ruins -- but then, one can write too much about George Charters, too. My favorite in this lot is the short biography of Frederick Hervey in #36; England produces such fascinating oddballs. Must be the climate. Any fan worthy of the name should read at least some Berry material.

THE SCARR #6 (George Charters, 3 Lancaster Ave., Bangor, Northern Ireland - quarterly - free for comment) This seems the successor of HYPHEN as Britain's leading humor fanzine. It isn't any better than HYPHEN, but it appears oftener and the material is quite good. George is a fellow-lover of that species of bad writing known as "kitsch" -- a word I learned from Don Thompson and which I frequently misspell. Whatever it's called, it's funny, and George usually has generous samples in SCARR.

ZINGARO #3 (Mark Irwin, 1747 Elmwood Dr., Highland Park, Illinois 60035 - 25¢ - quarterly) Mark apologizes for something which made me very happy; a promised con report was omitted from this issue. He requests material; this issue is all editor-written. Mostly reviews: books, fanzines, movies, tv.

DOUBT #1 (Graham M. Hall, c/o Tewkesbury Register, 8 High St., Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, England - no price or schedule) It used to be that British fanzines were either extremely good or extremely bad. This is sort of in the middle; better than many US first issues, but not outstanding (tho that's a lovely cover). In fact, Brian McCabe's artwork may well be the best thing about the mag. Material is primarily fiction, some of which is worth reading.

GRYPHON #14 (John Foyster, 4 Edward St., Chadstone, SE 10, Victoria, Australia - monthly - for trade or comment) John seems to derive more pleasure out of printing utterly pointless material than anyone else I can think of. Of course, there is pointed material as well, but most of his regular writers are addicted to the use of as many large words as possible to describe any given event or idea. (This is a very popular means of expression -- look at all the A. Merritt fans -- it just isn't popular with me.)

DOUBLE BILL #11 (Bill Mallard, 214 Mackinaw Ave., Akron, Ohio 44313 - irregular - normally 25¢; this issue is larger and costs 50¢) This is by far the best fanzine received this month, but I'm out of room, so I'll just say it's good and you should get an issue sometime.

grumbles

Walter Breen, Box 1032, Berkeley 1, California

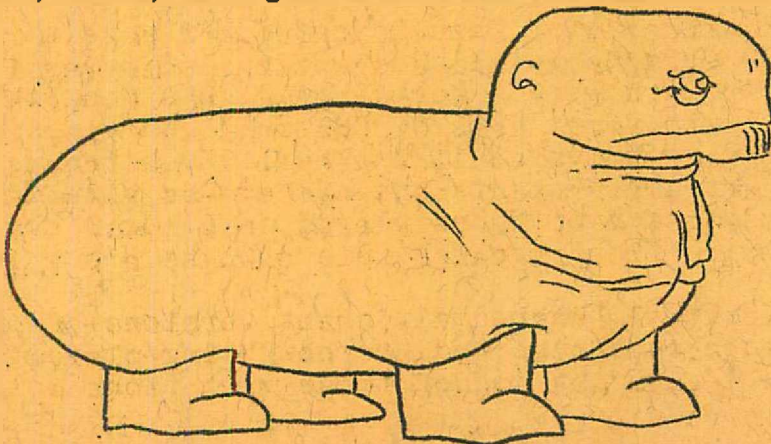
About the most convincing test one could make of the proposition that Hugos are of any importance whatever, let alone that they are any proof of lasting value in a piece of stf, is to read over the roster of items which have actually won Hugos in each category. BT had some scathing comments in Pleiades Pimples (Feb. 1960, reprinted in Void 22) after doing just that. A few publishers seem to have gotten the idea that an author who has won one or more Hugos can use the fact as a selling point on the dust jackets of his next few books. But this sort of blurb is of undeterminable value, like almost every other kind of blurb.

Calling Phil Dick's recent novels "van Vogt" type raises interesting questions. AEvV seems to have specialized in character development of a very peculiar kind: a seemingly ordinary person eventually finds out that he is Someone Very Special After All. (The most notorious instance being Asylum, the story which turned many people away from AEvV...) Stories in which many groups of characters are followed episodically, or which involve dozens of themes and subplots, are fairly common in mundane and even in stf were never limited to AEvV, Avram Davidson, Sturgeon, Heinlein, and many others have used this technique; Phil Dick has brought it to extremes. But have any of these people been using the "Common Man is Revealed as the Grand Galactic" kind of character development?

Ace originally published JUNKIE many years ago as half of a double-back item (the flop side being something called NARCOTIC AGENT, which I couldn't push myself to read beyond about page twelve); the author's name was then given as "William Lee" and the ms. seems to have been somewhat longer than in the present higher-priced edition. It's a realistic and mercilessly honest account of what a drug addict's life is like. I personally think that this book has probably kept some young people away from narcotics rather than attracted them to such drugs. If so, Burroughs has performed--however unwillingly or unwittingly--a social service.

The BT 3-chapter jokes you refer to are Lez-ettes, of c.

If Ace's best new titles are slightly better than their worst reprints, Buck, I might ask if you've read THE BLOODY SUN lately?



[The fact that other people have written complicated stories does not refute the fact that overcomplication is associated with van Vogt. For that matter, a few other people have written fantasies

about seemingly ordinary people who turned out to be Someone Very Special; I recall quite a few by either Hans Christian Andersen or The Brothers Grimm, or possibly both. In fact, the device is more often associated with them than with van Vogt, though I'll admit he used it to excess.

Okay; I exaggerated in stating that Ace's worst reprints were only slightly worse than their

best new books; this is an insult to Andre Norton, among others. Of course, I was considering reprints from recent magazines, since that was what the original discussion was about, and this would rule out all the creaky classics by Hall, Cummings, and Coblenz. But even so, it was an exaggeration; some of Ace's originals are excellent. (Even so, their reprints from recent magazines are, on the average, better).

RSC

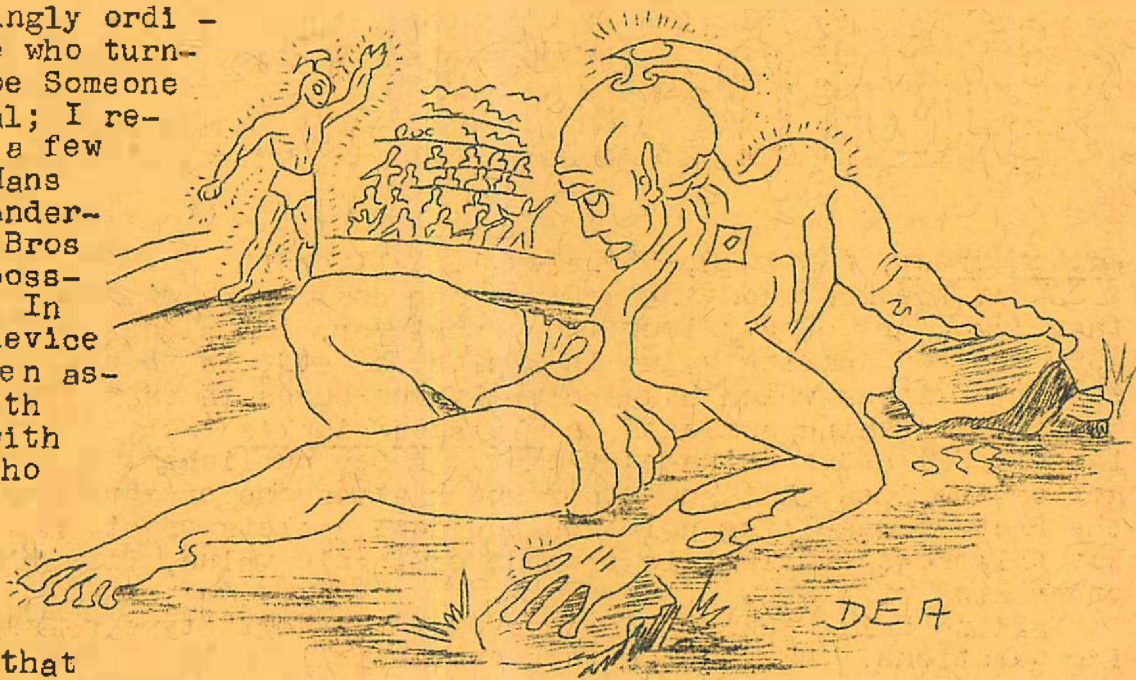
Donald L. Miller, 12315 Judson Rd., Wheaton, Md., 20906

I would also like to take issue with a couple of statements you made in your review of The Gamesman #1. First, to set the record straight, membership in the N3F is not required for membership in the Games Bureau. Bureau membership is open to anyone with an interest in board games, regardless of whether or not they belong to or have belonged to the N3F. In addition, membership is free.

Secondly, you missed the point concerning the bit I "tacked on" about possible changes in the Jetan rules. The Jetan article by Geo. Fergus dealt with the original version of Jetan, as described by Edgar Rice Burroughs in THE CHESSMEN OF MARS. This dates only from the early 1920's. The rules to the original version are complete, and are playable.

But every board game which has ever been invented has gone through an evolutionary process after its original conception. The version of Chess played today in the Western world, for example, has gone through many different stages since the first game of Shatranj was played hundreds of years ago, and it may evolve still further. Even today, many persons feel that changes and improvements are needed--as witness Capablanca's sponsorship of a version of Chess played on a 10x10 board. Would you refrain from playing Chess because rule changes are still being suggested?

In addition, there are several hundred different versions of our Western Chess which have been suggested and are now being played by gamesmen throughout the world. Every one of these variations is a



game in its own right, and several of them have weaned some of my Chess companions from the regular game, thus joining Go, Shogi, and Wari in robbing me of Chess opponents. In fact, I would prefer a good game of Shogi (Japanese Chess) to a game of Western Chess!

Jetan, as described by Edgar Rice Burroughs, is a game in its own right, and can be played as such. However, it is a relatively young game, and, as such, still has a few "rough edges". By throwing out a few ideas on possible changes, we are trying to speed the evolutionary process a bit. We hope that the players will give the variations a full trial, and will make their findings known to the rest of the players. If we can achieve a consensus in favor of a change, then Jetan II will be born. If not, at least a few variations will be entered in the repertory, and "Fairy Chess" will have a new companion!

[Sorry; I figured club membership was necessary for participation in club-sponsored activities. If not, so much the better.

Granted; anyone can think up a chess variation--in fact, that's what Burroughs did to begin with. However, not one in a hundred chess players takes these variations seriously, while I got the impression that Jetan was in for a complete overhaul. RSC/

John Trimble, 5571 Belgrave Avenue, Garden Grove, California, 92641

This is probably being mailed off much too late to catch the upcoming Yandro, but I'll make a stab anyway. Maybe you can put it in the nextish.

Being in the process of Co-Chairing a Westercon at present, and in the position of looking toward a possible L.A. Worldcon bid in the not-too-distant future, I read the articles by George Scithers and F.M. Busby with much interest.

I cannot agree more with George on the idea that the WSFS uninc rules should be followed as closely as possible by the committees who bid for and run the Worldcons. With him, I deplore the bending and breaking that several past (and, of course, the present) committees have engaged in. The only way that the sort of informal common law system such as the WSFS constitution and by-laws can function is by weight of precedent. Most of the precedent that has been set so far (since Pittcon), has been toward ignoring the rules, except where compliance with them has suited the committee.

And this situation, of course, plays right into F.M. Busby's thesis; we've had too much bending and breaking, and the Syracuse in '66 bid will be the final straw. This is a strong possibility, but I don't think that it is all so terribly probable that we can't consider another outcome in lunacy.

There is a possibility that since there is a provision in the WSFS rules for advancing the rotation schedule by dropping one sector, the Syracuse bid--if successful--might be the exception that proved the rule which we're always hearing about. If Syracuse was successful in its bid, and then proceeded to abide by all the WSFS rules, this proving exception hypothesis might come true. I realize that this is probably an overly optimistic attitude...but, I guess I'm incurable.

Now as to the whys of what Los Angeles support there is for the Syracuse bid, that's a matter pretty well divorced from any hypothesizing I've done above. Most of the actifen in L.A. have become personally acquainted with Dave & Ruth Kyle and Jay Kay Klein through attending cons, and from the formers' visits to Southern California al-

most yearly. We know these people, and you kinda get to feeling that you can trust people you know and like. And the Syracuse bunch has been pushing their bid; they're animated about it.

The mid-West, on the other hand, can't seem to make up its mind. One minute it was Cleveland who was going to bid, then it was Detroit. And then neither of them seemed very interested. Now Cleveland claims rip-roaring interest again. And, after the several contradictory stories about why Jason did or did not want to continue making the Hugos, etc., many of us don't feel too trusting toward Mr. Jason. And we don't know too much about his committee, except that one member of it is in the Army now.

This is not to disparage the Cleveland group; they may be fine people who'd put on a real going con. But, so far there doesn't seem to be much sign of it. In fact, there didn't seem to be anything but apathy from the mid-West until the Kyles and Klein announced their intention of "spicing things up a bit".

Dave Kyle is well-known and liked in England, and that's where the voting will be held. Now, if I were the Cleveland bunch, I'd sure have started before this to publicize my bid, and to build up as much support among Anglofen and Amerifen who'll be making the trip over to the con as I could possibly build.

Good luck to both groups. And Los Angeles in '67 or '68, depending.

[I'm sure that rules and regulations help to make for a smooth-running organization. But I have yet to hear a good reason why fandom should be either organized or smooth-running. I'm mildly in favor of the Rotation Plan, but scrapping it won't kill the conventions, or fandom. I see no reason whatever why conventions can't pick whatever Hugos they damned well please. It's the award of the convention. If some authors would like to have it made into Big Business, that's their tough luck. If they can make a profit out of our award, more power to them, but their profits don't entitle them to decide who gets the award. (I know; you didn't say anything about the Hugo. I'm still annoyed that Harlan could talk so many suckers into going along with him; it's a result of these delusions I get sometimes that fans really are different from mundane status-seekers. It's nothing to do with your letter.) RSC/

Jay Kay Klein, 219 Sabine St., Syracuse, N.Y., 13204

George's account of convention continuity, Hugo awards, and site-picking is exceptionally valuable--because so little has appeared on the subject. I certainly go along with the thesis that rules and procedures adopted by an open vote of membership form the basis for worldcon continuity. Really, the only difficulty with adopted methods of procedure is their publicizing, so that members of fandom are aware what has been done and what the implications are for conduct of future conventions.

I do feel that there has been an unfortunate tendency to let matters drift until some crisis threatens and then everyone attempts to stick his fingers in the breach at the last moment, with resultant confusion and even hasty adoption of rules that later defy revision until new problems loom again to break the bottle-neck of inertia.

Myself, I think fandom at large should become better acquainted with worldcon rules adopted in the past and give them some study. Even with

the best intentions, some of these rules have turned out in the long run to be unbeneficial. Thus, with an attempt at regulating the con selections in an equitable fashion, the present Rotation Rule has acted as a tidal brake, slowing down and finally stopping the spirited bidding competition which engendered the rule in the first place.

All in all, George's account is well-balanced and accurate to my knowledge in all particulars except one small point. And at that, I don't think it's George's error. He speaks of the bidding effort at the 1952 Worldcon to secure '53 for Philadelphia as "a spur-of-the-moment thing." This is a conclusion drawn from Bob Madle's abbreviated account in Convention Annual #3. Actually, I think there were nineteen (not fifteen) Philadelphia delegates at Chicon II. Whatever the exact number, they did attend with the understanding they were Philadelphia delegates working for a '53 con.

Buz's article is also a reasoned, considered piece of writing, though necessarily dealing more with matters of opinion and "political theory" than with facts of history. This is all to the good, since a prime reason for the Syracuse worldcon bid is the re-introducing into fandom of competition and interest in the proceedings. Worldcon selection is a matter of opinion, and it is a matter of opinion which convention committee and site have the most to offer fandom.

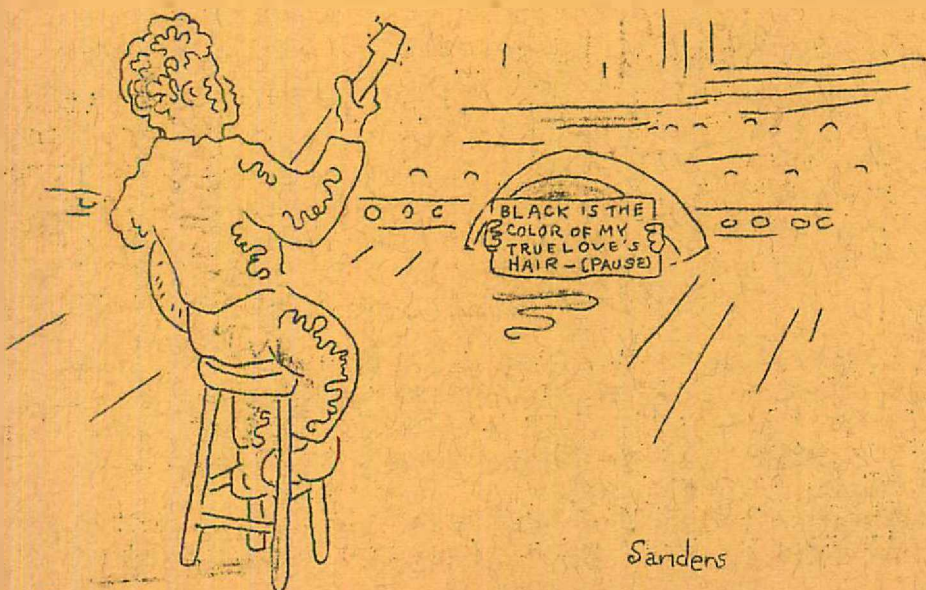
That competition and interest in con bidding have been declining is not a matter of opinion. It is an historical fact. That the same cities, even, are tending to repeat and repeat is an historical fact. That "voting" for a worldcon site has become a farce is an historical fact--how can anyone "vote" for a single, lone candidate?

It may be a matter of opinion whether or not this situation is good for fandom, whether lack of competition and declining excitement over the selection is preferable to winding up each year with one or more "losers". Buz indicates he feels this way, and marshals a number of valid, reasonable arguments for his opinion. The fact (historical, of course) that bidders' parties have disappeared is in itself not vital--but it is a symptom of the cavalier regard with which a single, uncontested bidder may view his captive "voters"?

I'll admit it is tough to spend so much time preparing a bid without being certain that you will after all receive the con. And a fair

amount of money can go down the drain, too. Unless, of course, this year's effort could be applied toward next year's bidding again. And that is where the Rotation Plan thwarts would-be bidders--no one can build up momentum and utilize the good-will and publicity for another try in a reasonable period of time.

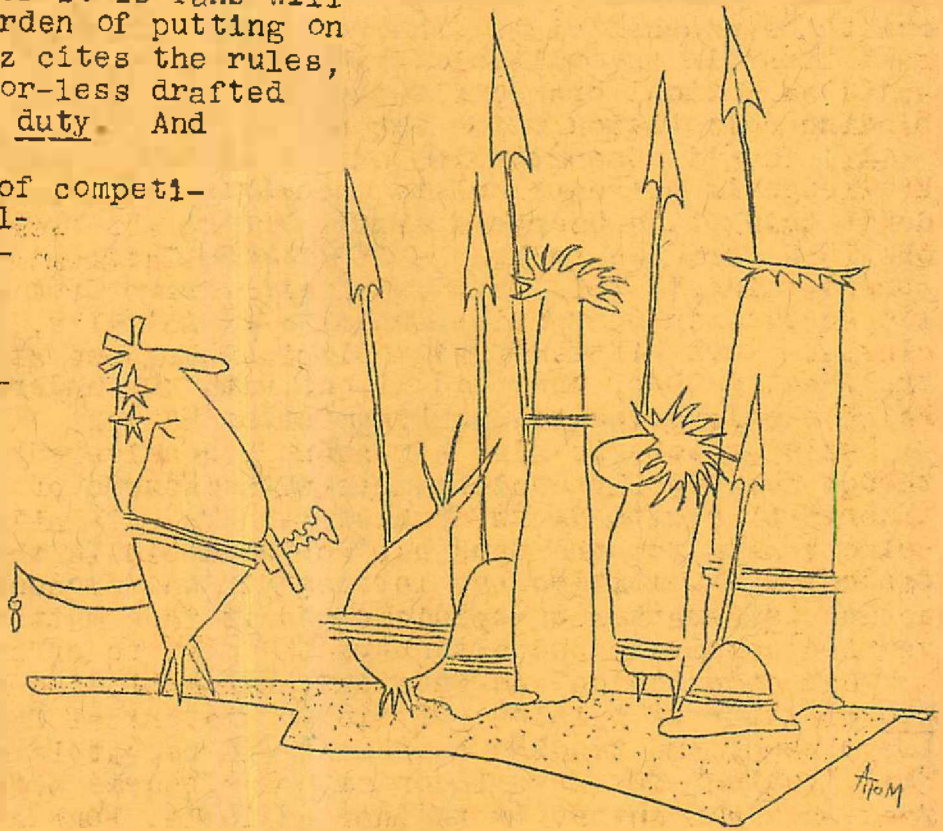
It is my opinion that nothing is likely to seem worthwhile unless it is fought for, and difficult to attain. The less com-



Sanders

petition, the likelier it is fans will shy away from the burden of putting on a con. Until, as Buz cites the rules, a con group is more-or-less drafted to hold the con as a duty. And then what?

An added feature of competition is the availability of "second sourcing". With competition, if one bidder should have to withdraw at the last minute, or having won the bid be forced to cancel, another group is ready and eager to go. So far, as Buz points out, this has not occurred. But it could--and that is one of the considerations I hope fandom will think about, and which Buz's article has brought to its attention.



Buz's viewpoint may possibly be a majority viewpoint in fandom. If a careful, thoughtful consideration of its implications are made, and site selection continued in the future as in the recent past, I'll go along with the crowd and hope for the best. With the points raised by the Syracon bid, though, it would seem likely at the least that the Rotation Rules so elegantly codified by George Scithers would come under close scrutiny.

I am glad that though Buz equates setting aside the geographical rotation as tantamount to a "grab", he grants me the benefit of believing in my sincerity. Still, the title "Stand By to Repel Boarders" does seem a bit suggestive. Fortunately, the Syracon committee is working within the regulation of the Rotation Rules, which make provision for out-of-turn competition. The necessity of achieving a three-quarters majority vote in order to make the bid does make it rather tough. We hope we have the "untapped resources of energy and enthusiasm" Buz speaks of. I do have enough faith in democratic procedures of voting to believe "grabs" are not likely to succeed, and that the only successful "grab" is likely to be performed by an uncontested group otherwise not likely to receive fandom's votes. In any event, the Syracon committee is not "breaching the Rotation Plan", but is merely working within the rules in an uphill, competitive fight--within the regulations presented by George Scithers. Any "breaching" done will be at a legally convened Business Session at which the Rotation Plan may be modified, amended, or replaced if it is the desire of the members.

On these points, I should like to quote from an article James V. Taurasi wrote for Convention Annual #2:

"One thing that I personally think was real bad for future science fiction fandom was the business meeting of the Chicago Convention.

This was railroaded through. It was also the shortest business session on record. The long drawn-out fights of old over the next convention sites may have driven the fans crazy, but it was democracy at work. This democracy was missing at the Chicago world convention. Now don't get me wrong, there was nothing illegal or tyrannical about the affair. It was on the up-and-up. Of this I'm sure, but much was lost in "written bids" mailed in days, weeks before, and in the lack of a convenient time for the business session. This is bad, very bad, and should be done away with. The business session should be held in the evening and one and all should have a chance to place motions before the convention, and bids should be placed at the con business sessions, without any advance written bids. It may make for a long drawn-out tiresome affair, but it is the best way to do it and the most democratic. Let fans fight among themselves in each city and then let the winner of that city make his bid. Let any and all persons with a solid following make their bids and let the fans at the business session decide whom they want for the next year. This is the real way in my opinion. All other items before the convention should be voted on the same way. An open, above-board form and an open, above-board business session is needed at world conventions before it loses all meaning and the world cons become extinct."

We had hoped that announcing a Syracuse interest in re-establishing competition—even if we had to bid ourselves—would result in arousing the competitive spirit of fans in the area scheduled for geographical consideration in '66. At the Pacificon II, Syracon committee co-chairman Dave Kyle announced in the Business Session that if serious contending bidders from the Midwest would emerge, Syracuse would defer until '67. By "serious" Dave contrasts against the joke Virgin Islands bid at the Pacificon, which incidentally was receiving so many votes that members of the committee went around requesting voters to lower their hands. I suppose the novelty of having a contest went to the fans' heads. It is presumed, of course, that no fans would start a "fake" bid merely to cause a Syracuse withdrawal.

We wish the only other announced bidder, Cleveland and chairman Ben Jason, good fortune. Support given our opposition will benefit fandom, and not take away anything from us. The problem would lie in apathy over what was happening at the next Worldcon. Fortunately, there's not likely to be much apathy this year, at London II.

/First, let's see some proof that the Rotation Plan is the cause of recent lack of bidding; I can think of several equally plausible reasons. Second, let's see some proof that lack of bidding has done any harm. Third, if you are operating within the Plan's provisions, why do you need to attack it in the first place? (Fourth, has Dave Kyle learned anything since the last New York con? I'm not going to withhold support just because Kyle is on your committee, but he was the chairman of the most spectacular flop in modern convention history. I don't know that any of it was his fault—but I don't know that it wasn't his fault, either.) If Taurasi (and Madle) think that the on-the-spot mass hysteria of "spirit bidding" is superior to calm decisions, they're welcome to their opinions. I'm not with them. RSC/

Ben Jason, 3971 East 71st Street, Cleveland, Ohio, 44105

It seems that the New York fans were going over the Rotation Rules as passed at the Discon and suddenly realized that if the Plan is set aside for

Syracuse that the next convention will wind up on the West Coast. Here is the rule and let's substitute the actual cities alongside the letters used in the example:

3.03 Convention sites shall be rotated among the divisions in the order: West, Central, East. The bids of locations to hold a convention shall only be considered and voted on if they lie within the geographical division whose turn it is: except that the rule of rotation may be set aside by a vote of three-fourths voting on the location of the next convention. In the event of such setting aside, rotation shall be resumed the following year. For example, if the order of rotation is A, B, C, and if it is A's (Midwest of Cleveland-Detroit-Cincinnati in this case) turn but the convention is given to a location in B (Syracuse--they use the letter C but I have substituted the correct sequence of letters), then C (the West Coast--in probability Los Angeles) the division which was neither set aside nor awarded the convention, shall be eligible next.

The above seems clear enough and is probably what the West Coast is counting on and which is why they have such a confident attitude that the con will return to them. However, the question arises whether the Plan can be set aside two or more times in a row? There are two interesting sides to this. (1) If Syracuse should succeed in having the Plan set aside, can the loser rebid the following year in the same manner? (2) On the other hand, if the Midwest wins, can Syracuse, (and they do indicate that they are interested in a rebid for 1967) Baltimore, and New York City bid?

What do you think?

The back of this flyer indicates that the Midwest is a two city bid but the situation changes rather rapidly. The Cincinnati Fantasy Group asked if they could join us and make it a Tri-City bid. Told them that I would have to check with Detroit first and the answer came a few days ago. Detroit said okay, so it's a Tri-City bid officially. A strong, unified bid. Besides the wealth of convention experienced members from all 3 cities, we have five (5) ex-con chairmen on the official committee: George Scithers (Parliamentarian & Costume Ball Arranger), Don Ford, Fred Prophet, Roger Sims, and Noreen Shaw. Quite possibly a sixth con-chairman may join. The Guest of Honor accepted several months ago, the hotel has been decided upon--but this may be changed due to the large number of new hotels and motels being built in the downtown district. All of these will be ready by convention time, so it may be that we may have a convention in a brand new hotel or motel. Most of the program is solidly set and we are trying to come up with something completely different. Room rates will be low, much lower than the past 3 or 4 cons, the banquet price will be lower and the food may be better, although I don't hold any hopes for that. The Hugos naturally won't be a problem.

While I'm at it, rumors have been flying that I intend withholding the awards from various cons (Loncon II, Syracon, etc.). There is no truth in the rumor, and there is a very simple explanation. Since it is the convention committees who pay for the Hugos, it follows (quite logically, I think) that the Hugos are not mine to withhold or give away. Right?

/If a Cleveland Committee couldn't stick together when composed of more or less local fans, I shudder to think what will happen between now and '66 with 5 ex-chairmen on the committee. (I prefer not to say "ex-con" chairmen; it has such unpleasant connotations.) However,

that, thank God, is your worry. As far as I can see, as long as the rules don't specifically prohibit an action, the action is legal. (And even if the rules do prohibit it, any number of fans can find all sorts of things wrong with the rules.) I am glad to see Cleveland getting out some information; this was the first news I had heard of the group since the informal committee discussion in our library last July. Apparently the group isn't simply lying dormant, as a number of fans have assumed. RSC/

Joe Hensley, 2315 Blackmore, Madison, Indiana

I can't recall why we used a pseudonym on "Dark Conception". We did three stories while Alex was here, one of which I liked much better than DC. Meredith still has that one, but he returned DC to me and I sent it on to Alex, who then sold it. All three of the stories were done under the name Louis J.A. Adams, Lou (is) being my middle name, Adams being Alex's, J. my first initial and A., Alex's. Ted White is using DC in the next Best from F&SF anthology, which made Alex and I both happy. He did the first draft on the thing and then I bittered it up. (Alex that is; DC that is.)

I rather liked Harlan's "The Glass Hand". I thought it was head and shoulders above the normal Outer Limits story.

Say, they must be digging this Burroughs in the second hand book marts. I was in one in Cincy not too long ago. I picked up some mint Bradbury firsts for a buck a copy. Beat up ERB's were going for from four to ten bucks a copy. Tsk, tsk. I cut my teeth on Burroughs, but I certainly wouldn't want to do that again. In Indianapolis, to compound the felony, I got a copy of SKULL FACE & OTHERS, with dust wrapper, paying \$4 for same. Once again ERB's were higher. Which must prove something.

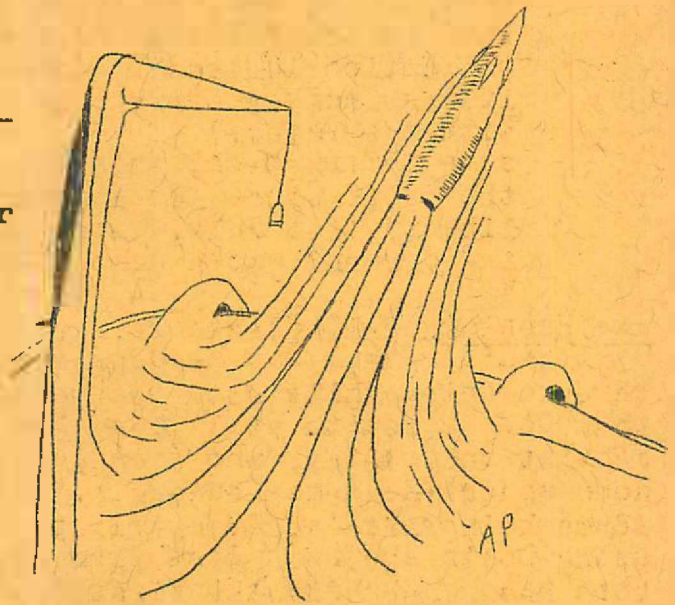
George W. Price, 583 Cornelia Avenue, Chicago 57, Illinois

Ted White wants to know (Yandro 143) if we would have had "any moral or ethical right to invade Cuba?" I say, yes, certainly.

The basic consideration is that a de facto state of war exists between the Communist powers and all non-Communist powers. This is by choice of the Communists, and will continue as long as they imagine themselves to have a right--indeed, a duty--to forcibly impose their system upon the whole world. Then, in sheer self defense, we have a right--indeed, a duty--to do what we can to reduce their power, including armed conflict where tactically and strategically indicated. Invasion of Cuba would be no more "aggression" than was the D-Day invasion; it would be repelling an aggressor.

DGL 7

The Korean War, the Malayan uprising of ten years ago, the Vietnamese War, the Venezuelan revolt, etc., should not be considered separate wars; they are individual battles in the one war of Communism against civilization. This war is no less real for being formally undeclared. So the question is not: should we go to war with the Communists? It is, how should we prosecute the war that we are already in? (To satisfy the legal formalities, we should declare war against Cuba; say, about five minutes before the invasion fleet crosses the three-mile limit.)



Morality should indeed be observed in the dealings of nations, as of individuals. But in what does international morality consist? Well, it is basically the same as personal morality. Nations, like individuals, should neither commit nor submit to aggression. War is the international equivalent of personal fighting; the morality of it depends on the purpose. It is wrong for a robber to attack a citizen, but it is right for the citizen to shoot a robber. And once a man has demonstrated, by committing crimes, that he is a danger to other people, the police pick him up and put him away, even though he may not be indulging in crime at the exact moment they arrest him. That, on the international scale, justifies our taking action against the Communists on our own initiative instead of acting only in response to their overt aggressions. They've long since demonstrated that we won't be safe until their power is drastically reduced. They are, as you might say, habitual criminals.

As Mr. White remarks, most of us are brought up to believe War Is Bad. I suggest that much confusion has arisen because of a failure to distinguish between the two meanings of Bad: "painful" and "immoral". War is always painful--so are surgical operations without anesthetic--but that is not proof of immorality.

A further confusion is caused by the fact that nations deal with each other in a state of anarchy. There is no international law; what is called International Law is really only custom, because there is no enforcing agency. The so-called International Courts are only advisory boards, not real courts; their status is comparable to that of a marriage counselor, not a divorce court. So where the private citizen can turn to the police for aid against aggression, nations must take their defense into their own hands, because there are no other hands.

The reason for opposing the Communists is certainly not that they are "Godless atheists". As long as they are not aggressive about it, their atheism shouldn't matter. But in fact they are not atheists at all; Communism is an evangelical and fanatic religion. Read Max Eastman's "Reflections on the Failure of Socialism", Chapter 7. Marxist theory abounds in teleological notions and, in Eastman's words, pictures man "not as an independent power, but as a constituent part of the superhumanly ordained movement of the universe... The universe of dialectic materialism--to put it briefly--is a pantheistic God masquerading as matter, and permitting Himself under that disguise forms of

of conduct that no God honestly named and identified could get away with in a civilized world." See also Poul Anderson's THERMONUCLEAR WARFARE, Chapter 9. As an agnostic, verging on atheism, I must oppose the Communists precisely to prevent them from imposing their foul religion on me.

/I think the Cuban problem has been complicated by the Bay of Pigs fiasco. Whether or not we had a right to attack, doing it under false colors and then getting both (a) found out and (b) decisively whipped leaves a remarkably bad stench. I think the government was quite right to refrain from further action once that had happened. However, there is no particular need to refrain from further action indefinitely--the main consideration would be to give other Latin American nations time to realize that Cuba is a threat to them. (Because that's where the threat is; not directly to us.) There is no point in winning Cuba and losing South America, especially when the governments in question are--most of them, anyway--not pro-Communist but simply (and for good reasons) against the U.S. (I started to say "anti-American", but that's like the old joke of the man asking the Arab if he was anti-semitic.) On the other hand, we don't want to allow Cuban-based revolutionaries to get too much influence in those governments before we hit. There are too many variable factors for any ordinary citizen to be able to say "we should do this now" -- he doesn't have enough information. RSC7

Alexei Panshin, 2515 Arrowhead Rd., Okemos, Michigan

The cover of THE UNIVERSE AGAINST HER (and how's that for a paranoid title?) looks more like a Gaughan than an Emsh, to me at least.

I do too submit to John Campbell. When I first started writing stories several years ago, I'd get them back from Campbell in six weeks with a rejection slip. Then it was somewhat longer with a letter that said, "Gee, boy, I like your style of writing. Try us again." I have about five copies of this one, and Joe Hensley showed me a letter he had from Campbell from 1952 or 1954 that said the same thing, word for word. Latterly, it takes three months to hear and I get a somewhat more individual letter. What this means is that I submit to Campbell last or close to it. Other people do buy my stories, so several have never gotten as far as Campbell. I do too submit to John Campbell: perhaps twice a year when I'm feeling genial (on my birthday, and on my anti-birthday).

F&SF, by the way, takes six weeks as a usual thing, and I'm expecting to hear any day on a piece they've had for two months plus. I don't mind: the Army taught me patience (suppressed growl).

/I thought it was more of a pornographic title, myself. RSC7

Robert E. Briney, 176 E. Stadium Drive, West Lafayette, Indiana, 47906

I got the latest Magazine of Horror in Chicago. Also found the third of the "Barton Werper" Tarzan things, which hadn't as yet shown up on the stands here. I even read one of them while I was home. (My mother read it first, and she laughed all the way through it. I had

to find out what was so funny. I did. It opens with this scene in a jungle clearing, see, where Tarzan and Jane have gone to shack up out in the trees. He gets sidetracked by a challenge from the leader of a tribe of apes, and while he is busy strutting around and exchanging insults with the ape, Jane is joined in her tree by the ape's wife. The female ape is pregnant--she is about to have a "pup"--and she and Jane compare notes on morning sickness...)

Dan Mannix does have other interests than sex orgies and devil worship... Have you read his (supposedly) autobiographical MEMOIRS OF A SWORD SWALLOWER?

The latest Airmont pb seems to be Blish & Lowndes' THE DUPLICATED MAN. The same chopped-up version that Avalon published, unfortunately.

One thing puzzles me about Y143: why the free two-page ad for the Burroughs Bibliophiles (Barr's "article", I mean)?

I discovered a surprising thing when I was in Muskegon, the likes of which I had never heard before. There is a city ordinance in Muskegon which makes it illegal for anyone under the age of 19 to smoke cigarettes (or cigars or a pipe) on the street or in a public place. And what's more, the law is enforced! There are frequent mentions in the local paper of warnings, arrests, referral to juvenile court, etc. Retailers who knowingly sell cigarettes to minors are also liable to prosecution.

My Christmas spirit got the best of me; I even felt kindly towards Burroughs. Sword swallowing in the Baum basement? That doesn't sound any more plausible than sex orgies, somehow... Personally I think tobacco companies should be required to put a skull and crossbones on the package, after which sales could be made to anyone over 15 years old. If people want to take chances with their lives, that's their business, as long as they don't take other people with them, like our idiot auto drivers. The age limit of course is arbitrary, but there has to be some legal breakoff between kids who don't know enough to come in out of the rain and adults (who generally don't, either, but who are supposed to). RSC/

Philip K. Dick, 3919 Lyon Avenue, Oakland 1, California

Thanks for Yendro 143. Being egocentric beyond the ordinary, I took special note of Ted White's comments on page 26 dealing with my several works. Hit 'em again, Ted! Wow! Gosh gee! Etc. However, peeking up through the fine, civilized comments of Ted, there is a faint and ghostly pale image of some prior comment by one Terry Carr, words not known to me but evidently claiming--in error, as Ted so keenly points out--that my novel THE SIMULACRA was written after the Kennedy assassination. Now Terry, whoever you are, wherever you are, either over here or in London, you know perfectly well that the novel was written before that moment. The story on which the novel is based was written in February of 1963; it was sold to Amazing in September of that year and was supposed to be the cover story--but due to the assassination it was instead buried in the back of Fantastic and got no cover. The novel (called by me, as Ted says, THE FIRST LADY OF EARTH, changed by Ace to THE SIMULACRA) was written in July 1963, and, as Ted says, was in his hands well before November 22. Nor were there any changes made in it--at least by me or to my knowledge by anyone at

all--at any later time.

I can't for the life of me imagine why Terry would claim that the novel was written after the assassination; had it been, I would be open to the just charge of trying to gain from that dreadful event, of making use of it for fun and profit. God in heaven. Well, Terry: lots of luck. And try again (no hard feelings; you have a pretty wife, and that makes you A-one in my book. And say hello to Carol).

/I sent him the mag containing your letter, Terry, so you don't have to. RSC/

James Sieger, S74-W20660 Field Dr, Route 2, Muskego, Wisconsin

Juanita's suggestion regarding the Big Dolphin Fund strikes me as both naive and too unsubtle. Kids, supposing they bit, would soak their parents for the dough, and the latter would resent such a second-hand hard sell.

Fie! Christmas is an annual Holiday of the Western world regardless of religious affiliation. Don't you know lots of non-Christians and even militant atheists who celebrate it some way or another? I understand that the early Church deliberately chose a holiday celebrated for non-Christian reasons. I think I comprehend why, but, er, can't pin it down right now. And if I stop and try to figure it out, I'll probably lose my enthusiasm for writing...

Again, fie! I like Mannix. He has a taste for the off-beat in subjects. Remember his piece on giant spiders in True some time ago?

Pickering's fiction was far better than I've yet seen in Yandro. However, I lack the terminology to say just what I mean. Sigh. I almost passed it up, guessing the event in advance. Everybody seems to find alien spaceships in the Bible these days.

Ted White disgusts me. His attacks on Derek Nelson and Rev. Moorhead, neither of whom I agreed with, are quite unwarranted. He doesn't even give reasons for believing Moorhead to be phony, etc., which makes it merely namecalling. In my time I've come up against people who'd justify such epithets; but the sins and shortcomings of Nelson and Moorhead are so mild in comparison with them that I can only conclude that White must live an exceedingly sheltered and innocent life, if he thinks that such harsh terms apply. More likely he operates on the questionable premise that anybody he doesn't like personally, just plain must be evil, dirty, nauseating, et. al.

Despite such a prejudicing start, I must agree with White's moral argument. (Fancy a bohemian espousing morals. Or did the bohemians drum him out of their movement so that's he's promoting morality just to spite them?) Us big nations simply have no right to invade little ones merely because the latter call us nasty names. Nor do we have any right to at-

tempt to overthrow an unfriendly government unless there's definite reason to believe it's without its peoples consent...and even then the morality is dubious. (Whoops...I mean unless the government is in power without the people's consent, i.e. dictatorships.) And, in view of the range of Russian missiles, I don't see that it makes too much difference if they're fired from Siberia or Cuba.

On the other hand, I don't see that kicking Castro in the seat of the pants would precipitate a nuclear war. Not even then (1962), and certainly not now that Castro's too much an embarrassment to the Reds. Castro's merely a useful tool for troublemaking; but his usefulness to them will cease if he provokes us into war; so why bother helping him then? They'd just make lots of loud noises about imperialist aggression and ship Cuba all their old Stalin statues to throw at the enemy.

I also agree with White in that governments are, or rather were, amoral; but are inclining more and more towards moral rules in their policy...a practice probably inspired by our own success as a nation founded upon highly moral principles. (Note that I don't say we were highly moral...)

/Giant spiders in the Baum basement? Naah. RSC/

Ben Solon, 3915 N. Southport, Chicago, Illinois, 60613

Steve Barr's article on ERB fandom (which I intensely dislike) just goes to show how right Hitler was when he said: "If you tell someone, something, no matter how preposterous, often enough and in as many different ways as possible, eventually they'll come to believe it." In other words, a few jerks like Vern Coriell keep telling everyone how great ERB was and presto, a lot of people start believing it. I would be willing to bet that a lot of the people who think Burroughs was a great writer wouldn't think so if they had discovered him on their own. Personally, I enjoy reading Burroughs, but I sure as heck won't let anyone tell me the stuff he wrote was "great literature".

Burroughs was a writer, pure and simple, not an artist. Great writing is an art, and damn little sf and fantasy is great literature. The stuff Burroughs wrote was intended to make money and entertain the readers, nothing more. Burroughs succeeded at this because, at the time he started writing, the material he presented was unique, and after a few years he was an established "name" and could sell almost anything he wrote--a la Robert A. Heinlein. The fortune that ERB fanatics are always pointing to as proof of their idol's greatness as a writer was made largely from movie and radio royalties. You see, ERB was a pretty clever guy even if he wasn't a great writer; he never sold the movie and radio rights to Tarzan, he just rented them out and kept a piece of the pie for himself.

Ted White's article brings up an important point: should world issues be regarded



in moral terms? And if not, why not? Well, to start off with, the best reason for not regarding world issues in moral terms is the fact that the Communists have discovered an important truth which the free world has long ignored--that there are no morals in politics. That's why the Reds are winning the "struggle for men's minds" all over the world. They don't preach about right and wrong, they just put food in the bellies of those that could use a square meal. And believe me, food is mightier than all the speeches about the "evils of Communism" ever spoken. If the free world is to survive, it must stop being so high-toned and reach the people of the underdeveloped countries before the Reds do. The current mess in the Congo illustrates this point very well: Belgium was "in" the Congo for over two hundred years and did almost nothing to improve the lot of the natives. After World War II, the Communists persuaded the free world that holding colonies was wrong, and Belgium, France, England and the other colonial powers started to abandon their colonial outposts and give them their freedom. A freedom for which, in many cases, they weren't ready. As soon as the colonial powers relaxed their vigilance, the Reds started subverting, and you can see the results today in your newspaper.

/I doubt that Coriell and cohorts have that much to do with it. Almost everyone makes a constant attempt to bolster his ego (since he doesn't have much of one to begin with). If he likes a particular author, this is enough to make him consider the author "good"; if the author isn't good then our protagonist has poor taste, and he can't admit that, even to himself. So he defends his choices with all his might. Very few people can say "that stinks, but I like it anyway". (This self-justification and self-righteousness is part of our emotional heritage that second-rate authors are always telling us is more important than reason and logic.)RSC7

Dennis Lien, Lake Park, Minnesota

Also got a Burroughs Bibliophile mailing today, for the first time in Lo, these Many Moons. You're missing something by not belonging, you know? Like a detailed synopsis of TARZAN ON MARS, by Stu Byrne, which is an unpublished pastiche, (not parody) which the BB may print up, for members only (the outside world would confuse it, apparently, with the Sacred Writings themselves. This article was written long before Werper's "Gold Star originals"--though not, I suspect, very--appeared, so already outdated.) Can't wait to see what the BB has to say about Werper (well, I know what one BB said about him. Is there any more damnably faint praisy phrase in the English language than "sort of interesting"?)

I like John Astin on "The Addams Family", too, but have no objections to the rest of the cast. I never thought of Astin as a young Groucho Marx, though; to me he looks like Ernie Kovacs and acts like George Burns.

I'm glad you liked "Freehans Farmstead"--the more I read it, the less I do. I wrote it in a white heat of disgust after finishing the disjointed, unsubtle and unsatisfying original and produced, I think, a disjointed, unsubtle, and unsatisfying parody. Perhaps I could pass that facet off as deliberate, or perhaps not.

Yandro 142--the cover was nice, though I had a confused idea that

Yandro had merged with Amra when I first saw it.

Lots of books that I wish Ace (or someone) would reprint. George Wells tells me that Pyramid is considering DRACULA'S GUEST (Stoker) and THE POISON BELT (Doyle) -- all very well, no doubt, but why doesn't someone reprint Howard? Ace did CONAN THE CONQUEROR in '54, but the other four Conan books, plus TALES and RETURN, plus the Kane, Kull, and what-not tales are still available only in the original mags, plus a few in SKULLFACE and some reprint mags... Hodgson has had only one of his five fantasy books reprinted in paper back... I've read all of Heinlein's juveniles, but I'd like to be able to own them. Hamilton's HORROR ON THE ASTEROID... Hale's BRICK MOON... the other works of Hoar (Farley, the "Radio" writer), and Hall... Haggard's ANCIENT AL-LAN and ALLAN AND THE ICE-GODS... Heard's GREAT FOG and BLACK FOX... Hubbard, esp. FINAL BLACKOUT... these are all from just the letter H; there are 25 more just like it... to hell with originals; reprints unlimited!

E.E. Evers' dissection of the alien-telepath-murder-witness-hypothetical story was probably the high point of the issue. Oh yes--Ray Bradbury would tell the story through the eyes of a small boy, who would quickly leave the court room to walk through the Clean Fresh Nostalgic Night of his Clean Fresh Nostalgic Illinois small town in Clean Fresh Nostalgic October. Then Bradbury would go through the story again, cut out the courtroom and the alien telepath along with any other vestiges of plot and sell the Clean Fresh Nostalgia under three different names to Harper's, Good Housekeeping, and The Saturday Evening Post. He'd keep the cut-off alien telepath fragment in his files for ten years, then sell it to F&SF and get a special Bradbury issue declared with his picture on the cover...

/Sometimes I'm not too sure myself, that Yandro hadn't merged with Amra. Is there a loophole in copyrighting that allows a group to privately publish copyrighted material for its own members only? The Burroughs estate had catfits when Ray Palmer tried to publish TARZAN ON MARS in Other Worlds, so howcome it's getting by now? I can't say I agree with all your picks, but there are certainly plenty of good stories left to reprint. I'd even like to see Williamson's two SEETEE books in pb. (They weren't very good, but I enjoyed them.) And I believe two of stf's best writers--Weinbaum and Campbell--are represented by only one pb apiece. RSC/

Ed. Meskys, L71, LRL, Box 808, Livermore, California, 94551

I see Metcalf is "pushing buttons" and trying to get people to react violently again. His argument that book-stf is better than magazine-stf because book publishers don't have N pages to fill each month would hold water if most publishers didn't have the same requirement. Phil Dick has often told me of the great pressures on book publishers to get enough first line mss to fill their needs. For instance, Ace is now publishing about a half dozen titles a month (Phil says. I don't know myself; I gave up being a completist about a year before I moved from NY, and since the BArea has no equivalent of Steve Takac's book store, which stocks about 80% of the current stf and little else, I've lost track of what is even available). Most other pb houses with stf lines are producing 1 or 2 titles each month (each publisher having its

own fixed schedule and books appearing like clockwork), Doubleday needs 2 titles every second month for its book club, etc.

Originally they relied on magazines for reprints, but this source has been virtually exhausted. The publishers are so desperate that they are reprinting such unmitigated crud as Doc Smith's GALAXY PRIMES. That serial was so awful that I couldn't finish it, a thing I can say only about it and THE OSLIANS in Spaceways. Then came original novels from agents and The Slushpile. But now they are so desperate that they have contracts with high production authors for books to be delivered more than one year hence. Phil Dick himself has close to a dozen conflicting contracts for novels due any time between a few weeks and a year hence.

Until recently Doubleday fed its book club with titles submitted to it plus reprints from other hard-cover houses. But apparently they have been unable to obtain sufficient high-quality material this way, acts Phil Dick, for they recently started to solicit advance contracts with him, as well as with other writers.

Anyhow, it probably takes more words to feed all of the book publishers of today than it took to feed the magazines at the height of any of the booms. And were I reading more than the few titles various people recommend to me, I suspect I would find as much crud in the books as in a dozen issues of Vortex, SF Digest, Cosmos, Spaceways, Fantastic SF, etc.

[This letter was "passed on" by Philip K. Dick before we got it, so I think it's safe to assume that it's authentic. Magazine reprints haven't dried up, tho; I suspect that publishers are bypassing many magazine stories in order to get originals with more of the sex treatment that will sell to the boobs. (I just finished NO MAN ON EARTH, and I can't think of any other reason for publishing it.)

RSC7

Banks Mebane, 6901 Strathmore St., Chevy Chase, Md. 20015

I sat up late one night reading OPERATORS AND THINGS, and I was damn' glad to wake up the next morning and not find a group of people standing around my bed. I don't think I'll ever go into a waiting room again without wondering what those blunk-faced, patient people sitting on the benches are believing is happening. Brrrr!

By the way, we now have out good old wet planet Venus back again. A group of infrared spectroscopists at Johns Hopkins University, working with data taken on high balloon flights, detected absorption lines from water vapor in Venus' atmosphere; also the reflection spectrum from Venus' cloud layer indicated ice crystals. Of course, the Mariner temperature data would preclude liquid water on the surface, but maybe a way will be found to explain that and still leave us our jungly, swampy or oceany world of beloved memory. I never did like the idea of Venus as a bone-dry desert.



The trouble with using numbers to identify everybody is that numbers have no redundancy, so any error in transcribing them changes things drastically. If I make an error with Coulson, and type it Colson or Couldon, anyone who knows you will still probably know whom I mean, and even an envelope through the mail would probably still get to you. But if you are 1748326, and I type it 1748327, that is somebody entirely different -- maybe John Boardman.

Does Steve Barr do nothing but write articles about the Burroughs Bibliophiles? I recall an almost identical article by him in another fanzine -- they should really be classed as advertisements.

Let me enthusiastically second Roy Tackett's comments on the fillers by George Barr and Nott you use on the contents page. Keep 'em coming! How about bringing out a separately-printed collection of them.



/I think everyone who wrote questioned my judgment in publishing the Barr article... the unusual part being that one of the people who wrote was the author. That's a good point against complete numerical identification; God knows people will never be precise enough to eliminate large numbers of errors. But of course it is irrelevant to current cries of "regimentation".RSC/

Gene DeWeese, 2584 N. Oakland Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53211

First, could you stick a short note in Yandro for me next time?

To wit: Does anyone have or know where I can get Detective Story, April, 1942? In case you're wondering why I want it--I was looking through my old Astoundings, picking out the issues with Foundation stories, and I stumbled across an ad for the April '42 Detective Story apparently another Street and Smith mag. And it had as lead novel a story by Fredric Brown, about a cat. So I'm interested in Brown detective stories, and bev...

Actually, come to think of it, maybe you could stick a second line on that note: "Or any other old pulp detective magazines with Fredric Brown novels in them."

Just saw an expurgated ad on tv for GOLDFINGER: "...also starring Honore Blackman as ----- Starting Friday!"

"50 Great Music Treasures"? All on 1 album? "La Donna is a Mobile and others. "Each selection up to 4 minutes!" Including something by Wagner, they say. In four minutes, Wagner would barely have time to give a downbeat.

I had a letter from Gina Clarke picked out, but I don't think it will fit in the few lines remaining. We'll use it next time. Joe Stator mentions a newspaper article which mentioned that some people have taken "The Man From Uncle", not only as being serious, but as being fact, and have written in to have "subversives" in their neighborhoods investigated. Sounds like some of our neighbors. Ed Meskys suggests that Norm Metcalf forgot to list SUPERNATURAL STORIES in his inclusive list of promags. For that matter, how about comics? They buy stf plots....

Golden Minutes

DAVY, by Edgar Pangborn (Ballantine, 75¢) Here's one that belongs on the next Hugo ballot (it came out in December). Despite the fact that DAVY is the best literary work in the sf field for '64, I think I'll still vote for Brunner's THE WHOLE MAN as #1. DAVY is better fiction, but it isn't better science fiction -- it's only science fiction at all by courtesy of a liberal definition. I was struck by the general similarity to Brackett's THE LONG TOMORROW -- except that where Leigh introduced a scientific element at the end (and whose book failed largely because of this), Pangborn keeps his neo-barbarian culture strictly "in character". It makes for a better book -- but it also makes for a story that might just as well have been written as a historical novel. By all means read DAVY (preferably without reading Ballantine's nonsensical cover blurbs).

CRASHING SUNS, by Edmond Hamilton (Ace, 40¢) I'm not quite sure what possessed Ace to publish these 5 stories in one book. Four of them have identical plots, and the fifth is only a minor variation. I first read "The Star Stealers" in AVON FANTASY READER #6; tho it didn't turn me in to a Hamilton fan, it didn't seem to be particularly bad when published with stories by other writers. Five stories just alike, however (even the names of the characters are similar), are "too many". The other 4 are "Crashing Suns", "Within The Nebula", "The Comet Drivers", and "The Cosmic Cloud". I can't imagine anyone past age 10 enjoying all of them in one dose.

THE SHIP THAT SAILED THE TIME STREAM/STRANGER THAN YOU THINK by G. C. Edmondson (Ace, 45¢) Here's another winner. The Ship is an original novel (or part of an original novel; I foresee a sequel), and despite the title it's up with the better modern sword-and-sorcery stories. The "science" is practically non-existent, but the action keeps moving and the writing is excellent. (And for once the hero doesn't wow everyone with his super-scientific knowledge; Edmondson seems to agree with Poul Anderson that our ancestors wouldn't have been pushovers for a few modern gadgets.) Stranger consists of 7 of Edmondson's "mad friend" stories from F&SF. If you like them, fine; personally I find them cute to the point of nausea. But the book is worth the money for the novel side, which takes up almost 2/3 of it.

(Can anyone tell me the name of the short story which appeared a few years ago -- in F&SF, I think -- about the destroyer in the Mediterranean which accidentally went back in time? Edmondson's novel reminded me of it, but since I can't recall either the title or the author I haven't had much luck in locating it.)

THE REASSEMBLED MAN, by Herbert Kastle (Gold Medal, 45¢) The publisher says that this is Kastle's first science fiction novel. If we're lucky, it may also be his last one. Right in the beginning this Mitty type is contacted by a bunch of aliens who want to use him as an observer/recorder of humanity. They take him apart and put him back together with improvements -- he's now the strongest man on earth, capable of denting steel plate with his bare fists; he can't be killed short of removing one of his vital organs; he has unbelievable sexual ability and endurance; he doesn't need to sleep; and, just like the old ads in the pulp

mags, he can "make people do /his/ bidding". (Sounds like one of Harlan Ellison's pipe dreams, doesn't it?) The rest of the book is concerned with his conquests of women and his less successful attempts to amass a fortune. Somewhere along the line he learns the kicker; once a month he has to go to New Mexico to report to the aliens, who drain him of information, erase all knowledge of themselves, and turn him loose wondering what he's doing 2500 miles from home. In the end, tho, the aliens get tired of him and rebuild him to more moderate standards, and he gets the girl and presumably lives happily ever after -- or as happy as a stupe with his mentality can conceive of being. This is science fiction for people who don't quite have the nerve to buy real pornography.

THE ISSUE AT HAND, by William Atheling, Jr. (Advent, \$5.00) "Atheling" is actually James Blish, and the book is a volume of criticism to put beside your copy of Knight's IN SEARCH OF WONDER. The Knight book is more entertaining, because his criticisms are so devastatingly funny; Blish is inclined more towards serious analyses than to poking fun at nincompoops. On the other hand, this book might well be a more important volume for the budding writer (not being a budding writer, I can't say definitely). Certainly Blish presents plenty of theories and examples of what writing should and shouldn't consist of. I don't always agree with him (I see nothing wrong with a few dangling prepositions, as evidenced above.) But every one of his rules are undoubtedly good ones for a beginning writer to follow, as best he can.

FIRST LENS MAN, by E. E. Smith, Ph.D. (Pyramid, 50¢) Pyramid seems to have some objection to publishing a series in chronological order. They jumped around among titles in Vardis Fisher's Testament Of Man series, and now they're doing the same thing with Smith. FIRST LENS MAN should be read before GALACTIC PATROL, which Pyramid published last month, as these characters are the ancestors of Kimball Kinnison and crew. (And still another book, TRIPLANETARY, comes before this one.) Of course, Pyramid might have a point this time; if you read FIRST LENS MAN first, you might not bother to read the rest of the series; it's vastly inferior to GALACTIC PATROL, tho I understand it was written much later. For one thing, Smith doesn't always remember what he's written from one chapter to the next. On page 47 he says "Samms did not energize his Lens; he had not yet developed either the inclination or the technique to probe instantaneously every entity who approached him, upon any pretext whatever, in order to find out what that entity really wanted." Or in other words, the Lens can be used to read minds, if there is sufficient need for it. Yet 20 pages later, when our heroes know that a ballroom contains at least one assassin bent on destroying them, do they make any effort at all to read a few minds and find out who the villain is? Of course not; that would be too easy. Instead they rely on Jill's "muscle reading". In fact, they never think to use the Lens for mind-reading of humans until page 189, when they rediscover its powers. (In between, it has been used as a handy-dandy translator of alien languages, however.) I only hope the later books in the series are an improvement over this.

THE ESCAPE ORBIT, by James White (Ace, 40¢) This appeared in the last 3 issues of the Carnell-edited NEW WORLDS as "Open Prison". It's a good example of action-adventure stf, with a nice twist at the end, and even says a few things (tho not many) about how humanity behaves. The escape is well worked out, and the book is well worth your money (unless you've already read the serial version; I didn't note much difference).

SPOT OF LIFE, by Austin Hall (Ace, 40¢) Well, Hall did it again. This one isn't quite as funny as THE BLIND SPOT; for one thing, it's shorter, and for another, Hall had to make all the mistakes himself, Flint having died between books. However, he does his best. On page 17 we find that if Detective Flanning had been fully warned, he could have warded off the calamity by jailing the Bar Senestro. Since on page 17 the Bar Senestro had done nothing more villainous than look at the sun, it leads to an interesting picture of what would have happened if Flanning had hauled him off to headquarters. Hall's command of the language is still the same: "I didn't suppose it could approximate so much mystery" (pp 49). "It was like a flash." (pp 73). He is still tossing in magnetism whenever he thinks of it: "Hal Watson was watching the pool of magnetism." His other scientific comments are equally interesting: "This room is full of phenomena." (pp 88). "We're in some sort of vibrationIt's governed by frequency" (pp 92). "He was galvanic" (pp 100). "The man is dying of vibration" (pp 113). "It was covered with radical signs and tremendous fractions, arranged in the formula-like precision of cryptic calculation" (pp 124). "We must do nothing until I have solved some more phenomena" (pp 126). "But your Einstein has proven that even gravity is relative and that time and distance are forever on the move." (pp 137) "X = .0" (pp 143). And the final explanation of the whole thing: Life is "built up from the underlaws of material coefficients" (pp 186). I can't begin to quote everything that I'd like, but I must get in this last one: "The idiom might have come from grammer" (strictly sic, including the misspelling). Buy the book, it has 40¢ worth of laughs in it. Oh yes, it does, after a fashion, explain what happened in THE BLIND SPOT. Mostly it consists of the sons and daughters of the protagonists of the earlier book going through the same stupid motions for the same idiotic reasons.

THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDRITCH, by Philip K. Dick (Doubleday Book Club, \$1.20) Dick has done much the same thing here that he did in SIMULACRA (or at least the results are similar). This is based on the same background as "The Days Of Perky Pat", but it has been completely rewritten and expanded to novel length, so that aside from the name of the game, there isn't much similarity between the magazine story and the book. I can't say how good a book it is, since I think Dick lost me somewhere along the line. I can follow the action all right, but I can't quite follow the author's reasons for writing the book that way in the first place, and I'm sure he had some. (The writing is good but the moral is Confusion.) There are lots of things said about humanity and so on, but none of them seem to tie together.

STRANGE WORLD, by Frank Edwards (Ace, 50¢) This is the third in Edwards' collections of "Fortean" events. They're fun, but don't take that cover blurb about them being "carefully authenticated" at all seriously. While Edwards may not be any more prone to repeat pure fiction as "carefully authenticated fact" than any other occult writer, he's done it oftener where I can catch him at it. Betty Kujawa exploded one of his stories; Rupert Furneaux, in KRAKATOA, does for another. And in a series like this, when you start finding errors you start wondering if the whole thing isn't pure fiction, and that pretty well kills the excitement. However, I'm sure the saucer crowd will lap it up.