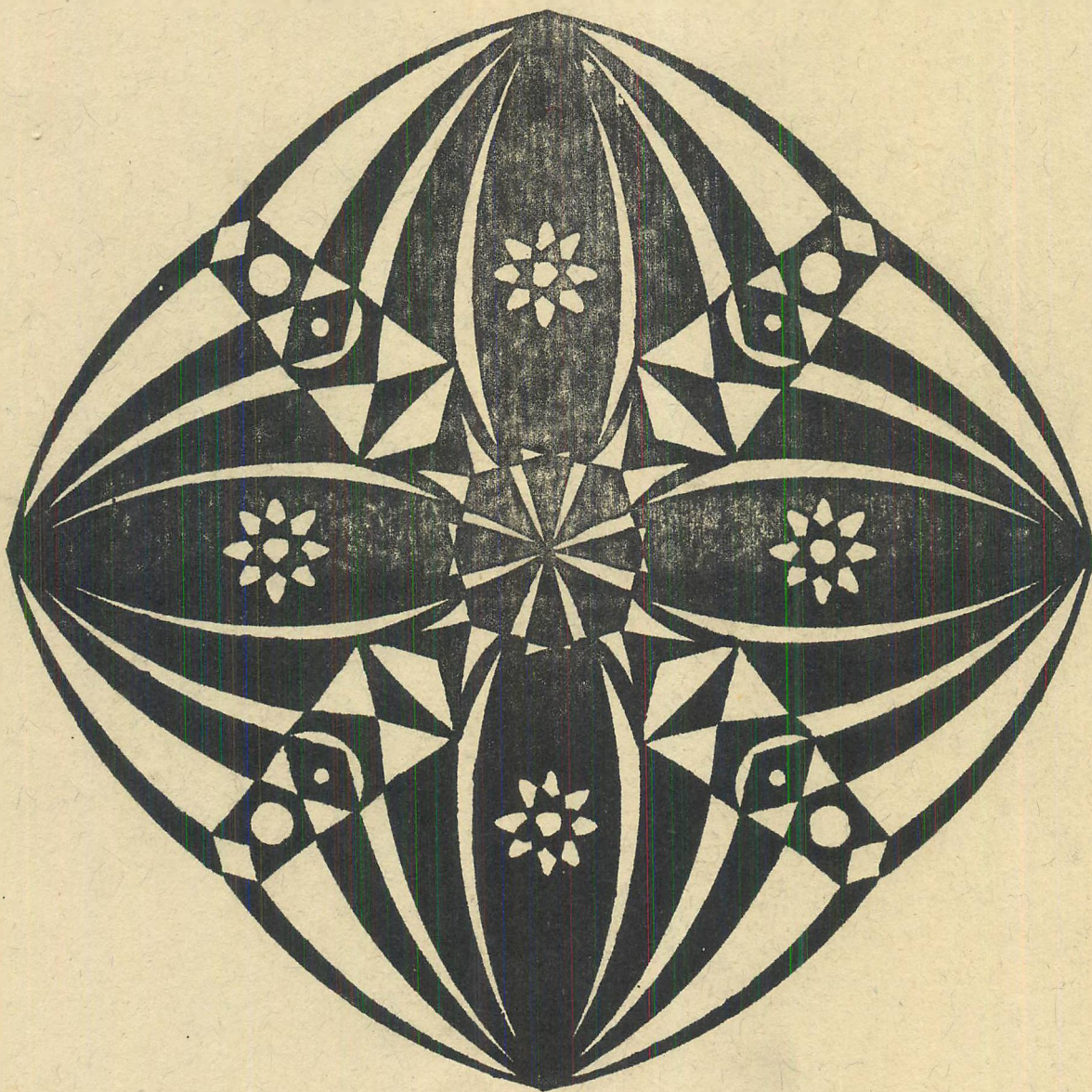


YANDRO



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This should have been the June issue, but didn't quite make it, for various reasons. We're being more irregular than usual this year.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS (more on page 43)

Steve Simmons, Zeeb House, 3825 N. Zeeb Road,

Dexter, MI 48130 (Zeeb? I don't believe that..)

Bill Bowers, P.O. Box 3157, Cincinnati, OH 45201

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ARTWORK

Cover by Fred Jakobcic

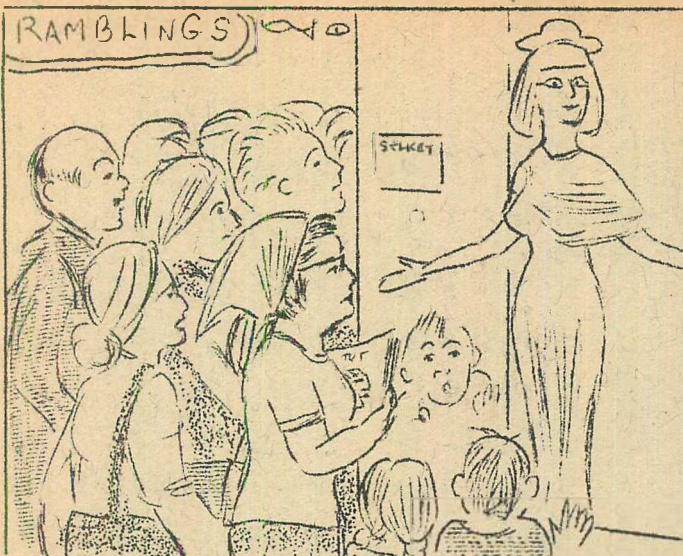
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" 11	Alan Lankin	" 41	Alan Lankin
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And two more new - for us - artists here; Jakobcic and Jackson. Next issue will probably have comments on Midwestcon - which was nice, as usual. Come to think of it, Juanita will probably include it in her editorial; mine was written before the con. Anyway, see you at Rivercon and we'll comment on that next round.

ACTUALLY, I WOULD
RATHER APPEAR
IN A GILLILAND
CARTOON BUT TIMES
IS TOUGH AND I TAKE
WORK WHERE I CAN
FIND IT.



FREJAC 77



It is distinctly and unpleasantly difficult to try to write an editorial when the outside temperature is 96 F and going up. The inside temperature is 83-84 F, and the humidity is considerably higher than that. By dint of typing a paragraph or two at a time and running a fan flatout and blowing strongly across me and the typer, I hope to get this completed today, and the last few pages mimeographed and the rest of this issue assembled. But it has not been easy. It went down into the 70s one day last week, and I hastily revved up the mimeo and ran stencils until my feet got tired of being rooted in the same spot for hours. At least that day the temperature was bearable and the humidity low enough that all the sheets of paper didn't stick together. But it was the only day like that recently. (We have long warned young fans thinking of putting on cons -- DON'T. The same applies to anyone thinking lightly of going into fanpubbing. The varying problems of machinery and weather are always going to be with you, unless, perhaps, you go to photo offset. But then, like in all other aspects of fanpubbing, you can join the club in wailing about the steady inflation in all of the materials required to put a fanzine. Fun, but there are times...)

There are compensations, though, and nice ones, some you never even suspected existed when you succumbed to the lust to feed paper into a mimeo and cut holes in stencils. Like being a GoH at a terrific con like Minicon, which we were this year. If only Mpls wasn't so far away. Being old fans and rapidly growing older and tired, we weren't up to one long horrendous drive-through from here, so collapsed overnight in Milwaukee with bev and Gene DeWeese, and then the next night trekked on northward, reversing the process coming back. It's roughly as far for us as driving to KC was, but a more intimate con, full of nice surprises and great people. Mpls fandom is a hotbed of good people -- all crazy, of course, or they wouldn't be putting on cons that require all that hard work, year after year. The musical, the panels, the parties, the huckstering and artshows...all very fine. And the fannish Easter Bunny left us space-eggs, too, on Sunday. Can't beat that for rounding off a con. (And just as a preview for the non-Midwesterners, to show them what we endure year-round, Minn-Stf arranged a special demonstration of weather, with temperatures in the high 80s over Easter weekend. We weren't taken aback or caught short, since we'd brought everything from winter coats to t-shirts, in anticipation and/or dread of exactly this sort of nasty joke from the climate. But out-of-regioners were a mite shocked, I believe. The Midwest is never what you expect. (And Midwestern, and Minn-Stf, fans, are more, much more...) We'd like to do it again next year. But I hope by that time we've saved enough to allow us to fly. That drive to and from has got to go to younger and sturdier fans, henceforth. We are tottering, to borrow from Tuck-

er.

Maybe by Minicon time next year I'll have reaped a few profits from writing a big steamy historical best seller...or rather from having sold sufficient copies of a big, steamy historical best seller. To be precise, this is the oft-described Babylonian epic, which Yan readers have been suffering through along with me. (Though not getting calluses on their fingers typing.) Last week I received from the editor at Ballantine the cover copy, containing the blurbs. My first reaction was to wonder if I wrote that. I guess I did, but it didn't sound nearly that...er...exciting when I was writing it. The genius of inspired copy editing makes it sound indeed like one of those mammoth, pulse-racing, romantic best sellers. And if it does persuade buyers to pick it up and pay for it, I'll be the last to object. The title

as of now is DARK PRIESTESS (and it's probably getting pretty late in the printing process to make any changes, so that's likely the way it'll hit the stands), and the catalog number, if I'm reading the copy right, is 345-24958-5-195. To say the very least, I'm going to be interested in how this one develops. It's not a gothic, though it evolved from one, and points me in a direction I'd like to go, toward historical fiction. Issue date is intended to be December. I'll let you know any further news when I get it. I can promise it'll deliver a lot of wordage for the money. Whether or not the sort of wordage fans might be willing to pay for...

And as Buck mentions in his editorial, I'll be busy this summer and fall, too, adapting a sword-and-sorcery novel, another long one, for del Rey books. Finding out about that one was a very unexpected and delightful surprise, the capper to Minicon, since Lester was kind enough to tip me off there that the sale was sort of pending. (And though Buck says the same-universe shorts appearing in Ted White's mags were "novellets", they weren't nearly that length. This novel, though, will be lengthy. Which is fine. I enjoy long warm-ups in writing, particularly when someone is nice enough to like the results and pay me for them.) Working title on this one is WEB OF WIZARD-RY, and of course I'll keep you posted on developments there, too.

We've just come back from Midwestcon and now is back-to-work time until Rivercon, which will probably be our last con of the summer. Cons are lovely, but in order to afford one, one must work. Fact of fannish life.

Buck also mentions, further along this, that we saw the Tut exhibit. It was a great deal more than the work of a moment (though not so long as the poor would-be viewers who did not have a membership to cut the red tape, as we did), but well worth it. The strongest overall impression I received was that few things are as you expect them to be; some are much larger, and the impact is heavier than you anticipated, and some are surprisingly small, but quite exquisite. I recommend it, if it's in your area and you have the time and patience (both are necessary, if you're not lucky -- our getting into the exhibit required less than two hours actual time in the museum, but two days' trips into Chicago and much extra time killed stalling for time in between purchasing the membership and actually entering the exhibit). My personal treasured mementos from the exhibit were the Selket statue and the Anubis pole; yours would no doubt be different, for your own reasons. But if you have the remotest interest in antiquities and history and beauty, you'll surely find something to stun you and delight your senses.

No Coulumn this issue, despite parental nagging. Bruce's new address is: 95 East 9th, Apt. 1, Columbus OH 43201. Maybe if others nag him, or better yet say the absent Coulumn leaves a noticeable and lamentable gap here -- which it does -- he'll squeeze one in for the next issue. Sure hope so.

I have no idea when the next issue will appear. It and an issue of Devlins Review are upcoming, but the normal division of labor arrangement for Yan and subsidiaries will have to shift this summer; I'll be increasingly busy with the sword-and-sorcery ms for del Rey Books. So...look for a scrambled stylebook and different typing patterns (and I will nag Buck to repair the faltering T key on this IBM, honest), because my bitter half will be taking over more of the typing chores for a while. I still have to do the mimeoing of course. (Nobody touches my precious hunka tin, the M-4 Rex; it's used to a delicate, er, well, kindly firm touch on the crank, one of long practice. If Buck asks nicely, I might teach him how to operate it, though, under supervision -- while I'm proofreading rough draft or something.) But more issues are coming, have faith. And they'll be along sooner if the weather cooperates, which it is most definitely not doing currently. Pray for moderation ~~and AAAA will bbbbbb ybb.~~ And pity the poor working farmers; today, in this region, they're out running combines in the noonday sun and harvesting wheat. And this morning, before doing that, our landlord and his son stopped by the attendant farm buildings connected with our residence to hose down their pigs, so the critters wouldn't die of heat stroke. Hoping you are not the same...



Pro news this round is that CHARLES FORT NEVER MENTIONED WOMBATS is available from Doubleday (see book reviews.) And according to Sharon Jarvis as relayed by DeWeese, it's already been sold in England - to Robert Hale, I assume. I would like to mention here that Fred Patten and Eric Lindsay sent me advance copies of their trip/con reports for use in researching the book. This notice should have gone in the book and didn't. I'm not positive why it didn't, but the highest probability of error rests with me, followed by the post office and Doubleday in that order. Gene worked from Tucker's trip report; that

didn't get mentioned in the credits, either, but Tucker gets enough publicity from his irrelevant introduction.

I understand the book is selling well, but I still would like YANDRO readers to provide a little publicity for it. The next time you're in your friendly local book store, see if it stocks WOMBAT. If it does, fine; you need do nothing further. If it isn't visible, please inquire about it. (If the proprietor then whips a copy out from under the counter, you may have to think fast to avoid buying it; it's best to work out replies in advance. Something on the order of "Oh, I didn't want to know for myself; my cousin wanted to know about it. I'll tell him you carry it." The same will work if he offers to make a special order for you, or you could casually say that he needn't bother; you'll get it from a mail-order dealer. Of course, if you want to buy a copy I'd be the last to discourage you, but I don't want to put you in a position where you have to buy one. The object is publicity, not sales per se.) The idea is that if a bookseller starts getting requests for a specific title, he may well order a few copies. And if WOMBAT is on display, I think the dust jacket is intriguing enough to sell a few, to the average book-browser. (I'm quite serious about this, by the way; the book can't sell where it's not displayed, and this is the best way I can think of to get more display space for it.)

Juanita's Babylonian epic has finally been finished and accepted and will probably be on sale in the fall. We'll tell you the title when we're sure what it is; current titles for it are "Dark Priestess" (the editor's choice) and "Lust In The Dust" (bestowed by Kay Anderson.) Also, she has a contract for a sword-and-sorcery novel from Del Rey/Ballantine. This will be set in the same world as the two novelets she did for FANTASTIC awhile back; she could make a fairly endless series of it, if encouraged.

Gene DeWeese was awarded first prize by the Wisconsin Writers Association for his Laser novel, JEREMY CASE. Best novel of the year by a Wisconsin writer.

Another book I want to mention is forthcoming; I just got an ad for it. After years of fans' wondering why all the sf art books ignored Edd Cartier, Gerry de la Ree, 7 Cedarwood Lane, Saddle River, NJ 07458, is bringing out EDD CARTIER: THE KNOWN AND THE UNKNOWN. 2000 copy limited edition; price \$15. Budget for it; I've already ordered one. (I probably will think that it doesn't include Cartier's best work, but with Cartier it doesn't matter much; all his work was good. I hope it will include my favorites, but almost anything by Cartier was a sort of favorite of mine.)

It's been awhile - and two conventions - since the last YANDRO. We attended Marcon briefly, though not quite as briefly as we had expected. We thought there wouldn't be any rooms left so we'd just go over on Saturday, but as it turned out we stayed over night. Pleasant enough little con; since I wasn't huckstering, I wandered around a lot and talked to the usual people. The con art show was notable for the ceramic and blown glass work of Dan Lovelace. I couldn't afford the glass (it was cheap enough, considering material and quality, but over my price range) but I did get a ceramic gargoyle. I hope Lovelace is at Midwestcon because I want to buy more of his stuff.

The Marcon art had its own little comedy of errors. We had to leave before the final art auction, so we left written bids on the sculpture and two paintings, and John Miesel agreed to collect it for us on the off chance that we actually got anything. (I mean, written bids always get overbid in the final auction, right? So we left bids on three items in the faint hope of getting one of them. You know what happened; John had two paintings and a sculpture to lug back to Indianapolis. Then we couldn't manage to get together in order to pick them up; eventually we took delivery of the stuff at an ISFA meeting in Lafayette, in May.)

So, at Minicon, we spoke very softly at the art auction, though we did get one gorgeous moonscape by one of the Minn-stf (I think) artists.

Minicon was a fine convention. Now I'm trying to figure out if we can afford to go back next year. (Afford the time, mainly; the money isn't that much of a problem, but spare time is limited and a 600-mile trip takes up a fair share of it.) We got to meet Clifford Simak and Alan E. Nourse, neither of whom I'd spoken to in person before. Simak in particular was very friendly and an interesting conversationalist. Gordon Dickson was there, of course, but then Gordy is at all the cons.... And Ben Bova, who I've met very briefly a couple of times.

Bob Asprin thoroughly croggled me by mentioning that his forthcoming novel from St. Martin's Press, THE BUG WARS, is based on my filksong "Reminder". (Then at the filksing he produced a song of his own, based sort of on the background of his novel, and I suggested writing a novel about it. (This sort of thing could go on forever. Profitably....))

Minneapolis even turned on the good weather for the con, hitting a record high for April of 88° F one day. (Which was hard on attendees who hadn't learned that midwestern weather is never what you expect. Ben Bova's daughter Elizabeth - a pleasantly fannish sort, incidentally - was muttering about not having brought any warm-weather clothing. Since we had driven up in a large station wagon, we'd used the room to bring suitable outfits for anything from a heat wave to a blizzard, so we enjoyed the warmth.)

Performance of "The Mimeo Man" was excellent; not only good fannish humor, but remarkably good singing voices, for the most part.

Juanita got an advance comment from Lester del Rey that he was "probably" going to buy her book, which he later did - I assume this means the con is a business expense. Besides, we spoke and circulated among the attendees and publicized....after all, the Fan GoH is supposed to mingle. He/she/they is part of the entertainment; a GoH who doesn't help put on a show isn't of much account. (Besides, Denny Lien threatened to coat me with plastic and stand me in the hotel lobby as a sort of con-totem-pole if I didn't participate....)

Other Coulson news. Well, NYSHIT finally has a paperback edition, for those of you who have been inquiring. How are you at reading Italian? We haven't seen any of the money yet (we haven't seen any of the money from the British sale, for that matter, though I bet we would have if we'd used my agent instead of Gene's. Oh well, we'll collect eventually.) Anyway, we were paper millionaires briefly; 1,414,000 lira. Less the large chunks taken out by the Italian government, Doubleday, and the agent; Gene and I should still get a little dribble of money.

We received a change of address notice from Billy Pettit, who mentioned among other things that he'd had to move 27,000 pounds of books and magazines (and that is presumably after he sold large chunks of his collection to Ben Jasen). I must say it discouraged me from the idea of moving again; we may not have that much stuff, but we have enough. Collecting type fans should stay put, slowly sinking into the subsoil.

The "Action Line" column of the Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette adopted a stray cat, and had a contest to name it. "Cataline" seemed fairly obvious to me, but nobody else thought of it and it was good enough to win. (Win what, I haven't discovered yet... Maybe I'll give Sunny Miller power-of-attorney to go up and collect the prize.)

We're a bit short of columnists this round. Even Bruce apparently can't get one in without his mother standing over him; two notices weren't enough. We do have a long column by Dave Locke which explains why he hasn't been writing much lately; it arrived too late for this issue and will go in the next one. Presumably Denny hasn't recovered from Minicon yet.

DEVLINS REVIEW #2 will be out shortly after this YANDRO. Approx. 50 pages of fanzine reviews; 75¢ by mail or 50¢ if you collect in person.

RSC

AN EVENING WALK

BY

william m. danner

The 76 car rolled swiftly along Fifth Avenue through the dusk, a little world of warmth and light in the December evening. There were not many passengers and I sat next a window watching the yellow squares of light from the car racing along the street and sidewalk and flashing momentarily upon each of the regularly-space, black steel poles.

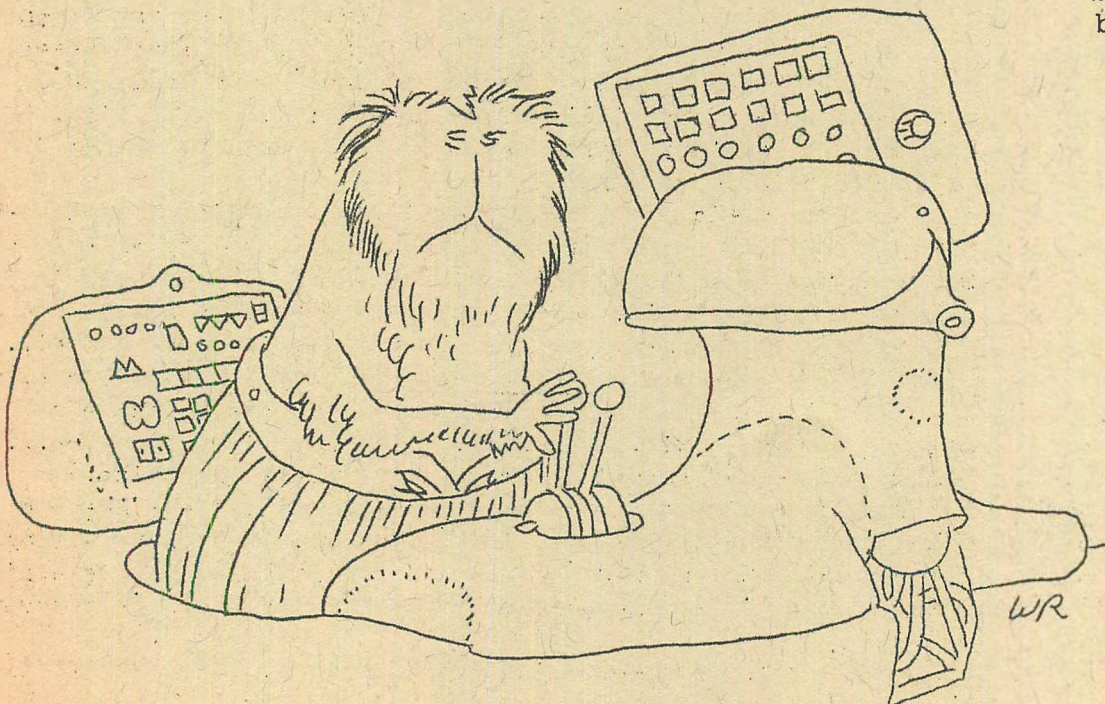
I was fourteen years old and not used to riding the trolleys alone. "Go straight up Highland until you run into the stone wall," Rich had said, "and take the first car that comes along." Highland ends at Fifth, on the far side of which is a high wall with a built-in shelter and drinking fountain. This car had come along just as I got to the corner and I had taken it without question.

As I rode I thought of what Rich and I had been doing for the proposed eighth-grade paper. The purpose of my afternoon visit had been to help set up and print the heading on his little rubber-type rotary press, while the rest was to be hand-written and reproduced on a hektograph. The fact is that the very little we accomplished that afternoon was the first and last work ever done upon the Blue & White, as it was to have been called.

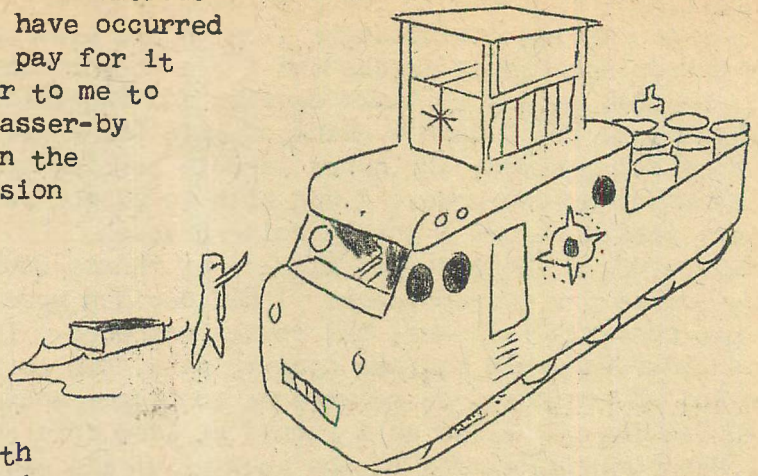
For some blocks an uneasy feeling had been growing in me and when the car stopped at the familiar corner of Ellsworth I knew why. I jumped from my seat and raced to the rear door, getting out just as the conductor started to close it. I had realized too late that Rich had meant it literally when he said "until you run into the stone wall." Instead of crossing Fifth and taking an outbound car I had boarded an inbound one. Having left home with only two nickels for the round trip and three odd cents

now did not have enough for another fare. I didn't know that I could have gotten a free transfer from the conductor that would have taken me back on the 75; and if I

has I would probably have forgotten to get one in my hurry to get off.



Three cents was not enough for a phone call, either, and even if taxis had been as numerous then as they are now it would not have occurred to me to take one and let someone pay for it when I got home. Nor did it occur to me to ask the two cents I needed of a passer-by or of the druggist in the store on the corner. After a moment of indecision on the windy corner I could see no course but to start walking, while wondering if I could walk that far. My clothes were quite warm enough and I was wearing overshoes, but I was not very robust as a boy and I had always hated walking. I started out Fifth in the direction from which I had just



come and then, after a few steps, stopped to think. When I had accompanied Mother to town on the car we had always taken a 75, so that I knew that route pretty well. I could hardly have gotten lost by following the Fifth Avenue tracks, but I decided to play safe. I turned back and started out Ellsworth.

The air was getting colder and occasional snow flurries added a bit to the two or three inches already covering the city. In those days there were no snow-plows for the streets and if there were any regulations about cleaning walks they were pretty generally ignored. As dusk deepened into darkness the packed snow covering most of the walks began giving out crunching noises at every step.

I realized that there was almost four miles ahead of me and refrained from hurrying, even while worrying about the fact that I was going to be very late getting home, if I got there at all. I suppose I got a sort of macabre pleasure from the vision of my exhausted body lurching and falling to the cold concrete; the discovery by some passerby; the ride home in an ambulance and the welcome I would get there. In an attempt to banish such thoughts I began to count my steps, but before long this became such an automatic process that I could keep it up even while thinking the most complex thoughts or while observing what little there was to be seen around me. (996, 997, 998...)

Those were the days when most automobiles were put upon blocks for the winter so there was little traffic except for the streetcars. I looked longingly at each outbound car as it sped past, almost feeling for a moment the pleasant warmth of the brightly-lighted interior. This part of Ellsworth was sparsely built up so that, except when a car passed, there was little illumination but that of the corner arc-lights.

I had no watch but felt as though I had been walking for hours. Then the outbound cars, pulling trailers, began coming only a few minutes apart so I knew it couldn't be more than five-thirty. The cars were jammed with standees but I'd gladly have changed places with any of them. Standing in that stuffy warmth, buffeted by the bodies moving with the swaying of the car, would have been infinitely preferable to the continued putting of one foot before the other in the dark and cold. (1265, 1266, 1267...)

I was tired before I was halfway home. For a little bit I thought I couldn't keep it up another moment. Somehow I did, and, while I certainly got no fresher, the feeling that I couldn't take another step gradually faded away.

Presently more frequent houses and a glow in the sky from its lights showed that I was approaching East Liberty. By this time I was walking as automatically as I was counting and hardly realized how tired I was. I looked at each warmly-lighted window I passed and wondered, illogically, why our house couldn't be located along here. The trolleys, more widely-spaced again and without trailers, were no longer crowded so I knew it must be about six o'clock. When I finally got to the business section the clocks verified this. It seemed forever since I started but I had been walking a

little less than an hour. I wondered how the crowds going their various ways could help noticing that I wasn't ready to drop quite yet. (4393, 4394, 4395...)

Past the waving incandescent flag on the Liberty Theatre and over the little bridge across the Pennsy tracks and I was on the home stretch. This part of Penn Avenue, devoted mainly to small stories and factories, was even darker and lonelier than Ellsworth, but I didn't think of this for I was wondering how I was going to explain my being almost two hours late in getting home. And now, having come all this way under my own power, I was able to glance somewhat disdainfully at the two cars that passed before I got to Point Breeze.

As I trudged the last two blocks out Thomas Boulevard I still had thought of no good excuse for my tardiness. I had decided upon one thing, though -- that I could not possibly tell what had really happened. It seemed to me then to be, not just an understandable mistake upon my part, but an inexcusable blunder that would get no end of fun poked at me were it to become known. (6482, 6483, 6484...)

My feeling of relief as I turned at last into the walk of the big house on the corner was somewhat dimmed by the thought of the explanation that would be demanded and the realization that I had none to offer. Mother was at the door when I opened it. (6483)

"Goodness, Bill," she exclaimed. "Where have you been all this time? We were getting worried."

Without hesitating even a second, I said, "I had to wait a long time for a street-car."

And that was the end of it.

NOTICES AND STUFF

Suncon has announced the final Hugo ballot. Nominees as follows: NOVEL - Children of Dune (Herbert), Man Plus (Pohl), Mindbridge (Haldeman), Shadrach In the Furnace (Silverberg), Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang (Wilhelm) I'm inclined to Herbert or Wilhelm. NOVELLA - By Any Other Name (Spider Robinson), Houston, Houston, Do You Read (Tiptree), Piper At the Gates of Dawn (Cowper), The Samurai and the Willows (Bishop). Tiptree first, Cowper second; no contention from the others. NOVELLET - The Bicentennial Man (Asimov), The Diary of the Rose (Le Guin), Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance (Varley), The Phantom of Kansas (Varley). Nothing I really care for; go with Le Guin or either of the Varleys (they missed his best one). SHORT - A crowd of Shadows (C. L. Grant), Custom Fitting (James White), I See You (Knight), Tricentennial (Haldeman). None of them terribly good; go with the White. DRAMA - "Carrie", "Future-world", "Logan's Run", "The Man Who Fell to Earth". I haven't seen any of them and have no urge to see any of them. EDITOR - James Baen, Ben Bova, Ed Ferman, Ted White. Ferman is my choice; no contest. White second. PRO ARTIST - George Barr, Vincent DiFate, Stephen Fabian, Rick Sternbach. Hard to choose there; I'd pick Barr or Fabian, but I like Sternbach, too. FANZINE - Locus, Mythologies, Outworlds, Science Fiction Review, The Spanish Inquisition. Go for the last one. FAN WRITER - Don D'Amassa, Dick Geis, Mike Glicksohn, Don C. Thompson, Susan Wood. I'll pick Wood first, D'Amassa second, in that group (none of them happen to be my favorites). FAN ARTIST - Grant Canfield, Phil Foglio, Tim Kirk, Bill Rotsler, Jim Shull. Since Kirk and Rotsler have already won, I'd like to see Shull get it. He's done a lot of excellent work. CAMPBELL AWARD FOR NEW WRITERS - Jack Chalker, C. J. Cherryh, M. A. Foster, Carter Schulz. Cherryh, I guess - or vote No Award. GANDALF AWARD FOR FANTASY - Poul Anderson, Ursula Le Guin, C. S. Lewis, Andre Norton. Anderson first, Norton second.

William Rotsler, P.O. Box 3126, Los Angeles, CA 90028, is collecting material for a book of contemporary quotations called QUOTEBOOK. He wants short, pithy items which can "stand alone and be valid and interesting, without even knowing who said it or what sex they were or under what circumstances" though as editor he would like to know a bit about the person being quoted if it can be done in a couple of words. There is no payment for quotes accepted.

"There are a lot of empty coconuts out there."

....Alex Eisenstein

THE CORRIDORS OF HER ESOPHAGUS,

THE HEADLIGHTS OF HER EYES

DUANE STEWART

I heard a scream.

It was a trite scream. One of those long keening wails which signal a maiden in distress.

I could ignore it and continue on into the night. But, my heroic tendencies being as they were, I was unable to disregard what fair maiden called for my aid.

I examined the cigarette in my hand. Only a quarter gone. A shame. Then I drew pleasurably upon the cylinder, quaffing the thick, delicious smoke. It was my last puff. Then I snubbed it out.

"What do you say, Black, should I rescue the damsel?" I asked my faithful steed.

"You know you want to! And, anyway, the name's Beige. Some thief hot-wired Black. Are you color-blind! I don't look a bit like Black. You should keep track of your horses."

"I thought it was Pink who was stolen."

"As I said -- colored-blind."

Hurriedly, I dismounted from Beige, my horse -- at least to stifle the garrulous creature. Beige was one of those mechanical contraptions keyed to only my neural processes. It would not function without me upon its back. This cuts down on thievery, although there are some smart aleck adolescents who are able to hot-wire the horses.

After patting the now serene creature, I departed the scene. Quickly, at that.

I ran toward the yonder castle, heart pumping, lungs filling with air. I gasped, slowed, stopped. (The overall effect of those lousy cigarettes was far from beneficial. It was a habit, though a delightful habit. And it was damn hard to kick. Somehow, I would have to improve my health if I wished to consummate my life of heroism.) Sucking in precious air, I resolved to fight fatigue and continue.

So I did.

The scream sounded again.

Dumb broad.

I neared the source of the harsh voice and finally reached the steps at the foot of the castle.

I looked up.

The moon cast a silver radiance over the majestic castle; and the granite walls began to scintillate as stars in the vast expanse of space.

So much for the poetry of the situation...

I took the steps two at a time, the tap of my feet echoing in the blackness.

The goofy broad was still at it. My ears were annoyed.

I arrived at the castle and gazed upwards at the source of the scream.

"What ails ye, o lovely maiden of my dreams?" A bit of tender wordage will get 'em everytime.

"A monster is pounding at the door of my chamber, o prince and savior of my sleep's fantasies."

She wasn't bad herself.
"What kind of monster?"
"Does it matter?"
"No."
"Then come on up!"
"How?"
"My hair."

What appeared to be creeping vines encircling the tower, was in actuality hair of grayest gray. A Rapunzel she was not! A stared carefully at the opening above, but there were only shadows, naught else. And this brought remembrances of fatigue and hunger and thirst. I hadn't had a shadow all night.

"Well, are you coming, or are you just going to stand there and allow the wretched monster to molest me? Hurry up while I keep my hair taut!"

So I did and she did. (She couldn't be that ugly! Her voice was gently enticing. I could anticipate at least a face of decent beauty.)

As I climbed, I felt the power of my arms diminish. Then I came to the opening and encountered the damsel which I strived to save. Then I screamed.

I attempted to escape, but she grasped my wrist in bony fingers and pulled me into her dark chamber. (I don't want to seem demeaning or anything -- but, God, was she grisly!)

I was down, and she was atop me; frenziedly her arms and hands traveled the course of my frame with bawdy intention.

"I have you! I need a man. Any man. Just a man to fulfill the object of my desires, to satisfy my sensual cravings, to sacrifice his being in ecstatic communion...You are the man. You, you, I love you!"

A woman's mouth never ceases its constant chatter.

I pushed her away. Then I pulled a knife from under my torn cloak. I could feel the poisons of weakness seeping into my muscles. This active endeavor was against my expectations. If I would have known, I could have quaffed down my bottle of shadows to replace my depleted strength. There was not a natural shadow to be found anywhere!

I compelled myself toward her. She backed away, consumed with fear of impending doom. (I noticed that my bottle of shadows had fallen from my cloak in the scuffle and lay a few feet from her feet.)

I was very weak.

Her back was against the wall. Her eyes bulged. Then I rose the blade, intent on the kill.

"No-no-no-no-no, that is wrong! Don't do that!"

I swirled around, surprised. Yet the voice was so familiar.

I stood before me. Rather, a spirit of I.

"Who are you?"

"Your conscience."

"Impossible!"

"Do you see me?"

"Yes."

"Case closed!" My conscience produced a cigarette, flicked a lighter and lit it. Began puffing away.



"You're smoking! That's a vice!"

"I'm your conscience -- not vice versa. I can do as I please."

"Give me that cigaret!" I groped outward, but my conscience kept it out of reach.

"No, you have your own."

"Then leave me. Depart. Scram Sam! Buzz off, creep!"

"I'll pester you until you decide against killing her. Killing is a sin."

"But I am only relieving this unfortunate witch of the misery of ugliness and abstinence. Is that sinful?"

"Permit her to indulge. Then she will be happy."

"Would you... Well... You know?"

"You have a point there."

"Then will you please go."

"Might as well. As long as you don't feel bugged by me."

"No, as a matter of fact, I don't."

"I'll go, then. Bye. Nice talking to you.."

The image of I disappeared. That is, my conscience disappeared.

I turned back to my task. But the witch had taken the bottle of shadows from the floor and held it temptingly before me.

"You thirst! Oh, how you thirst! Your throat burns like the fires of hell! You feel fatigue. I possess the medicine. The price: be my lover."

I licked my lips. "No." But I could not move. I was paralyzed. I required a shadow. And fast.

She laughed. Shrill. Irritating.

She came forward, tantalizing me with the shadows contained in the flask.

I mustered a mote of energy, and slashed downward with the knife.

She pranced away, But the flask slipped from her grasp.

Glass shattered.

Shadows suffused the floor.

She screamed -- again.

I stepped into the puddle of strength (I prefer taking shadows internally, but this was sufficient under the present circumstances) and killed her.

And that was that.

I mounted Beige. As we made off into the night, I recognized the silence for what it was.

Some damned bandits had stolen Beige's hoofcaps.

I should have never entered this strange neighborhood.

Thinking a mixture of exotic thoughts, I strived to reach Chartreuse, the only real world. And damned if I'd ever find it!

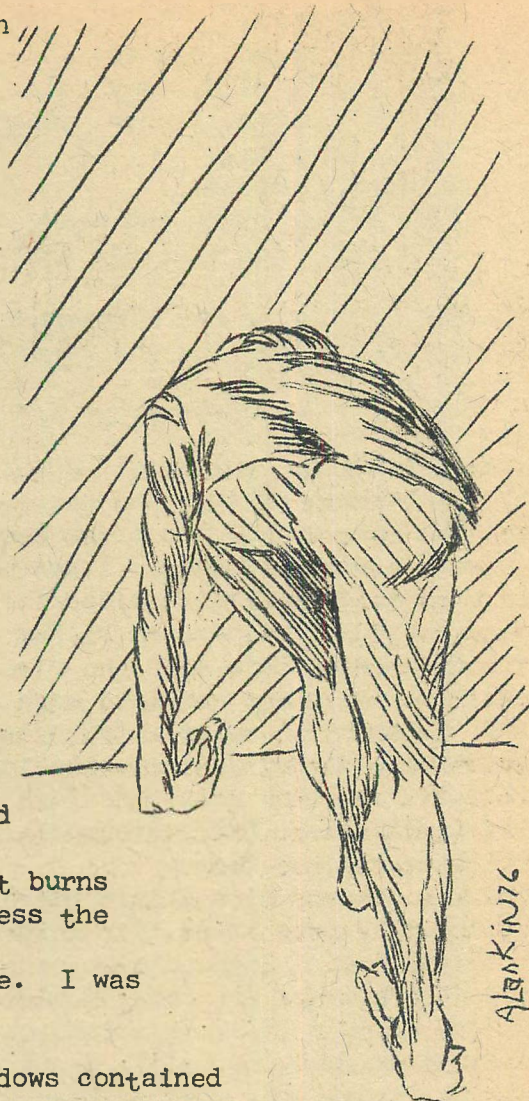
I remembered what Beige had said about me being color-blind. Perchance, I have my colors crossed.

"I tell you, it's useless!" remarked Beige just then. "We'll never get home with your memory to guide us!"

"Ahh, hush up!"

"If I can only recall..."

"Maybe yellow," I said. "Gold..."



"Getting warm."

"Purple, green, silver..."

"Now you're cold, very cold."

"White...Amber...amber, amber...AMBER!!"

"Hot, quite hot."

I heard a scream.

"You better hurry and start concentrating," said Beige.

So I did. And that was that.

"The Han Solo Award for Marksmanship, presented to those people who can fall out of a canoe without hitting the water." (Zilch, as I recall, via the Passovoyes)

CONVENTIONS AND OTHER THINGS WORTH NOTICING

Since writing my editorial, Juanita and I have been to Chicago, where we got to see the Tutankhamen exhibit and were treated to a showing of "Star Wars". (The Passovoyes insisted that we go, and after seeing some of the promotional material for the show, I wasn't a bit reluctant.) I recommend the movie unreservedly; it's the most fun I've had with science fiction since I discovered PLANET STORIES years ago. Producer George Lucas obviously discovered PLANET at some point, too, and has brought it to gorgeous life on screen. It's also the first movie I've seen in any category where grandiose special effects are combined with a plot that refuses to take itself seriously. (The final dogfight in space is a joyous parody of numerous WW II movies with naval air squadrons launched against opposing carriers.) None of it is at all serious, and it's all good fun. (And while the fans in the audience are rolling in the aisles - literally in his case, Larry Propp claims - the mundanes are finding it all terribly thrilling.) Go see it.

Somewhere around here I laid out a batch of convention information. Let's see....

AUTOCLAVE 2, July 22-24. For information write Leah Zeldes, 2191 Parklawn, Oak Park, MI 48234. Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge in Detroit. \$6 advance, \$7 at the door. Fan-nish programming, art show, movies, banquet, presentation of the FAAN Awards.

ARCHCON 2, July 15-17. For information contact John Novak, 1260 Moorlands Drive, Richmond Heights, MO 63117. Stouffer's Riverfront Towers in St. Louis. General programming, hucksters, movies, Fred Haskell Song and Slide Show. I'd like to be there if only to see the Couches as Fan GoH, but we won't have time. \$5 advance, \$7 at door.

SUMMERCON 1, July 29-31. For information write Summercon, Apt. 1210, 411 Duplex Ave, Toronto, Ont. M4R 1V2, Canada. Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto, for programming; Carlton Inn for parties and sleeping. \$5 until July 1; then \$6.

HIPPOTOCON 1, Aug. 12-14. For information write Paula Gold, Box 51A, RR 2, Beecher, IL 60401. Sheraton-Homewood in Homewood, Illinois. (That's close to Chicago....) A non-programmed con from Wally Franke, Paula Gold and Lynn Parks. \$5 pre-registration, \$7 at door. (Another one we'd enjoy attending but probably won't.)

And of course one that we will attend; RIVERCON 3, July 29-31. Stouffer's Louisville Inn, Louisville, KY. For information, write Rivercon, P.O. Box 8251, Louisville, KY 40208. \$5 in advance and \$10 at the door. Programming, films, hucksters, art show, masquerade, riverboat cruise. (The masquerade is usually where midwest costume freaks try out their Worldcon costumes.)

And of course MIDWESTCON, but by the time you get this, that will be over. We'll be there, and hope that we see you.

WINDYCON 4, October 7-9. For information, write Windycon 4, P.O. Box 2572, Chicago, IL 60690. Arlington Heights Hilton (also near Chicago). \$5 advance; \$8 at door.

Programming, art show, masquerade, presumably a banquet. I said I'd never go to another Windycon until they got it out of downtown Chicago, and this year they did, sothe Coulsons will probably be in attendance. Probably.....

THE ART OF FRANK KELLY FREAS is a book forthcoming from The Donning Co./Publishers, 253 West Bute St., Norfolk, VA 23510, for \$29.95. Apparently 8-1/2 x 11 size, 55 full-color Freas paintings. We've ordered one.... Shipping date is supposed to be Sept. 9, 1977.

GOLDEN MINUTES

CHARLES FORT NEVER MENTIONED WOMBATS, by Gene DeWeese & Robert Coulson [Doubleday, \$6.95] The sequel to NOW YOU SEE IT/HIM/THEM... This time our mild-mannered reporter gets mixed up with disappearing wombats, a metallic disc with strange powers, a planeload of fans on their way to Australia, and various improbable events after they all arrive. Also back from the first book are Kay Clarke, the invisible Bob Adams, and the strong-mannered reporter Don Thompson. The rest of the cast is new, strange, exotic, and more than a little inept. Some of them you may recognize. (Incidentally, at least one fan reviewer, commenting on the Tuckerism in the first book, wondered idly if Kay Clarke was "real". Well...sort of. A combination of two fannes, a actually, with totally fictional mental characteristics and powers.) The dust jacket illustration is the best I've seen on a Doubleday book in years -- that doesn't matter to the story, but we have hopes that it will help sell the books.

THE TRITONIAN RING, by L. Sprague de Camp [Owlswick Press, \$12.50, Del Rey/Ballantine \$1.50] Two reprints of an excellent sword-and-sorcery novel. De Camp is an expert at making his fantasies seem real (he makes them a bit too real for some of the s&s fans, but I prefer them that way). Our hero must go on a Quest, through a primitive world full of typically barbaric, greedy, treacherous, bullying humans, with a few gods and wizards thrown in. He has an unpleasant time, and is human enough to complain about it now and then, and it's all very enjoyable. Obviously, if you only want to read the story, you buy the Ballantine edition. The advantages of the Owlswick Press volume are hard covers, a dust jacket by Jim Cawthorn and George Barr, numerous interior illustrations which seem to be mostly Cawthorn, and the probability that it will go up in value as soon as it's out of print. But buy one or the other because it's well worth reading.

IMPERIAL EARTH, by Arthur C. Clarke [Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, \$7.95, Ballantine, \$1.95] Hmm. George Oshry used that title years ago -- remember, Lee? But I think Clarke has a better story... Mostly, it's a travelog of Earth in the year 2776, during the US Tricentennial celebration. Clarke is considerably more optimistic about our future than most sf authors seem to be these days. There is a plot, of course, but it's a trifle stiff; Clarke has never been known for his characters but for his scientific ideas and occasionally his philosophic concepts. The plot is adequate to carry the reader past the "background" ideas and comments, which are the important parts of the book, in this case. The Ballantine edition has one of the trick covers being used on paperbacks that are expected to be best-sellers; it's a fad I'll be happy to see the end of.

EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS: THE MAN WHO CREATED TARZAN, by Irwin Porges [Ballantine, \$10] This is a two-volume boxed set; a total of over 1300 pages. Fully illustrated; there seemed to be almost as many photos as there are words. Photos of Burroughs, Burroughs' homes, Burroughs' family, vacation photos, shots of covers and titles pages of Burroughs' stories, etc. But there is a remarkable amount of wordage, too. (I learned a lot about the man, including the fact that I probably would have loathed him if I'd known him in person. As a young man he tended to leap into projects on impulse and then expect his father to get him out of them if the results weren't up to his expectations, and as a writer he still had to have everything his way or he wouldn't play. However, I didn't know him in person, so I am content to loathe his writing.) All in all, it's an excellent job, and (even though I have been known to mutter about the good old days when paperbacks sold for a quarter) undoubtedly worth the money to anyone with any sort of interest in Burroughs. Considering that I enjoyed it, and I

don't have any interest in Burroughs, it would seem to be a must for the Burroughs fans. In fact, it's probably a must for anyone with any sort of interest in people; an excellent biography.

KEEPERS OF THE GATE, by Steven O. Spruill [Doubleday, \$5.95] This has much of the air of a George O. Smith novel (HELLFLOWER, to be specific). Not that the plot is all that similar, but there's a sort of Smith feel to the book, as our retired military protagonist keeps running into inexplicable events and the nagging suspicion that his government has been infiltrated by aliens. It's the sort of interplanetary adventure that used to be a staple in Startling Stories; by current standards it's outdated and old fashioned and I enjoyed it immensely. Recommended.

SKYFALL, by Harry Harrison [Atheneum Publishers, \$8.95] A near-future novel. The world's largest (to that date) space vehicle is launched, with a six-person Russian-American crew. There is a malfunction, and the vehicle is stuck in a decaying orbit; unless repairs can be made in space, the ship will strike the atmosphere within a few orbits and then a spaceship with the mass of a destroyer will come down -- somewhere -- on Earth. The scene shifts between the crew trying to salvage the mission (and their lives) and the governments of the two countries, playing politics in the face of disaster. It's a good idea, the technology shown seems authentic, and the characterization is at least adequate for a thriller. A good, solid book; one of Harrison's better jobs.

THE BEST FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD, edited by Don Wollheim [Doubleday, \$7.95] To be more accurate, as Wollheim admits in his introduction, this is the best that he could locate from Western Europe, but that wouldn't be as grabby a title. From France there is "Party Line" by Gerard Klein, "A Problem in Bionics" by Pierre Barbet, and "Ysolde" by Nathalie-Charles Henneberg. Norway provides "A White Shade of Pale" by Jon Bing and "Codemus" by Tor Age Brinsvaerd. Germany supplies "Paradise 3000" by Herbert W. Franke and "The King and the Doilmaker" by Wolfgang Jeschke. Then there are "Pairpuppets" by Manuel Van Loggem (Holland), "The Scythe" by Sandro Sandrelli (Italy), "My Eyes, They Burn" by Eddy C. Bertin (Belgium), "Rainy Day Revolution No. 39" by Luigi Cozzi (Italy), "Nobody Here But Us Shadows" by Sam J. Lundwall (Sweden), "Round and Round and Round Again" by Domingo Santos (Spain), and "Planet For Sale" by Niels E. Nielson (Denmark). There is a good variety, though on the whole it would seem to appear that European writers, being members of the intellectual community, consider technology somewhat beneath them. Jeschke's time travel novelet would be at home in any US anthology, and probably one of its better stories. Here, it's well above the competition. Bing's color-blind (literally) aliens are well-drawn. Barbet has an interesting idea, if not much of a story. Santos' extrapolation of freeways is cute. The rest is philosophical fiction, and not all that high a grade of philosophy.

THE SWORD OF ARADEL, by Alexander Key [Westminster, \$7.50] Juvenile swords and sorcery. Brian, the child of a serf, becomes important in the struggle for succession of the duchy (name of the country is unspecified, but it sounds vaguely English -- or possibly one of those little German principalities that littered the map for centuries.) Eventually, together with a half-breed dryad, he starts his quest for the Sword, which has been "hidden" in a museum in his future (but in our present). It's well enough plotted, and, if the heroine didn't keep reminding me of Shirley Temple at her most nauseatingly cute period, I'd recommend it for anyone. As it is...well, 9 to 12 year olds shouldn't object too much to her (though modern liberated girls might, at that.). Recommended anyway; it has flaws, but it's not at all a bad juvenile.

A SCANNER DARKLY, by Philip K. Dick [Doubleday, \$6.95] A novel about drugs and -- of course -- about the Nature of Reality. I gather the characters are based more or less on real people; in an afterword, Dick says it's "about some people who were punished entirely too much for what they did." (But stupidity brings its own punishment, and for a human to call an act of nature "too much" is the height of stupid

arrogance.) It's probably an excellent novel of the drug scene of a few years ago, slightly extrapolated; I wouldn't know. I didn't like it, but that's personal; I didn't like the characters. I probably would have loathed their real-life counterparts. This one you'll have to try for yourself and see what you think of it.

SCIENCE FICTION OF THE 30's, edited by Damon Knight [Book Club] But I picked up a remaindered copy, so I don't know the original price. It's a big book -- 460 pages -- and includes 18 stories. The 1930s are divided into three sections -- early, middle, and late -- and the editor has a short commentary at the beginning of each section. (I must say I hadn't realized I was so well read in the field; I'd already read over 2/3 of the contents.) Until one gets into the late (or Campbell) period, most of the stories aren't very good, and these are supposedly the cream of the crop. But there are a few interesting examples, even in the early works. Contents are "Out Around Rigel" by Robert H. Wilson, "The Fifth-Dimensional Catapult" by Murray Leinster, "Into the Meteorite Orbit" by Frank B. Kelly, "The Battery of Hate" by John W. Campbell, Jr., "The Wall" by Howard W. Graham, "The Lost Language" by David H. Keller, "The Last Men" by Frank Belknap Long, "The Other" by Howard Graham, "The Mad Moon" by Stanley Weinbaum, "Davey Jones' Ambassador" by Raymond Z. Gallun, "Alas, All Thinking!" by Harry Bates (who is better known to modern readers for his "Farewell to the Master," on which the movie THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL was loosely based), "The Time Decelerator" by A. Macfayden, Jr., "The Council of Drones" by W.K. Sonneman, "Seeker of Tomorrow" by Eric Frank Russell and Leslie T. Johnson (certainly the worst story Russell was ever associated with), "Hyperpilosity" by L. Sprague de Camp, "Pithecanthropus Rejectus" by Manly Wade Wellman, "The Merman" by de Camp, and "The Day Is Done" by Lester del Rey.

THE LITANY OF SH'REEV, by William Jon Watkins & Gene Snyder [Doubleday, \$5.95] I couldn't get far enough into this one to really find out what it was about. I ran into too many lines like "Her voice was like molten gold being poured over him" and "The nimbus of their oneness mellowed around them." and "Sh'reev watched the dark star of her death like a navigation mark." If you like this sort of thing, fine; I felt like I was beating my way through molasses. The central character seems to be a psychic healer who has precognitive visions couched in sticky symbolism.

MAGIC CARPET MAGAZINE [Odyssey Publications, PO Box 71, Melrose Highlands, MA 02177 - \$4.50] Reprints from this short-lived publication, which featured primarily oriental adventure stories but included some fantasies. Photo-offset, original artwork included, paperbound. Authors included are mostly those remembered today: Edmond Hamilton, Seabury Quinn, E. Hoffman Price, Clark Ashton Smith, H. Bedford-Jones, and Robert E. Howard under his "Patrick Ervin" pseudonym, along with several names less well-known. The stories are generally above-average in quality for the period.

THE DRAGON AND THE GEORGE, by Gordon Dickson [Ballantine, \$1.95] A thoroughly enjoyable fantastic farce. Jim Eckart, worrying about getting promoted to an instructorship and finding some place decent to live so he can get married, has stray thoughts about the good old pre-mechanical days when knights in armor didn't have to put up with arrogant professors, penny-pinching landlords, inflation, and the rest of our modern ills. He doesn't think of all the little problems -- such as, when being sent to a more primitive era by what amounts to astral projection, that he's going to wind up as a dragon instead of a knight. Then he must join forces with Brian the knight, Aragh the English wolf, Giles the outlaw, Dafydd the bowman, and Secoh the mere-dragon to war against Evil. It's a none-too-serious medieval fantasy, and one of the best books of the year.

KNAVE OF DREAMS, by Andre Norton [Ace, \$1.75] A long novel. The basic plot is the old PRISONER OF ZENDA one; the hero who looks like a ruler of some country or other and who is substituted for him as part of a Plot. Except that Ramsey is kidnapped into an alternate world because he is the psychic as well as physical double of the Prince, and neither of the two opposing sides is very virtuous so he has to operate on his own, in a world where super-science has degenerated into wizardry. It's well enough handled, and I enjoyed it, despite the cover. Good light entertainment.

THE CLEWISTON TEST, by Kate Wilhelm [Pocket Books, \$1.75] An excellent near-future novel about the interrelationships of people, which has a solid scientific background. Since I've never liked Wilhelm's short stories, it surprised me. It's also, I might mention to any right-wingers in the audience, somewhat of a feminist novel, inasmuch as the protagonist who puts work above everything else is a woman (which shouldn't actually make it "feminist," but does, things being what they are). Probably the best thing about it is that it's not one-sided; everyone has clear motives and believable emotional responses. There are only a few places where someone acts like an idiot, which puts it well above average in that department. Highly recommended.

THE PASSING OF THE DRAGONS, by Keith Roberts [Berkley, \$1.75] A dozen short stories from one of the best science fiction writers in the world today. One or two may be from F&SF, but most appeared first in England and will be unfamiliar to you, unless you're as omnivorous in your sf reading as I am. Stories are "The Deepes" (generation gap with a vengeance in an undersea colony), "Therapy 2000" (minor item written around noise pollution), "Boulter's Canaries" (a horror story with an interesting gimmick), "Synth" (the robot who develops emotions; not new, but well handled), "Man-scarer" (an extrapolation of mobiles and the place of the artist in society), "Coranda" (Moorcock's glaciated future and high emotion; all very symbolic and not terribly good), "The Grain Kings" (a sea story transported to the future and gigantic harvesting machines; the characters are suitably dwarfed and the effect is outstanding), "The White Boat" (a smugglers' boat as a symbol of freedom; I don't think much of the symbolism but it's well written), "The Passing of the Dragons" (a truly incomprehensible alien race), "The Lake of Tuonela" (a look into the sort of person who does things, for whatever supposed reason, simply because they haven't been done before), "I Lose Medea" (an alien future -- or alternate world? -- with time-travel, witchcraft, and what-have-you mixed together), and "Weihnachtsabend" (a grisly look at a Britain which surrendered to a Nazi Co-Prosperity Sphere and one of the best stories in the book). A large book; 300-plus pages. Recommended.

THE CHALK GIANTS, by Keith Roberts [Berkley, \$1.25] A year old, but I just got around to it. I hadn't realized, when I read these stories originally, that they formed a coherent whole, similar to PAVANE (and apparently a preliminary to it, which makes PAVANE a far-future book instead of an alternate-world one). This volume covers the recovery of a world from holocaust. In "Monkey and Pru and Sal", a few traumatized survivors exist among the ruins. In "The God House", "The Beautiful One," and "Rand, Rat, and the Dancing Man" an intelligent and ambitious woman sets the course of her world. Beginning as a dreamer in a peasant society, she rises to power as a priestess -- and becoming responsible for the chalk carvings of the book title -- and eventually, senile and searching for youth, evolves the religion of the Wheel. And in "Usk the Jokeman" the new religion and the new feudalism are both in full flower. Aside from making a fascinating whole, each story is well done. Highly recommended.

MACHINES AND MEN, by Keith Roberts [Panther, 50p] Some duplication of PASSING OF THE DRAGONS; this includes "Boulter's Canaries," "Therapy 2000," "The Deepes," "Man-scarer," and "Synth". It also contains "Manipulation" (the ironic life of a telekineticist), "Escapism" (an excellent story of contact between present, past, and future), "Sub-Lim" (the problems of a subliminal tv technique that worked all too well), "Breakdown" (a rural mechanic is called on to repair a flying saucer), and "The Pace That Kills" (automobile speed as a symbol for human daring; I could have done with another symbol, however well-written it is). Overall; a trifle dubious purchase if you already have DRAGONS, but I personally think that 5 different Roberts stories make it worth the money.

BROTHERS OF EARTH, by C.J. Cherryh [DAW #212, \$1.50] Cast away on a primitive planet, with the only other human a member of the enemy nation, Cherryh avoids all the clichés of this plot, at the expense of most of the exotic appeal. The characters are made "real" -- and just a trifle uninteresting. (Djan has appeal in her attempts to reconcile her humanity with her power, but protagonist Kurt Morgan is an out-of-place middle-echelon executive, with all the appeal of a robot insurance salesman.) The

plot is suitably convoluted and the primitive society is well-constructed, but I lost interest in what happened to the protagonist about page 20 and never regained it.

THE POWER OF BLACKNESS, by Jack Williamson [Berkley, \$1.50] The "Blacklantern" stories, originally published in the magazines, put together to form a novel (which they pretty obviously were, anyway). Blacklantern is a primitive recruited into a galaxy-wide troubleshooting force. Not being a superman, he has problems, but he's not the impotent anti-hero of too much modern sf, either. The stories are sheer adventure, and the characters are a good grade of cardboard, but they're fun to read.

A WHIFF OF MADNESS, by Ron Goulart [DAW #207, \$1.25] Our stalwart heroes from Muckrake Magazine are off on another round of adventure in the Barnum system, mixing it up with King Waldo and the Phantom of the Fog, a highwayperson named The Saarlet Angel, Den of Thieves #206, and various other improbabilities. As a series, this holds up better than most (for me, anyway) because somewhat repetitious slapstick doesn't get dull as quickly as repetitious adventure does. Not to be taken seriously, but quite enjoyable.

THE EMPEROR OF THE LAST DAYS, by Ron Goulart [Popular Library, \$1.50] A slightly addled computer and its more or less human minions conspire to save the US from succumbing to dictatorship. This has more adventure and less farce than Goulart's Barnum System books, but it's still a long way from being serious. (An esper who only hypnotizes robots is the sort of character I can appreciate...) As in all Goulart's books, people and machinery tend to be more or less inept -- in fact, Barney the computer is probably the most resourceful character that Goulart has yet presented. Recommended.

GADGET MAN, by Ron Goulart [Paperback Library] You'll probably have to look for this in the secondhand book stores, which is where I found it. The characters here are even less apt than they are in EMPEROR, and the situation is more farcical. Action takes place in The Republic of Southern California, which was formed in a general breakup of the US (I must admit that I enjoyed the -- accidental -- Tuckerization of referring to the country as RSC). This features idiotic guerillas opposed to ridiculous government agents, with the protagonist a more or less innocent bystander. Moderately recommended if you can find a copy.

THE SEA BEASTS, by A. Bertram Chandler [Curtis] Another secondhand volume; I grabbed it because (a) I'd never seen it when it was new, and (b) it is not a Commodore Grimes novel. It's a fair adventure story of a revolt of the dolphins, whales, etc., with the handicap of a rather prissy protagonist. I've read worse, but I've also read a lot better.

SATAN'S WORLD, by Poul Anderson [Berkley, \$1.50] One of the novels about Nicholas van Rijn and associates. Anderson's version of the adventures of unrestrained capitalism, presented somewhat more logically than even Heinlein does it (largely because Heinlein is a truer believer and tends to assume that his ideas are obvious, while Anderson plugs loopholes and shores up possible weaknesses). Essentially a space opera; an alien species menaces humanity. Very well handled; enjoyable light reading.

NEW WRITINGS IN SF 26 and 27, edited by Ken Bulmer [Corgi, 60p and 65p respectively] Two more volumes in the longest-running and best series of original-story anthologies. #26 includes "A Planet Called Cervantes" by John Keith (a rather weak story of superpowers and side effects), "Men of Good Value" by Chris Priest (a tract on the evils of propaganda which is barely science and barely fiction), "Three Coins in Enigmatic Fountains" by Brian Aldiss (3 vignettes which I didn't read), "The Phobos Transcripts" by Cherry Wilder (an interesting variant of the alien-contact story; very good), "The Man Who" by David Garnett (a fantasy about the Ultimate Rut; not all that great), "You Get Lots of Yesterdays, Lots of Tomorrows, and Only One Today" by Laurence James (the programmed future -- as a rule of thumb, I've discovered that the longer the title, the poorer the story), "Murders" by Ramsey Campbell (could be the same society as James', at an earlier period, and the story is almost as dull), "To The

Pump Room With Jane" by Ian Watson (a study of madness; not bad and not fantasy), and "The Seafarer" by Ritchie Smith and Thomas Penman (all very symbolic and poetic and pretentious). Overall -- well, you win a few, you lose a few. This is one of the losers.

#27 starts with "Bartholomew & Son" (and the Fish-Girl)" by Michael Coney (a short story with the same background as THE JAWS THAT BITE; good), "The Day They Cut Off The Power" by Vera Johnson (student rebels of the future; not bad; I believe Johnson writes better fiction than she does folksongs), "A Time of Mind" by Keith Wells (more superpowers, not particularly engrossing), "Year By Year The Evil Gains" by Brian Aldiss (3 more vignettes that I didn't read), "Long Time Ago, Not Forgotten" by Bob van Laerhoven (moderately interesting story of the emotions of future "freaks"), "Zone" by Peter Linnett (gimmicky and not very good story of the horrors of absolutism), "Heatwave" by David Langford (nice satire though unfortunately very poor science fiction), "Heal Thyself" by John Rackham (nice idea on the possible blend of medicine and mysticism), "The Observer" by Graham Charnock (much poetic ado leading up to an obvious and rather banal point), and "Cassius and the Mind-Jaunt" by Colin Kapp (fairly interesting variant of the story in which the protagonist literally enters another mind; cardboard characters but good action). Overall; enough good ones in here to make it one of the winners.

NEWTON AND THE QUASI-APPLE, by Stanley Schmidt [Popular Library, \$1.50] The problems of interfering with a planet just entering the age of technology. Interfering for the best of motives, of course; pure humanitarianism. It's basically action-adventure, and it's not the best-written example that I've seen, but I enjoyed it; Terek is the sort of hero I can sympathize with. Recommended.

VENUS DEVELOPMENT, by David Bergami [Popular Library, \$1.25] An exceptionally talky and slow-moving variant of the super-complicated plot, with several factions involved and nobody really knowing what's going on. My problem was that I neither believed in nor cared about any of the (presumably) central characters, or in the plot, so I didn't finish it and I can't guarantee what all the fuss was about. If anything...

THE SECOND WAR OF THE WORLDS, by George H. Smith [DAW #215, \$1.25] Direct sequel to an earlier Smith story (which of course I can't find at the moment) (and a sort of indirect relative of Wells' WAR OF THE WORLDS. On the whole, Phil Farmer does this sort of thing much better; this is a fairly average space-opera.

A JUNGLE OF STARS, by Jack L. Chalker [Ballantine, \$1.50] The hero, a military man (named, rather obviously, Savage), is returned to life because he's needed as a pawn in an alien combat. Competently handled, but not my type of story. Lots of intrigue and things being seldom what they seem for them as likes that sort of thing.

THE SECOND EXPERIMENT, by J. O. Jeppson [Fawcett, \$1.25] A superwoman and a robot go zapping around the galaxy and sparring with a super-villain. It reads a little like Doc Smith, who was never one of my favorite authors. Space-opera with a vengeance.

JULIA, by Peter Straub [Pocket Books, \$1.95] A horror story aimed at mundanes; very slick, but a trifle elementary for fans.

HAVEN OF DARKNESS, by E.C. Tubb [DAW #242, \$1.50] #16 in the Dumarest series, of which I got thoroughly bored several novels back.

STAR TREK LOG NINE, by Alan Dean Foster [Ballantine, \$1.50] Novelization of a script by David Gerrold. It's an adequate and amusing space opera on its own, but after all this time the characters are beginning to wear a bit thin, for me. (If you're a Trekkie, of course, presumably that wouldn't apply, and the book is certainly better than anything Blish did in the translations of scripts to stories.)

THE WORLD ASUNDER, by Ian Wallace [DAW #216, \$1.50] A time-travel novel, with all of the usual complications and a whiff of metaphysics thrown in. A big book, allowing for more than the usual complications. As nearly as I can figure out, Wallace managed

to tie up the various loose ends pretty well, but I can't say I cared a lot about the book.

SUPERMIND, by A.E. van Vogt [DAW #224, \$1.25] I gave up reading van Vogt some time back, but if you didn't, here's one.

DIONYSUS: THE ULTIMATE EXPERIMENT, by William S. Ruben [Manor, \$1.50] Extremely dubious science coupled with even more dubious writing ability. The idea is that if Mars is to be colonized, the colonists must be able to enjoy sex on the trip (why?) and the only way to find out if they can do it is to select a couple of guinea pigs who don't know each other in advance (why?) and ship them into orbit and let them experiment, while monitoring their activities. (Another why? at this point would probably be superfluous.) It is even specified on page 47 that there is no problem about the mechanics of the thing; that's been solved. The government is interested in the emotions of the experimenters (why these should be any different in space than they are on the ground is never explained). The writing produces such gems as "Man doesn't have instinct, he has intuitive drive", and "There is nothing more persuasive than the advice given a naked man". There is a fair amount of copulation, not terribly well described (it can't be called pornographic; it doesn't arouse anything but boredom). All in all, I found it moderately funny, but you won't unless you enjoy laughing at bad books. Feminists in the audience will probably be offended by the stereotypes presented.

THE VENUS FACTOR, edited by Vic Ghidalia and Roger Elwood [Manor, \$1.25] Fantasy by women writers. Includes "God Grante That She Lye Stille" by Cynthia Asquith (a fairly standard story of possession; well written though seeming a bit dated), "The Foghorn" by Gertrude Atherton (a short story of madness; not fantasy but interesting), "The Last Seance" by Agatha Christie (what might happen if ectoplasm really did come from the medium's spiritual force; an excellent and original fantasy), "Against Authority" by Miriam Allen de Ford (rebellion against the alien invaders; competent but fairly common pulp plot and treatment), "J-Line To Nowhere" by Zenna Henderson (a clue to nature in the super-city of the future; very good), "The Ship Who Disappeared" by Anne McCaffrey (one of her android-ship series; good), "The Lady Was a Tramp" by Judith Merrill (space-going hetarae), and "The Dark Land" by C.L. Moore (one of her Jirel stories; swords and sorcery). Overall; good writing and probably unfamiliar to most readers. Recommended.

THE BEST OF PHILIP K. DICK [Ballantine/Del Rey, \$1.95] 19 of Dick's short stories, in 450 pages. 14 of the copyrights are from 1952 to 1955, 4 are from the 1960s, and 1 from 1974. Mostly, they're the gimmick stories that were in vogue in the 1950s -- very clever gimmick stories, generally ironic (and occasionally concerned with Reality, though the readers never thought of that at the time). Most are good; a few don't quite make it. Overall, it's well worth the money.

THE BEST OF FREDRIC BROWN [Ballantine/Del Rey, \$1.95] 29 stories in 315 pages; Brown was noted as the most able practitioner of the vignette in science fiction (and I think he still holds that record). 12 copyrights in the 1940s, 7 in the 1950s, 10 in the 1960s. Brown was a humorist and an etymologist, and the stories combine his interests. ("Jaycee", for example, is built around the fact that the initials can stand for two entirely separate but well-known entities.) Recommended -- in fact, recommended a trifle more than the Dick book (but you really should get both).

VISIONS OF TOMORROW, edited by Roger Elwood [Pocket Books, \$1.95] A little of everything from classics to current items; for once, this isn't an original-story collection. There is "The Chronic Arguments" by H.G. Wells (an early, and ponderous, time travel story -- or part of one), "Sunjammer" by Arthur C. Clarke (one of the first stories to use the idea of space sails), "Ms. Found In An Abandoned Time Machine" by Robert Silverberg (leftist political propaganda rather than a story), "The Storm" by Gardner Dozois (a story of -- telepathy? -- that is neither particularly lucid or interesting), "The Last Man" by Mary Shelley (a plague survivor, who mostly wanders

around feeling sorry for himself), "The Begum's Fortune" by Jules Verne (excerpt from a novel), "With The Night Mail" by Rudyard Kipling (the voyage of the ray-powered digigible, which by now reads like something from an alternate world), "The Land Ironclads" by Wells (one of the first mentions of tanks in fiction), "Lenny" by Isaac Asimov (the origin of Asimov's famous positronic robots), "The Running" by Richard Posner (a moment of freedom in the programmed future -- nice idea but not all that well handled), "The Crystal Egg" by Wells (glimpse of an alien civilization; interesting), "Ariel" by Roger Elwood (future racism; noble sentiments but not much of a story), "The Serpent in Eden" by Poul Anderson (the problem of discovering whether or not an alien race is intelligent), "The Weariest River" by Tom Scortia (the horrifying world of immortality), "The Rescued Girls of Refugee" by Anne McCaffrey (a sort of anti-feminist mood piece), "The Shining One" by Nat Schachner (a primitive version of the currently popular peace and brotherhood message), "My Friend Klaatu" by Lawrence Yep (a fairly good alien-contact story), "The Gentle Captive" by Tom Godwin (the religious conversion of a soldier; not really fantasy -- and not terribly believable), "The Last Congregation" by Howard Goldsmith (a religious vignette; faintly ridiculous), "Towards the Beloved City" by Phil Farmer (faith at Armageddon; very good), and "High Priest" by J.F. Bone (a strange form of priestly succession; also very good). Overall; interesting if you haven't already read most of the stories.

THE DISCIPLES OF CTHULHU, edited by Edward P. Bergland [DAW #213, \$1.50] Original stories continuing the Cthulhu Mythos, by Brian Lumley, James Wade, Bob Van Laerhoven, Ramsey Campbell, Walter C. DeBill, Jr., Joseph Payne Brennan, Lin Carter, Eddy C. Bertin, and Fritz Leiber. Lumley, Leiber, and perhaps Van Laerhoven approximate the better Lovecraft tales; the rest approximate the inferior Lovecraft tales (and some could be very inferior). Wade and Brennan, in particular, kept making me snicker. But, as horror anthologies go, this is at least an average sample -- and new horror-fiction short stories are hard to come by these days.

WEIRD HEROES #5: THE OZ ENCOUNTER, by Marv Wolfman [Pyramid, \$1.50] An imitation Doc Savage novel, based on character originated by Ted White and copiously illustrated by Steve Fabian, who does a better job than the author. Wolfman is basically a comics writer (the entire WEIRD HEROES series is comics-oriented despite the claims of it being a "modern pulp") so he's at home writing about superheroes. In general, he does a somewhat better job than Lin Carter has done in his Doc Savage imitations for Doubleday. (Which, of course, isn't saying a lot.) If you like the original Doc, you might well like this -- but I didn't like the original Doc, so...

SWORDS AGAINST DARKNESS, edited by Andrew Offutt [Zebra, \$1.95] An original anthology of sword-and-sorcery fiction. "Nekht Semerkeht," started by Robert E. Howard and completed by Offutt, is a pretty typical second-rank Howard story, with the action diluted by Howard's attempts at philosophy, but still quite readable. "The Tale of Hauk," by Poul Anderson, is either a translated Scandinavian ghost-story or a good imitation of one. "The Smile of Oisia," by George W. Proctor, is a very good Conan imitation; Proctor has the style and mood of the original. "Pride of the Fleet," by Bruce Jones, is a humorous -- and anti-feminine -- swashbuckler. "Straggler From Atlantis," by Manly Wade Wellman, pits a homeless wanderer against a monster for the stars. "The Ring of Set," by Richard Tierney, concerns a magic Egyptian ring, being squabbled over in Roman times. "Largarut's Bane," by Raoul Garcia Capella, concerns a primitive fisherman in contact with the Unknown. "Dragon's Teeth," by David Drake, gives us a mad wizard who can sow teeth and grow giants -- and other things. And "The Sustenance of Hoak," by Ramsey Campbell, is a good and original mingling of s&s and horror. Major drawback of the book for me was that too many of the stories were obviously hopeful beginnings of series. (But maybe it won't bother you; and one or two of them may be revered as "origin stories" in years to come -- not by me, but by some of you.)

ONE AGAINST A WILDERNESS, by William L. Chester [DAW #228, \$1.50] Second book in the Kioga series; a collection of short stories from the 1937 Blue Book. Kioga was an imitation Tarzan, operating in North America. A white man (of course) raised by Indians, and (of course) superior to them in all ways. Chester was a pretty fair writer for the period; his fiction is hardly classic, but I've read worse. Should be enjoyed by Burroughs fans.

CONAN OF AQUILONIA, by L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter [Ace, \$1.95] Final (one hopes) and long-awaited (though not by me) volume in the Conan saga. An elderly Conan and his son Conn venture forth to the final battle with the wizard Thoth-Amon. Lots of action and a fairly acceptable plot, though not equal to Howard's best. Presumably the s&s contingent will like it.

KROZAR OF KREGEN, by Alan Burt Akers [DAW, #237, \$1.50] #14 in the Dray Prescott series. Imitation-Burroughs interplanetary adventures; Akers possibly comes the closest to the original of any of the myriad imitations.

SWORDS OF THE HORSECLANS, by Robert Adams [Pinnacle, \$1.25] Future barbarism, with a handful of immortals trying to restore a faint bit of peace and prosperity to a North America split into warring petty kingdoms and wandering tribes, and attempting to foil the machinations of an equally small group who have preserved the science of our day -- the wizardry of the future -- and plan to use it for their own advantage. Having secured a base of power in the first book, our protagonist is now consolidating his realm and breaking up the opposition, such as a greedy church. The final confrontation with the scientists is presumably somewhere in the future. It's not quite swords and sorcery, but has the same general aura, and is a pretty good example of the type.

THE BARBARIAN OF THE WORLD'S END, by Lin Carter [DAW #243, \$1.50] 4th book in the Godwane series. Swords and sorcery...I don't know; a lot of people must read Carter's books, but I can't imagine why.

THE MAD GOD'S AMULET, by Mike Moorcock [DAW #238] \$1.25] Second book in the Rune-staff, or Dorian Hawkmoon, series. A reprint, it's a revised and "authorized" edition -- being the first edition that hasn't been edited without the author's consent. Which I doubt makes all that much difference to the average reader. Moorcock is a better than average s&s writer, though his moody heroes do tend to lose much of their charm after you've read several of the books.

PERRY RHODAN #111 & 112, by William Voltz and M.H. Scheer [Ace \$1.75] By now, the PERRY RHODAN #113 & 114, by Clark Darlton and Kurt Mahr [Ace, \$1.75] Rhodan universe is at least as large as Doc Smith's, and probably larger, and with a variety of authors, the writing varies considerably from one story to another, though the series is kept internally consistent. Perry is a major factor in all the books, of course, but 112, for example, is a first-person narrative with the protagonist being Atlan the Imperator of Arkon. The books are still handled as a paperback magazine, with two stories, editorial, letter column, pen-pals column, etc. I don't find it all that thrilling, but then I don't like series. (I didn't find Doc Smith all that thrilling, either.)

THE GOBLIN RESERVATION, by Clifford D. Simak [Berkley, \$1.25] I admire Simak's gall. He has the nerve to put into one book an interstellar Menace, time travel, an enigmatic black slab, goblins, trolls, banshees, a dragon, alien critters that run on wheels, and matter transmission; and his little band of heroes consists of a university professor, a Neanderthaler, a ghost, and a girl who has a pet sabertooth tiger. And he not only manages to make sense of all this, but turns it into one of his typically charming novels. It's a reprint, but if you didn't get the earlier versions, by all means get this one.

THE BROKEN SWORD, by Poul Anderson [Ballantine/Del Rey, \$1.50] Unlike de Camp, Anderson can depict creatures and societies which really believe in Fate, and in the wrath of the Gods. The plot here is similar to that of many of the early tales; that

man may rage against his fate, but he cannot escape it. Skafloc, human-born but stolen by elves and replaced by a changeling, falling in love with his (unrecognized) sister, fated to die for his elven foster-kin, obviously doesn't have a chance. (The whole thing somewhat resembles a Norse soap-opera, but then so do the genuine folk tales and sagas.) A grim story which presents the "little people" in their original guise. (And an excellent Vallejo cover -- he finally showed the front end of a horse too.)

THE STAR BEAST, by Robert A. Heinlein [Ballantine/Del Rey, \$1.50] One of Heinlein's more amusing juveniles. His human protagonist acts a bit too young for their supposed ages, but Lumnox has enough character to overwhelm this slight deficiency. Fun reading for an adult; a great book for a fannish 12-year old. Recommended.

EARTH'S LAST CITADEL, by C.L. Moore and Henry Kuttner [Ace, \$1.50] A group of 1940s people accidentally hurled into the far future, where humanity is represented by a decadent machine-run city and a tribe of barbarians, and where a malefic alien threatens to wipe them all out in order to sustain itself. It combines mood and action, and just possibly was the inspiration for Jack Vance's THE DYING EARTH -- there are similarities, certainly.

WALK TO THE END OF THE WORLD, by Suzy McKee Charnas [Ballantine/Del Rey, \$1.50] Reprint of a novel that first appeared only 3 years ago; most of my readers probably have the earlier version, if they wanted to read it. The lot of a woman in a barbarous future; it's well enough done but seems a bit too obviously open for a sequel.

LORD KALVAN OF OTHERWHEN, by H. Beam Piper [Ace, \$1.50] Because of legal problems, this one has been out of print for 12 years, which is too long; it's one of Piper's best. Calvin Morrison has two advantages when he's accidentally removed to an alternate world: he is an on-duty state cop, fully armed, and he is a history student, so the less technologically advanced world on which he finds himself is strange but not totally baffling to him. He does have problems -- and his biggest one, convincing the Paratime Police that he's not a major evil to be rooted out, he never even knows about. The rest is primitive empire-building, and very well handled. And above all, "Lord Kalvan" is a sympathetic protagonist whom the reader cares about. Excellent.

THE PEOPLE OF THE MIST, by H. Rider Haggard [Ballantine/Del Rey, \$1.95] The only one of Haggard's books that I've been able to finish. Despite the Victorian sentiments of turn-of-the-century prose, it's a reasonably good exotic adventure, involving the usual African lost race, jewels, etc. Editing it to about 2/3 of its present length would be an improvement, but I can recommend it as written. It's been pretty regularly available since 1973.

THE LINCOLN HUNTERS, by Wilson Tucker [Ace, \$1.50] A future time traveler sets out to collect a speech made by Lincoln at Bloomington, Illinois, which has never been accurately recorded. Aside from totally ignoring one time paradox, Tucker has done an excellent job with this one. First published in 1958.

THE YEAR OF THE QUIET SUN, by Wilson Tucker [Acc, \$1.50] Quite possibly Tucker's best book to date. Also concerned with time travel; this time, a government agency sends out scouts to survey the future; certainly a logical enough premise. The future they find is disaster -- and there is nothing they can do about it. A grim book, and a good one.

THE PRINCESS BRIDE, by William Goldman [Ballantine, \$1.95] This one comes to reviewers -- even to reviewers who say they don't want it, as in my case -- with a reprint from Publisher's Weekly, saying how unusual it is that a book that bombed on its first printing is reprinted only 3 years later, with a trick cover to help attract browsers. As far as I'm concerned, it bombed because it's a lousy book; one that patronizes fantasy and fantasy readers in order to show the author's sophistication. It's "a comic adventure romance" according to the blurb -- one that unfor-

unately isn't very funny. The idea is a light, sophisticated parody of fairy tales, and the author simply doesn't make it. If you didn't buy it the first time around, keep up the good work.

RESTOREE, by Anne McCaffrey [Ballantine/Del Rey, \$1.50] I like the cover better this time, even if it is by the Hildebrandts. It's more suitable to the contents; RESTOREE is possibly the first successful science-fictional gothic romance. (Not the first attempt; other authors have tried the same thing and produced atrocities. McCaffrey makes it work, after a fashion.) It doesn't bear up very well on re-reading, but I recall enjoying it the first time around. And it's not all that far from some of the male-oriented space-operas; heroine is jerked from her world, her mind inserted in another body, in the furtherance of a Plot, which she eventually helps to foil. (The one difference being that in gothic tradition she can't wreck things all by herself; she has to assist the hero.)

ALPHA CENTAURI OR DIE, by Leigh Brackett [Ace, \$1.50] One of Brackett's lesser works, meaning it's only slightly better than other people's space-operas. It's been reprinted several times, but if you don't have it, it's worth getting.

RED MOON AND BLACK MOUNTAIN, by Joy Chant [Ballantine/Del Rey, \$1.95] One of the best of recent (1970) sword-and-sorcery novels. Chant's world is almost believable, and her characters far more credible than most, though the plot is fairly standard.

OUT OF THE DEAD CITY, by Samuel R. Delany [Ace, \$1.50] Originally published as CAPTIVES OF THE FLAME, the first book in his FALL OF THE TOWERS trilogy. It's one of his first books, and one of the few of his that I enjoyed. The far future is the setting, with the hero battling decadence and the aftermath of disaster.

UNDERSEA QUEST, by Frederik Pohl and Jack Williamson [Ballantine/Del Rey, \$1.50] Also the first of a trilogy; a juvenile one, this time. A cadet enters the sub-sea academy and foils a plot aimed at his uncle's undersea developments. About average or a bit above for its type.

FUTURE SANCTUARY, by Lee Harding [Laser, #41, \$1.25] A writer who really can't take criticism descends into madness upon being offered some; the book explores the visions of his own mind. Interesting technically, but with a totally unsympathetic protagonist I couldn't work up enough enthusiasm to finish it.

EPIGRAPH IN RUST, by Timothy Powers [Laser #47, \$1.25] A young monk in a barbaric future learns about Life. A fairly good, lightweight adventure story.

MINDWIPE, by Steve Hahn [Laser, #51, \$1.25] A future with mental powers, and the usual plotting and intrigue. I didn't finish it.

THE EXTRATERRITORIAL, by John Morressy [Laser #52, \$1.25] An agent of the government discovers that the government is corrupt. Fairly standard type plot and action; acceptable if not brilliant characterization. A competent thriller.

THE ECOLOG, by R. Faraday Nelson [Laser #53, \$1.25] Nelson has described a human but somewhat "alien" utopia, and landed in it a man who refuses to fit in. The action and conflict are good enough, but sometimes I think Ray doesn't know a lot about people. (At other times, I am regretfully certain that he does. His people aren't any that I can get very interested in, but then neither is the mass of humanity.)

SHEPHERD, by Joan Hunter Holly [Laser #55, \$1.25] Joan Holly is nice enough in person, but her recent books are far too saccharine for my taste. Our hero learns about love and sympathy from a sweet little child, who is far too good to be true.

SHADOW ON THE STARS, by Robert B. Marcus, Jr. [Laser, #57, \$1.25] Hated in his own times for being a telepath, the protagonist is yanked into the future -- and, of course, not told anything, so a good share of the book is spent in digging out information. Other than that, it's a pretty fair adventure; equal to one of Ed Hamilton's poorer efforts.

ORDEAL IN OTHERWHERE, by Andre Norton [Ace, \$1.50] One of Norton's "Warlock" series; the protagonist is caught up in intrigue against the natives and their mental powers and must learn to use her own mental abilities to bring peace. Essentially a juvenile, but a good one.

VICTORY ON JANUS, by Andre Norton [Ace, \$1.50] Sequel to JUDGMENT ON JANUS; I hope Ace reprinted that one, too. More mental powers -- the one drawback in Norton's books for me is their emphasis on mental powers and mysticism. (Another drawback to this one was that DeWeese and I were working on a novel which would have had an identical explanatory gimmick, when this one first appeared, so we had to shelve ours -- for a while, anyway.) I don't think this is one of Norton's best, but it's a good juvenile.

STAR GUARD, by Andre Norton [Ace, \$1.50] A Terran mercenary is drawn into an intrigue against the galaxy-ruling Central Control, and finds that he has more support than he counted on. A good space-opera. Excellent cover on this new printing -- Foss? Looks like his style, anyway.

THE BEAST MASTER, by Andre Norton [Ace, \$1.50] Communication with animals is one of Norton's regular gimmicks; it's in ORDEAL IN OTHERWHEN and is a major part of the plot here. Protagonist is a Navaho Indian, trained with an animal team as a saboteur in an interstellar war, and seeking vengeance both for personal reasons and because of the destruction of Earth in that war. Eventually, of course, his personal and patriotic antagonists come into conflict. One of Norton's best.

OPERATION TIME SEARCH, by Andre Norton [Ace, \$1.50] Time travel; the hero, poking his nose into an experimental project, is tossed back in time, to a war between Atlantis and Mu. And faces the usual question: does he want to return to his own time, or stay in his new world? Fairly good.

STAR GATE, by Andre Norton [Ace, \$1.50] Crosstime travel, into a world split off from the home world because of different decisions; where people who appeared to be old friends might be -- because of those decisions -- enemies. And this parallel world is in the future, on a world where Terrans and alien have mingled -- and clashed. The protagonist is a half-breed, with his own personal problems. Interesting idea; fairly good story.

DREAD COMPANION, by Andre Norton [Ace, \$1.50] I hope Andre is getting paid for this round of reprints... A faintly gothic flavor to this one; the protagonist achieves her ambition of getting off-planet by becoming teacher-companion to a pair of very strange children, who lead her into an alien world, where humans are changed into something else. She is offered assistance -- but is it assistance she can trust? One of the better ones and, as I recall, the first in which anything like adult male-female relationships occur in Norton's work. Still essentially a juvenile, but not quite as much a juvenile.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF COMIC BOOKS, by Richard O'Brien [Ballantine, \$6.95] There are a few pages of text on comic characters but most of the book is devoted to full-size reproductions of comicbook covers from the years 1937-1945; it could be considered a companion to Ballantine's book of science-fiction art. Sort of interesting to a non-comics-fan like myself; I keep wondering how anyone could become addicted to that sort of thing. Probably considerably more interesting to a comics fan.

POOR RICHARD'S ALMANACKS, by Benjamin Franklin [Ballantine, \$6.95] A large-size book reprinting all of the Almanacs, except for a certain amount of repetition, and the outdated astronomical data. Runs to 300 pages, size 8 1/4 by 11, with 6 full-color paintings and some black and white work by Norman Rockwell. Ben even has an adage for beginning fanzine editors: "Then he that would please all, and himself too, / Takes more in hand than he is like to do." And "The favour of the Great is no inheritance." (Not to mention one for Hensley, Propp, Miller, and other such legal types: "God works wonders now and then; / Behold, a Lawyer, an honest Man!") It's not the sort of book to be read at a sitting, but it's fun to dip into it on occasion.

CHRONICLES OF LUCIUS LEFFING, by Joseph Payne Brennan [Don Grant, Publisher, West Kingston RI 02892, \$7.00] A collection of short detective stories. Considering the author and publisher, I had expected fantasies on the order of Seabury Quinn's de Grandin tales, but these are straight detection, with a detective perhaps modeled after Sherlock Holmes, but without any of Holmes' eccentricities. (Leffing's own eccentricities are mentioned frequently, but never become particularly real to the reader.) Only one story -- the best one, incidentally -- involves anything supernatural. As detective stories they're acceptable. I'm no great reader of the genre, but there seems to have been an attempt -- a successful one -- to achieve the mood of a much earlier age than the 1970s in which they were first published. Detection is adequate, though the reader is not offered any of the vital clues to enable him to match wits with the detective. (Possibly that's standard in short stories; I wouldn't know.)

WHAT YOUR AURA TELLS ME, by Ray Stanford [Doubleday, \$6.95]

SITUATION RED: THE UFO SIEGE, by Leonard H. Stringfield [Doubleday, \$8.95]

Aura-reading seems to be the latest occult fad. By making his book a sort of personal, rambling account of all the auras he has read -- successfully, of course -- the author greatly reduces the possibility of anybody checking up on him. Auras do not, apparently, predict the future, but the aura-reader can be a medical diagnostician, a lie detector, and so on. (The cover art is as poor as the contents; it makes the book look like a cheaply-produced religious tract.) But UFOs are still worth more to the suckers, it would seem -- or maybe the difference in price is simply due to the fact that Stringfield wrote a longer book. He's a trifle more convincing than Stanford (and considerably duller), but I can't say I have any more interest in UFOs now than I did before the book arrived. Quite possibly I have less.

MEN WITHOUT COUNTRIES, by John Edward Weems [remaindered, \$1.49] This would have been an appropriate Bicentennial volume, but it was published in 1969. It covers the lives of three singular Americans: General James Wilkinson, who took Spanish pay while serving as ranking officer of the US Army; Philip Nolan, who was Wilkinson's protégé and occasional partner and whose career was the inspiration for Edward Everett Hale's totally fictitious "The Man Without A Country"; and Peter Ellis Bean, who became acquainted with Nolan, and who cheerfully doublecrossed the governments of the United States, Mexico, Texas, and a group of Mexican revolutionaries. (After the Texan independence, he claimed his back pay from Mexico, saying that he had been a loyal Mexican officer captured by the rebels, and petitioned the new Republic of Texas for a land grant on the grounds that he had been a loyal Texan citizen.) None of the three gained any great rewards for their perfidy; Wilkinson managed to conceal proof of his treason until long after his death; but his last years were a round of threatened scandal and harassment. Nolan died young, and Bean spent a good share of his life in one or another Mexican jail. But they're interesting examples of their times.

THE ANCIENT ENGINEERS, by L. Sprague de Camp [Ballantine, \$2.25] Early technology; the pyramids, siege engines, Babylon's Ishtar Gate, Roman aqueducts, bridges, cross-bows, water wheels, a Roman bilge pump, and such frivolities as the first coin-operated vending machine, invented by Heron of Alexandria in the first century A.D. (It dispensed holy water -- never say that the Church scorned technology...) A thoroughly fascinating book.

JUPITER, by Isaac Asimov [Ace, \$1.50] All that is currently known about the largest planet in our solar system. Reasonably interesting.

THE HAWKLINE MONSTER, by Richard Brautigan [Pocket Books, \$1.75] Subtitled "A Gothic Western", with "Gothic" referring to the original horror tale and not to the current "gothic romance". It's a parody of the horror story, mostly. The blurb refers to "bold imagination", but not that much imagination is required of a parody. The author's individual style has attracted mundane critics, but offhand I'd say I've seen parodies as good as this in more than one fanzine. Still, any humor is better

than none; mildly recommended.

THE DARK BACKWARD, by Marie Buchanan [Ballantine, \$1.75] An archaeologist unlooses a malignant force from the past when he digs into an ancient megalithic structure. British (you can tell because the protagonist is having marital problems.). I do think that naming the protagonist "Dr. Sarson" is a bit much -- puns tend to distract one from the Menace -- but it's an acceptable if not brilliant book.

VELVET SHADOWS, by Andre Norton [Fawcett, \$1.50] Her second historical gothic. This takes place in post-Civil War San Francisco, and includes at least one historical character; the voodoo queen Mammy Pleasant. (Norton sketches her activities in an historical afterword.) Otherwise, there is the usual combination of desperate heroine, moody hero, and Menace. In this book, the latter is provided by a gang of voodoo worshippers after the hero and his money. Competent if not outstanding.

THE HORROR FROM THE TOMBS, by Florence Stevenson [Award, \$1.50] This is, though the publisher doesn't tell you so, the seventh and last book in the Kitty Telefair series. It's unfortunately a bit more serious than the other, but as usual it includes genuine fantasy -- in this case, surviving Egyptian magic. Reasonably good.

MISTRESS OF MOUNT FAIR, by Elsie Lee [Dell, \$1.25] I love Lee's heroines; after Emily Deming is foiled in her scheme to get the villain to attack her so that she can shoot him in self-defense, she manages to break both his arms in an attempt to kill him bare handed before she's pulled off and he's saved. (She's discovered that he murdered her husband.) The plot is typically gothic, but, as usual with Lee, very well done. Well above the average of the genre.

WEB OF GUILT, by "Jean" DeWeese [Ballantine, \$1.25] Part of Ballantine's 1976 Zodiac gothic series which I didn't get to immediately. The heroine is mixed up in murder, an old and unsolved bank robbery, and blackmail. The detection is well worked out; the love interest is pretty standard. Not so much tuckerizing in this one, though Gene does manage to work "The Invisible Dirigible Affair" into it at one point.

FLASHMAN IN THE GREAT GAME, by George MacDonald Fraser [Signet, \$1.95] A new Flashman book is always a treat to look forward to. In this one, Flashy becomes mixed up in the Sepoy Rebellion -- through no desire of his own, as usual. At 300 pages, it's longer than the other Flashman books, but seems fairly short because it's interesting. Possibly a little less humor than the average, too, but enough to keep things moving. Highly recommended, of course.

THE SNOW TIGER, by Desmond Bagley [Fawcett, \$1.75] A modern thriller concerning an avalanche in a small mining town in New Zealand. Bagley has boned up thoroughly on his avalanche facts, and worked out an ingenious plot device for presenting them in large lumps without distracting from the story. Enjoyable.

OPERATION SURVIVAL EARTH, by Stefan Denaerde [Pocket Books, \$1.50] Translated from the Dutch. This isn't a science-fiction book, despite the cover blurb; it's a communist tract, presented as though spoken by the crewman of a flying saucer. What isn't propaganda is occultism, badly presented. Avoid this garbage.

WORLDS IN COLLISION, by Immanuel Velikovsky [Pocket Books, \$1.95] I could say the same about this one; Velikovsky is utterly sincere in his delving into old records, but only the uneducated equate sincerity with truth. The blurbs, of course, say that now the author's claims have been "vindicated" -- which is more than even newspaper articles will admit, and far more than scientific journals will say. But he may become the Western version of Lysenko.

PSYCHIC SCIENCES, by Walter B. Gibson and Litzka R. Gibson [Pocket Books, \$2.25] An encyclopedia of the occult; the history -- occasionally spurious -- and current practice of all fortune-telling and psychic health devices, from astrology to yoga. Not a bad reference book for authors who want to include references to one or another of them.

-STARKY & HUTCH-#1 thru #6, by Max Franklin [Ballantine, \$1.50] These novelizations of the pilot film and five scripts from the tv series are better than average adaptations. Franklin is somewhat hampered by being forced to use the script versions of episodes (which differ, sometimes substantially, from the improved aired versions). But unlike some writers of popular adaptations, he has a fair knowledge of firearms and police procedure and, according to Kay Anderson, his descriptions of how to get around in Los Angeles are accurate and in-groupy, a you-are-there extra. He has a far better grasp of the characters and their motivations than most such adaptors, too. Franklin fills out the necessary wordage with on-the-spot creations of minor characters on both sides of the law (often amusingly and sometimes jarringly, when plot demands that he kill off said characters after making them such interesting critters). If you're a fan of the series, as I am, you'll find these better mementoes of the show, by far, than Blish's were of STAR TREK. The books are about equal in quality, though the latest one showed some evidence of Franklin's being rushed toward deadline (proofreading was a tad sloppy). In general, I'm looking forward to these more than I have any novelizations to come along since THE MAN FROM U.N.C.L.E. series folded (and enjoying these more than I did most of those, excepting the fan-written books). JWC

ROCANNON'S WORLD, by Ursula K. Le Guin (Harper & Row, \$6.95) One of Le Guin's earliest novels (AMAZING 1964, Ace 1966) given the dignity of hard covers. It's a long way from the Le Guin of LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS, but it's an enjoyable space-opera. The author points out a few of her beginner's flaws in her new introduction, but if the book has a tinge of mediocrity, it's still mostly enjoyable to read. There are worse sf novels in hard covers.

THE FUTURE NOW: SAVING TOMORROW, ed. by Robert Hoskins (Fawcett, \$1.75) To be published July 12, which from the looks of things may be before this YANDRO gets out.... This is an anthology of Relevant Science Fiction, which puts one strike against it right there. Each author gets a foreword in which he can explain his own brand of Relevance, which is occasionally very helpful because I would never have guessed what a couple of them were trying to do from reading the results. The book opens with "The Stalin In The Soul", an essay by Ursula Le Guin, about art and censorship and the censorship of marketing, or hackwork. Good. "All The Troubles of the World" by Isaac Asimov, concerns the complexity of society and the borderline between human and computer. Also good. "Home" by Poul Anderson, is an excellent story about the clash of cultures. (Unlike all too many authors, Poul gives a fair presentation of both sides; he does not knock down straw men.) Then there are "Silent In Gehenna" by Harlan Ellison (the hip conscience of the world, screaming insults that nobody pays any attention to - I must say it's a natural theme for Harlan), "Shark" by Edward Bryant (the usual neurotic people trying to solve their problems; in science fiction the problems may be a trifle more bizarre, but the people are depressingly standard. Or sub-standard.) "Kangaroo Court" by Virginia Kidd (the problems of a visit from space travelers after we have "sensibly" devoted our efforts to curing all the ills of Earth; good), "A Season For Freedom" by Dean R. Koontz (criticism of Our Violent Society; not very good), "Final War" by Barry Malzberg (which I didn't read), "The Mountain" by Robert Hoskins (the effect of scarcity and starvation on brotherly love; nice idea, rather mediocre story), "Our Times" by Bill Pronzini (the pressures endured by the powerful, treated as a farce; poor), "The Wind and the Rain" by Robert Silverberg (ecological propaganda rather thinly disguised as fiction; poor), and "The Merchants of Venus" by Frederik Pohl (the future of transplants, in a thoroughly enjoyable adventure story; it's not really all that relevant, but it's fun). Overall; a surprisingly good average, considering the theme.

THE ICE-SCHOONER, by Michael Moorcock (Harper & Row, \$8.95) This is one of those worse sf novels I mentioned up there; this, too has been rescued from the oblivion of a pb edition (Berkley, 1969) It is far less scientific than Le Guin's book; the author never convinced me that his damned ice-whales could get a fraction of their required sustenance in his sterile future. This could (and should) have been done as a straight historical whaling novel; it would have been far more believable that way. It's also more pretentious than Le Guin, and with less reason. Avoid it.

CRUMBLINGS...

Sterling Lanier

CARCAJOU: (sequel to SGT DIKE), by Roy W. Snell. Grosset & Dunlap, mid '30s. I liked them too. Who else would know this (or care)? SPAWN, by Glut, rather appeals to me, as a catch phrase alone, I hasten to add.

[[I certainly never would have picked Snell as the author. I liked CARCAJOU, and while I read numerous other Snell books (they were unavoidable for a young reader in the mid-30s) I can't say any of the others ever impressed me. Certainly not to the point where I remember the physical appearance of the book (light, pebbly-blue binding, with the name in lovely gold letters. Author's name wasn't on the cover -- probably the copy I had had been rebound at one point or another -- which is undoubtedly why I didn't remember it.). RSC]]

Robert Bloch

Thanks much for sending me a copy of Yandro #239 the other day. That was a kind and thoughtful thing for you to do, and I promise not to tell anyone and spoil your image.

Thanks also for the review, with its mention of THE LEARNING MAZE and THE MOVIE PEOPLE -- both personal favorites. I'm not usually quite as pessimistic as the former yarn would indicate, or quite as sentimental as the latter piece might infer, but I am pleased they registered with someone like yourself.

And what an inveterate eye-tracker you are! That list of reviews croggles me. How on earth can you read so much? No one can possibly be that constipated. I used to go through two or three books a day as a child, cut down to one during most of my adulthood, and am now happy to manage a couple a week, along with periodicals, fan-press material, correspondence, and bills.

But as you say, the inclement weather lends itself to such bibliomaniac-depressive conduct. Don't know if I could survive those midwestern winters anymore; memories of -23° in Weyauwega recur, but it's hard to believe I really lived through this annual homage to Whittier's "Snowbound".

Vanity implies me to state that I've not put on any weight during the past fifteen years or so -- what this recent photograph shows is not added poundage; merely sag. It's the ineluctable force of gravity that makes me look like the Jowly Green Giant.

YOU SAY THE
NICEST
THINGS



Tell Juanita to quit worrying about the saccharin problem. Whatever the authorities may finally decide it irrelevant. On the basis of experiments involving 1,482,309 case-histories of carcinoma victims all over the world it was ascertained that all of the subjects, without exception, had made a lifetime habit of ingesting a minimum of three meals a day. The conclusion is inescapable. Eating causes cancer.

Breathing isn't very safe, either.

With which thought I take my leave, wishing you both a very Happy Easter. (But don't touch those Easter eggs -- oviparous bunnies are dangerous mutants).

[[Of course, to balance the winter blizzards, the Midwest offers scorching hot and humid -- but mostly rainless -- summers. Plus tornadoes for people who enjoy suspense. California is so bland...RSC]]

Jackie Causgrove, 2716 N. Hampden Ct. #108, Chicago IL 60614

As you can read in the above address, I've gotten my own apartment now, and it's slowly being filled with borrowed/donated furniture and stuff, and is developing into a neat little home for me. Held my first "party", of sorts, Friday night, so it's even been christened in a proper fannish manner.

This seems to be the moving season for fans. Bowers is shifting to Cincinnati from Massillon, Yale Edeiken and Dana Seigal (who originally hail from Philadelphia and Detroit, respectively) are moving from a northwest side apartment to one about a mile from here, Jon Singer's coming here from Connecticut to move into a new apartment with Lynn Parks, about four blocks from the one she now shares with Yale and Dana. Hank and Martha won't be at Midwestcon as they're going to California to scout out the situation there before following through on their tentative plans to move in with Sally Rand this coming fall. Don't know if Pete Edick has completed his move from Toronto to Minneapolis yet, and, of course, I've just set down here for at least a year (and after moving all the stuff that's been done so far, I probably won't be inclined to do so again for quite some time to come!). You and Juanita haven't caught the bug, have you?

Oh yes. Please note name change. I'm resuming my natal name for various reasons..

[[Previously known as Jackie Franke, for readers who hadn't heard.//The only way we're going to move is if we have to for some reason, or if Juanita becomes a Best-Selling Author and we buy a home of our own. (An idea we're considering more seriously now- the home, not the best-sellers -- and one we might eventually bring to fruition. But not for some time yet.) RSC]]

Maggie Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Road, Mentor OH 44060

Last night Don had a long talk with John Jakes about Jakes' Bicentennial series for Pyramid/Jove. The book review editor at the PRESS wanted to have some sort of item on the series (it's making history with the size of the printing of the sixth book in the series). So Don volunteered to read the whole bloomin' thing -- and ended up with enough questions for Jakes to merit an in-person phonecall. We'll send you a copy of the clipping when the article runs.

By the way, we'd be very curious of your opinion of the series; Don enjoyed it



mightily but really doesn't have the historical expertise to nitpick details or even catch some major historical flaws, if any. (The hell I don't! -- Don.)

When we complained of the cold weather (when we were doing our comics column), we got a vicious letter from some Maine reader who said that anyone who turned the thermostat up as high as 68° was almost criminally stupid, etc., etc., etc. He, it turned out, loved the cold weather and could not imagine that anyone was ever made less than incredibly healthy by it. As another of our readers pointed out, that was probably a good attitude for someone who lived in Maine. (By the way, said Maine reader refused to even consider that, say, arthritics or newborns could be affected adversely by such severe weather.) Ah, well.

I absolutely agree right down the line with your review of THE SWORD OF SHANNARA (that's in case you need another, "Right on!" today). I'd been really looking forward to reading the book -- and it turned out that the anticipation was a heck of a lot greater than the fulfillment. And you didn't even comment on the fact that the illustrations didn't match the text, Brothers Hildebrandt or no.

Bill Heron's letter is chilling and horrid -- and, of course, contains the germs of the nightmare that haunts every collector. I get cold goose every time a new price-guide comes out and the value on parts of our collection goes up. In case of a theft or water damage or somesuch, I suppose we're pretty well protected, because our household insurance covers contents to a large extent -- and we don't have expensive furniture or carpeting or drapes, just lotsa books. But in the case of total destruction (as in a fire), we could never recover a fraction of the value. And insuring collections as collections is incredibly complicated. Errr. It might be worth Heron's time to get a dealer to come and estimate his losses (said dealer being approved by the insurance company in advance -- which shouldn't be any huge problem). We were told we couldn't estimate our own losses, even with a price guide, in case of insuring a collection; it'd have to be done by a third party.

We were really taken aback by Buck's response to Carolyn Doyle's letter in Y#238 ("Of course I follow sports just to be accepted by a bunch of 'malty' people.") Good grief! Conformist Coulson, he was known as... Neither Don nor I have ever pretended to possess the slightest interest in sports -- and have, in fact, argued strenuously against organized sports from time to time -- and no one accepts us either more or less because of it. (We're known as weird people, of course -- but we'd be known as weird people in any case.) It is not necessary to lie about interests one does not possess to get along in this world. (On the other hand, we suspect Buck is really a sports freak; his comments on basketball give him away.)

[[Right, I'm a closet jock...looking at that in cold print makes me want to add, "Now, that's not what I meant..."// I thought the Hildebrandt's overwhelmingly Aryan elves were hilarious, which as far as I'm concerned is about par for them. I've seen far more atrocious Hildebrandt covers than I have good ones.// So far I have avoided the Jakes books because except for his one parody I never liked his writing, trendy mundane best-sellers put me off no matter who they're by, and when the hell would I get time to read them if I did buy them? I have 75 books waiting for review now.]]

Mike Deckinger, 649 16th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94118

The cover by DEA causes a jab of nostalgia. Is this a new piece or one that's been gracing Yandro's files for a few centuries? If she is still active she must be one of the longest running fan artists still producing material. Next month Dan Adkins?

Linda Michaels has done an impressive feat. She's taken a basically single-faceted theme and expanded it to more than 3 pages without dragging the idea to the point of exhaustion. She approaches that peak at times, but there are enough bright lines in her article to sustain the continuity. I must confess a mild addiction to some of their products myself. I'm no junk-food junkie, but I happen to believe that the contents of a typical quarter-pounder and shake are no more lethal than those served in more formal restaurants. A McDonalds now stands at the infamous corner of Haight

and Ashbury, for those who think unconquerable territory still exists.

You should know that to the mundane audience, Robert Bloch will forever be known as the man who wrote PSYCHO. Why? It sells books.

I'm told that Laser books have disbanded, which is hardly cause for regret, except for one reason. Raymond F. Jones did a number of books for them, after years of writing nothing. Jones has written some remarkably fine things in the past, and his few novels were the highlights of a rather dismal series. Perhaps this will encourage him to devote more of his time to writing. Otherwise, Laser had all the earmarks of a typical Elwood project: flamboyant build-up, grandiose promises, and disappointing results.

Dickson's NAKED TO THE STARS was published by Pyramid in December 1961, following the appearance of a shortened version in F&SF in October and November. What you didn't mention (or perhaps didn't know) was that it was Dickson's personal response to STARSHIP TROOPERS, written when the flak was just beginning to fly over Heinlein's epic. Harry Harrison responded too in an entirely different vein, with BILL, THE GALACTIC HERO.

Perhaps the book detailing the creation of KING KONG was amusing, but the movie is abominable. A falteringly campy script, turgid acting, and barely acceptable special effects. I saw it for free (one of the joys of attending a multi-unit cinema, and slipping next door when you grow tired of the feature you paid for), and I felt I had been overcharged. Even the predominantly juvenile audience seemed bored with the proceedings, which may, hopefully, mean that the potential audience de Laurentiis aimed for was more intelligent than he presumed.

At a recent con, Ellison mentioned that the cover for the pb edition of THE STAR-CROSSED is actually a snapshot of him with an old girlfriend, who dumped him years ago. He hadn't expected both figures to be on the cover, and now nervously awaits word from her lawyers.

I find it hard to sympathize with your over-abundance of snow, since in California we are struggling with just the opposite; a massive drought. It has to be a science fictional world; in which half the continent faces massive disruptions caused by an over-supply of one commodity while the other half is in a disaster caused by a lack of that very same commodity. One radio station ran a contest for the best jingle advocating water conservation. The winner is: "In this land of drought and sun, we don't flush for number one."

I thought ROOTS was awful, too, not so much for the factual distortions, which I tended to overlook, but for the manner in which it was trivialized for television consumption, transformed from an epic of personal identity to "Upstairs, Downstairs At the Old Plantation". The virtues of the show were that a number of fine black performers were given excellent parts, and it appears numerous viewers were incited to seek out Alex Haley's book.

I have my doubts that gasoline will ever climb as high as it is in Brazil (\$2.38 a gallon) within the foreseeable future. One of the most painless methods of cutting gas consumption, outside of attaching a prohibitive surtax on it, would be to drastically cut production of gas guzzlers, and concentrate instead on more economical smaller cars. Just today, however, one of Carter's top aides, along with the auto lobby, said that this was not the answer, and would only tend to hurt the lower-income driving public. Sure it will, all those lower income people and middle income people, who will have to give up their Cadillacs and Lincolns for Gremlins and Colts.

[[The really good KING KONG book is the big one that Ballantine published on the original movie. Easily worth the \$3.95 cost and more. The standard sized pb on the remake is okay -- better than the film, possibly, but not great reading. I haven't seen the film; I wasn't enthusiastic enough to drive 15 or 20 miles for it. I may just make the trip for STAR WARS; if I do, it will be the first sf/fantasy film I've seen in a theater since CHARLY.// But if I'd said that the Dickson was in response to Heinlein, I'd also have had to say that it wasn't a very good response; it's better if you read it without considering Heinlein. Dean McLaughlin is still the only

writer to successfully refute Heinlein, and he picked one of the juveniles, BETWEEN PLANETS. McLaughlin's THE FURY FROM EARTH not only points out Heinlein's flaws, but is a very good book. In my arrogant opinion, Dickson didn't quite make it, and Harrison isn't even in the same league. RSC]]

Robert E. Briney, 4 Forest Avenue, Salem MA 01970

Of all the new sf magazines, I have the highest hopes for Cosmos. Haven't been impressed by either of the first two Isaac Asimov issues, and Galileo is strictly for the birds. There is also Unearth, a small sf-oriented magazine devoted to publishing previously unpublished authors, except for one reprint per issue. The reprint is generally some famous writer's first-published story -- offered to encourage the neophyte by showing how bad you can be and still get published...

I glanced at (but did not buy) copies of Unearth at Boskone, and I know it is sold in a couple of Boston bookstores.

Most interesting book I've run across lately (found on a remainder table in a Boston bookstore): THE DRAGON EMPRESS: Life and Times of Tz-u-Hsi, 1835-1908, Empress Dowager of China, by Marina Warner. A large, lavishly illustrated British paperback. An excellent account of the last century (roughly) of the Manchu dynasty in China.

Apropos of balls (as in "All Hail the Balls of a Toreador"): have you heard of Harry Harrison's forthcoming book, announced for Fall publication in England?

GREAT BALLS OF FIRE: An Illustrated History of Sex in Science Fiction.

And no, I am not making this up. Saw an advt. in The Bookseller.

The drawing of the one-way streets that accompanied Bruce's column in #238 reminded me of a situation that used to exist in Boston; there was a T-intersection where three one-way streets converged, all pointing toward the point of intersection. Once you arrived at that intersection by car, you could not legally leave. This did not, of course, have any inhibiting effect on traffic, since Boston drivers are accustomed to not paying any attention to signs (or laws) anyway. The intersection no longer exists; that entire area was wiped out during one of the "renewal" efforts in the downtown area.

[[No comments on the new mags until I get a chance to read them. I have Vol. 1 #1 of Unearth; have there been more? (As a collector, I'd have to buy them -- and I'll be just as happy to not have to shell out for any more. RSC]]

Bob Vardeman, PO Box 11352, Albuquerque NM 87112

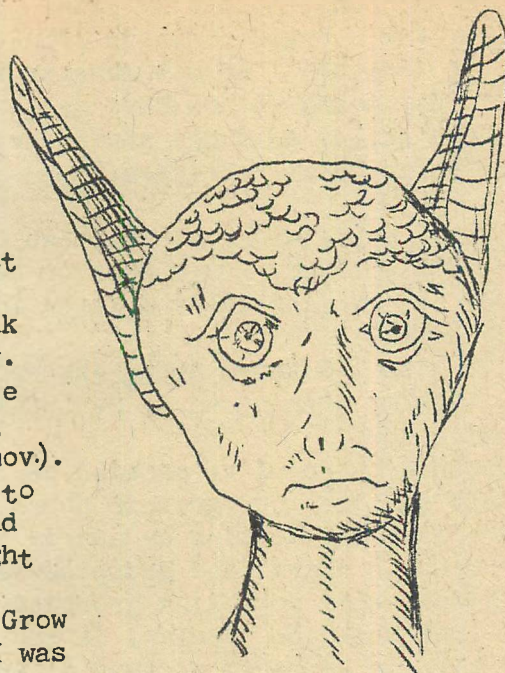
Comments on things in Yan #237:

I guess most of Jessica Salmonson's article/humor/whatever left me bemused since damned few of those "fannish stereotypes" had ever occurred to me. Perhaps the closest is the RAH one. Witness the idiot fans at Big MAC who booed Heinlein's probably accurate contention that we're heading for another war (and his follow-up which is probably wrong that we'll be trying to go to the stars) and then voted for THE FOREVER WAR. Which, in my mind at least, was not the antithesis of STARSHIP TROOPERS. It was a reader's digest condensed version of that book in the part originally entitled "Hero" and then went on showing much the same things -- war is pretty obscure to the foot soldier whose only thought in life is to stay alive.

But back to the article. According to those stereotypes, I guess I would be lacking in imag-



ination. (I like ERB) and read Zane Grey (I don't, though) and comprise the ghetto of fandom while seldom lowering myself to fannish activity (I like LeGuin for the most part -- her works, not her since I've never met the lady). However, I make up for this by smiling a lot and being clumsy and well-meaning because I'm stoned (and a Leiber fan). This is offset by a limited horizon and having little chance at succeeding (being a reader of Poe). Thank the Lord I'm not a Tolkien fan because I can't think of anything more rotten than writing bad poetry. But then, I'm hypocritical and have a super-race drive (liking RAH). This is alleviated in part by being super straight (liking Clarke and Asimov). So this fannish ghetto dweller who has nothing to do with fandom because I'm too unimaginative and clumsy can still smile a lot because I'm straight and stoned in my hypocrisy.



ALANKIN76

In the lettercol, a quick note about "Green Grow the Rushes, O." I remember singing that when I was in Boy Scouts 1 1/2 decades ago. At the time, we were told this was the basis for the word "gringo". It seems that Winfield Scott's men were fond of singing the song while marching and raping and pillaging while they went from Vera Cruz to Mexico City in 1847. "Green Grow" and "gringo" do sort of sound alike. Even more so if you're being raped and the rapist is singing the song at the time, I would imagine. (By the way, Leo Hoffman's version is the one I'd heard.)

Note to Denny Lien: Of course invisible dirigibles exist. I saw one once.

My favorite muddle-word in the "sexist" word category is cowboy. Someone in TAPS said this must now be bovineperson. Shore a lot a'them them bovinepersons in town for the State Fair, y'all.

[[Either you were told wrong or I was; somewhere in my reading I turned up the information that "gringo" possibly -- historians seem rather dubious about the whole thing -- came from "Green Grow the Lilacs". It seems considerably more probable as an origin, because every version I've heard has been more or less jingoistic: "We'll change the green lilacs to the red, white, and blue" in one version, or "...to the Oregon blue" in another; presumably that was a reference to Oregon and "54-40 Or Fight". Anyway, "Green Grow the Rushes, O" isn't associated with the Western Movement, though presumably a few Scots expatriates sang it. RSC]] [[As a long-time campaigner for equal rights -- I was active in the attempts to open up civil rights for blacks in the early 50s, before there was much of a movement in ~~that~~ field -- I am vastly indifferent to most of the proposed word changes suggested by the more rabid women's rights devotees. There is one form I would like to see adopted, though, and it does not involve any violence whatever to the English language, nor any change, except an acceptance of biological reality in place of cultural habit. I tend to sigh whenever a human female over the age of 18 (at the latest) is referred to as "girl". I would accept that term as inevitable through the age of, say, thirty. But when writers and media people continue to refer to women in their 40s and 50s as "girls" it grates. I realize a number of them think of the term, jocularly, as a cute compliment, but it is condescending and an unthinking put-down, though not -- I fervently hope -- with the same knife-edged undercurrent common years ago in the white bigot's insistence on calling any Negro male "boy". I just wish journalists would let the adult female half of the population grow up in their minds and address that segment accordingly. as "women".JWC]]

Irvin Koch, 835 Chattanooga Bk Bldg, Chattanooga TN 37402

When you get a chance, please print the following info: In addition to the Chattanooga story contests I am now manager of the National Fantasy Fan Federation Story Contest. That means we now have at least \$75 in prizes. Plus, the NFF contest usually has a pro editor as judge and several entrants have sold their stories. One SASE gets info/forms on all contests.

Eric Lindsay, 6 Hillcrest Avenue, Faulconbridge NSW 2776 Australia

Yandro 238 arrived, just a week or so ago, indicating from the cover date that either you are getting later & later in producing it, that the PO is getting slower (probably both).

Buck, I wish I'd known about the Woodhenge you mentioned. However, what on earth is wrong with my turning up at St Louis on my way to MAC? Don't you know we do everything upside down?

The groupie photo; I've managed at last to look at some of my slides from the trip, and do have at least one groupie photo -- if you'd like it mention it sometime.

You are just not looking at awards in the correct manner. Obviously, if you can't have fun with an award (and groupies are superior) then we need to redesign the awards to make them more like groupies. Or perhaps just make an award of groupies. I'm sure that would be popular, if the selection were done well.

Denny Lien is correct; we should first turn to secondhand bookshops. For one thing, they have the classics that you missed (after a while you realize it was better to have missed them), while new bookshops have hardcovers. The paperback never appears at the new bookshop. It undergoes a transformation to make it tatty and then appears in a secondhand bookstore.

On the disappearance of socks being sinister, does this imply that only left socks disappear? I notice shoe stores here only display one shoe from each pair -- the left shoe. This implies that there is some sort of analogous migratory movement which transports the left socks into shoe stores, where they hide while waiting a chance to get together with all the left shoes there.

I bought a copy of NONE DARE CALL IT TREASON -- mind you, I haven't read it yet... Gene DeWeese should be banned.

I don't know why we should bother to try to teach kids how to read; most never do it when they grow up.

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

Wonder if you could do me a favor? I need the address and price of subscription rate to a magazine (fanzine?) called Galaxy Times. Usually I'm on to such things, but this one has escaped me.

Don't need the information for myself. Doc E.E. Smith's daughter, Verna, wrote me and said that Fred Pohl told her an article appeared in the mag about Doc and would like to get it. For that matter, so would I, since Doc and I were old friends.

[[The name sounded vaguely familiar, but I couldn't place it. Anyone with information please contact Ben.]]

Ira Thornhill, 1900 Perdido Street, Apt 897, New Orleans LA 70112

Yandro 238...I've a few (again, old) notes that I jotted (really, I think that it would be better if the past tense of 'jot' were 'jet') down about this one.

Somehow the first few pages of this issue managed to leave me almost sad -- maybe because all of the MAC material served to remind me that I wasn't there because of some stupid schedule mixups (and Janet's nursing school obligations). Then Buck's bit about the nurse who gave him the swine flu shot cured me of my gloominess. I'm married to a nurse. I live around dozens of nurses and work with dozens more -- I love nurse stories, and always believe every word of them. When Ghod created nurses he must've been very stoned. Buck, they teach nurses to behave like that. They have classes for their first two years of nursing school in How to GET Patients.

Damn Carolyn Doyle. Even when she's not really trying she brings back memories of

my own high school years. Sometimes painful ones. I was outcast enough in high school -- not because I didn't share many common interests (I played football and was involved in many of the 'normal' things), but because I actually READ BOOKS and because I was sometimes known to think and to discuss my thoughts. I can just barely imagine how bad it would've been had I been a fan at that time. Sheesh!

[[I wasn't a fan until I was a legal adult, so I had no problems that way -- but again, asthma and reading (which may have been cause and effect) made me a trifle odd. The fact that I was an enthusiastic hunter and knew more about firearms than any of my schoolmates prevented me from being thought queer as well...// I am happily awaiting a blast from Ethel Lindsay about your nurse comments. Though, actually, I doubt if Ethel needed any classes on how to "get" patients -- or anyone else. RSC]] [[My only experience with nurses -- while as a patient -- was in the OB ward; it varied between sets of very nice delivery-room women who were taking advance bets with each other on the sex of each kid (it had been a very busy night and they were getting somewhat giggly) and a head floor nurse who was the ultimate stereotype of all the irritating things patients are warned about nurses before they enter the hospital: waking you up to ask if you're asleep, asking if "we" have had our eliminations today, and in general being an officious nerd. Made a nice balance and showed me the gamut and I came away persuaded nurses are people, with all the usual variations thereof. JWC]]

Fred Jakobcic, 113 W. Ohio, Apt 4, Marquette MI 49855

Gun control is really a touchy subject. People don't want to give up any rights and are afraid of the invasion of privacy it can lead to (or could)? Maybe? Law enforcement is hampered by the people that it is supposed to protect. The people in a lot of cases only have themselves to blame, and yell when the law tries to get tough on the issue.

As long as there are men and women (does that mean something that I place men before women?) we are going to state the obvious. The only way to eliminate sexism in languages is to eliminate men and women.

I hate to see stories, in newspapers or in other news media, such as mentioned in the case of THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY. I remember when the Vonnegut book, SLAUGHTERHOUSE-5, was banned. I don't remember the year, but it was in the Detroit Free Press. This kind of ignorance, and intolerance, and narrow-mindedness scares me.

[[I tend to think banning a dictionary is hilarious, even if the general subject of censorship is serious. (I also believe ridicule is as effective a weapon as anything -- Ambrose Bierce is my lit'ry ideal. Though he did tend to go to extremes in person, as well as in print.) RSC]]
[[Some sexism in language can be eliminated, if the language is used precisely, without any need for convoluted changes such as "cowperson". See above comments to Bob Vardeman's letter. JWC]]

Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque NM 87107

Reading about the winter of '77 in the papers and seeing glimpses of it on the tube is one thing and getting first hand reports from people one knows is something else. Your reports of how it personally affected you serve to bring home just how bad it was in that part of the country. Brrr.

Of course the weather pattern that made it so rough in the east gave us fairly pleasant weather during the winter -- except for the first two weeks in January, which are always miserable regardless of what the weather pattern is -- comparatively speaking, that is. We will feel the effects of that this summer since the snowpack on our watersheds is less than 50percent of normal and we figure to run out of water fairly rapidly this year.

The "news media" out here report that we can probably expect an influx of people

fleeing from the east to the Land of Enchantment (and to Arizona, the Land of Corruption) as the Chamber of Commerce and its ilk and assorted moving companies have been receiving numerous inquiries from prospective new residents and businesses. The governor says, though, that his resources study board tells him that the state has enough water to support a population of 1.7 million, which means we could take in another half million at the very most. That's too many.

What's this Babylonian romance, Juanita? That's not the same as the gothic you were working on a while back, is it? Which, by the way, I haven't been able to find out here if it has been published.

Nonsense, Juanita, Southern California could use a large number of Code 12s.

Buck, your reports of traffic conditions there reminds me of the clipping I was going to send you but didn't. About the chap from Hartford City who skidded on a patch of ice and lost his car in a ditch. He went back, got his truck, hit the same patch of ice and lost the truck in the same ditch alongside the car...

The big flap here this past winter was over the price of natural gas. I presume we still have adequate supplies, but the price differential between interstate and intrastate has led to some interesting arguments. For instance, natural gas produced in NM is sold in California cheaper than it is in NM. The last session of the legislature slapped price controls on the wellhead so it may tend to even out.

I started to read Linda Michaels' thingee and got as far as "veneration and adoration of Ronald McDonald" and decided I really didn't want to read any more.

But, Buck, what is Brunner -- and fandom -- outragedly howling at? By any statistical average science fiction is synonymous with pseudo science. I would estimate that 90 percent of the people writing alleged SF today are almost completely ignorant of the various sciences and write down whatever pops into their heads. There is damned little science fiction being written these days. What is being written is a lot of fantasy dressed in the trappings of SF. I suppose that has always been the case but it seems more noticeable now than it was a few years ago. The ability to suspend disbelief has had quite a workout in the past few years. I think mine is worn out.

I wish I could remember who wrote CARCAJOU. I read it back in grammar school, too. Very fine.

Robert Adams' letter: We had a similar occurrence to the Richmond incident he describes, but with somewhat different results.

Last spring a couple of hammer-wielding punks walked into a local grocery and threatened to take the place and the personnel apart unless they were given the money. The owner reached under the counter and whipped out his trusty pistol. The punks fled shouting that they'd be back. The store owner followed them out, fired one shot at the getaway car and killed the driver (a young mother of two, by the way). The local news media started to sound off about this "irresponsible action" on the part of the storekeeper but stopped that nonsense when a vast outpouring of approval came from the general populace of the Albuquerque area. The county grand jury quickly considered the matter and returned a verdict of justifiable homicide. Last fall the storekeeper was elected to the state senate.

The local judges seemed to have gotten the message, too, for they were quick to point out that although they would like to deal more severely with lawbreakers they were tied by the state's indeterminate sentence law. For instance, the law said that for X crime the sentence was from two to ten years, say, and the criminal could be pardoned after serving 1/3 of that two years -- which meant he could be out in eight months. The last legislature changed the sentencing law. Parole is out and if the judge says two years, that's what he means. There is a provision of time off for good behavior, but it is minimal. Criminals will find that



It's beginning to get a little rough in New Mexico.

Tell Steve Simmons that a cheap shot is all today's school kids are worth.

[[Now, Roy...at least in this area, kids today don't seem any worse than kids 40 years ago. No better, maybe, but no worse. It's just that there's more of them.// Juanita's Babylonian gothic was, by editorial request, changed and expanded to a Babylonian historical novel. Official working title is DARK PRIESTESS, and it's to be published this winter. (Unofficial title, bestowed by Kay Anderson, is LUST IN THE DUST, but I can't see a publisher using that one...) // I'm not moving out to New Mex; it's dry enough here in Indiana. RSC]]

John Robinson, 1-101st Street, Troy NY 12180

Does Ice-9 exist in Indiana? I refer to the problem of driving through a puddle and having one of your tires get stuck. Now there's something unusual. The tire should have warmed up from rolling over the road. Is it possible that this puddle of Ice-9 melted for an instant, cooled the tire, and promptly refroze! And has the Ice-9 now left on the tire spread to other parts? Will I find myself slamming to a halt unexpectedly while driving down treacherous Route 7 and cause a pile up of 39 vehicles because somebody spread the stuff up and down the highways of the nation? Sheesh!

Stupefying question of the Year: Who is "Duke Kipshaw"?

I was listening to the radio on my way home when a kid called in and asked this question. It seems his teacher asks a question each Friday as homework for the weekend to get the kids to check out Encyclopedias, Guinness World Records, etc. I've heard one possible answer that sounds like it might be right but is unconfirmed. Does any Yandro reader know?

[[Never heard of Duke Kipshaw. Is he any kin to John Galt?//If anyone has a logical explanation of the moving car getting frozen to the street, I'd like to hear it. It wasn't an April Fool story, though, because it appeared too early in the year. RSC]] [[It also occurred regularly in the Midwest this bitter winter, and the police were feeling smugly vindicated after they'd tried to block traffic near water mains which had fractured and erupted in the sub-zero cold...and certain clowns avoided their barricades and tried to drive through the torrent and got stuck solid by the almost instant-freeze gushers. There are more weather phenomena on earth than are dreamt of in your... Several years ago Scientific American ran an article on fog which included material on "polar fog", which they described as only occurring in the Western Hemisphere in Alaska and Canada and certain mountain regions because a special combination of temperatures below -15 F and very high humidity were required to form the stuff. Well, it's occurred in Indiana several times. We even have photos of the stuff, though we couldn't get a close focus on the thermometer to prove it. It's very thick, eerie, beautiful, echo-making fog wherein you aren't really aware that the temperature will turn your nose into an ice cube if you linger out in it very long, admiring the beauty and ringing stillness. JWC]]

George Flynn, 27 Siwamsett Avenue, Warren RI 02885

For the first point is a comment on Y238 that I've been meaning to make for four months (got it Feb 2, my notation here says), and had better get to before I totally forget it. In your review of Homebrew, Buck, you mention "the illustrations by Rick



Sternbach...which I would cheerfully dispense with for the sake of a lower price." As Treasurer of NESFA, I guess it's my job to refute this. You see, the illos had essentially nothing to do with the price: Rick did them gratis (except for goodies like a free room at the con), and it doesn't cost any more to do an illo offset than a page of text. But as you say, it's those publishing costs. You may recall George Scithers' article in the MAC Program Book arguing that list price should be 5-8 times production cost. Well, Homebrew cost about \$47 per book, so by this standard the book is pretty reasonable; the costs were roughly 25 percent typesetting, 25 percent printing, 35 percent binding, 15 percent dust jacket (plus some odds and ends). (We've since found that there are some weird non-linearities in the costs, so that a 128-page book is cheaper than a 90-page one to make!) In spite of the price it's been selling very well, breaking even in about 6 months (which is very unusual), and thus far we've been able to send Poul over \$550 in royalties -- which is in large part the point of the operation. There's certainly a market for these things; we've been amazed to hear of dealers selling the out-of-print Asimov Boskone book for \$40.

As usual your Hugo recommendations are provocative, Buck. Let's see, THE SHOCKWAVE RIDER came out in '75, as did CONTINUUM 4. "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?" is a novella. (I was pleasantly surprised to find "Bloody Man" high on your list; you're the only person that I've seen recommending it besides myself. (And in general our tastes decidedly do not coincide.)

Hmm, it wouldn't occur to me to consider "interface" literary/psych jargon, as you put it, since I'm a physical chemist and it's part of my jargon -- that "initial reaction" to THE SWORD OF SHANNARA is one of the great critical one-liners of our time, even if you did take it back. STAR WARS the movie is indeed fun; half the fans I know have already seen it more than once. (One shudders to think of the imitations that are bound to follow.)

As I understand the law, while one has to deposit copies to register a copyright, (i.e. to make sure the government knows about it), the copyright is established simply by publishing with the notice.

Interesting to see about all those other Robert Coulsons. There are at least two George Flynns besides me who've written books (one expanded his thesis on Catholics in the New Deal; the other did a biography of Vince Lombardi; I co-authored a textbook), and another chemist in close to my own field whose mail I sometimes get. Fortunately we all have different middle initials. And then there was the other George Flynn who skipped out on a \$17,000 judgment, for which I somehow got served with a writ (that was the only time I ever decided I needed a lawyer); I never did hear if they got the right one.

[[My error for assuming that you'd paid for the Sternbacks, but my point stands; the volume is not worth \$10 to a science fiction reader. To a speculator in rare books, yes; but not to a reader. (The profits are immaterial; I didn't think NESFA was profiteering, but the reader still has to shell out the money, whoever gets it. Which is why I said nothing about profits; read implications into my writing at your own risk.)// Con committees have not always stuck to the letter of eligibility on Hugo contenders; I recall one novel that was on the ballot in two different years and won the second time around. If enough votes come in for a paperback edition, I think the story should get on the ballot, even if prior hardback publication makes it technically ineligible. RSC]]

George Fergus, 1810 Hemlock Place, Apt 204, Schaumburg IL 60195

By the way, you happened to mention "Mack Reynolds' trio of future-African stories" but I remember only the two that were published as an Ace Double. Which one did I miss?

Since I just sent a letter off to Don Thompson (Don-O-Saur), arguing that some of the feminist complaints about sexism in language aren't justifiable, I've decided to balance things out by arguing the opposite position with you some more. I hope you don't mind too much.

Obviously, the way in which language is used is only one of various contributions to cultural sexism. And in many cases the effects of these other contributions will make the effect of language negligible. However, such cases (such as your example of the existence of a non-sexist personal pronoun in Turkish) prove only that the elimination of sexism in language will not necessarily improve the status of future generations of women, any more than cleaning a car's spark plugs will necessarily improve its performance. However, in the particular case where the rest of your car (or culture) is undergoing repair, it probably won't end up working too well unless you change the plugs (language) too. The sexism in English has only become so evident in recent years because the rest of the cultural contributions to sexism have been decreasing. It will presumably continue to become more obviously sexist as the rest of the reinforcement factors in the culture become less so.

Your second objection has more validity. Certainly the conscious replacement of old words like "Miss" with new euphemisms like "Ms" does very little to change the subconscious mental associations that most of us (regardless of our intellectual commitment against sexism) have built up. However, such changes in language may help reduce the development of those associations in the next generation.

Although I agree with you that most of the changes that have been suggested seem unlikely to ever have any significant effect, I have no doubts about the sexism of English pronoun usage, because the effects are subtle and insidious. When we first learn to use language to systemize our perceptions of the world around us, the limited array of personal pronouns available forces us to keep dividing all individuals, whether we are acquainted with them or not, into two mutually exclusive categories. This may be so strongly reinforced by the culture's differential attitude toward men and women that it would make little difference whether the language was set up that way or not, as in Turkey.

(The evidence is equivocal on whether language reinforces traditional attitudes in most non-English-speaking countries. In France, for example, a gender for everything may actually tend to reduce the contribution of language to sexist thinking, since the gender labels associated with objects or concepts are sometimes very arbitrary. On the other hand, even numerous exceptions to a rule do not necessarily inhibit the learning of the rule, as we know from English grammar.)

But in the US the personal pronoun situation is one of the strongest factors encouraging an early and overly simplistic categorization of the sexes, which is modified only with difficulty in later life. (Presumably, the later prejudices develop, the weaker and more easily overcome they are.) At the very least, you must admit that the way pronouns are used in our language does nothing to help get rid of such early biases. One can cite numerous examples of texts, government publications, health and child care manuals, etc., which refer to the student, the taxpayer, the consumer, the constituent, the police suspect, the farmer, the sick person, the child, etc., as "he".

Regardless of how liberated our culture becomes in other respects, as long as it remains proper for textbooks to talk about the cave-man using his hand axe, the hardy pioneer establishing his homestead, the struggling migrant worker trying to feed his family (or the budding SF writer trying to get his first novel published), many kids will continue to inform an impression of cavemen and farm workers, sight unseen, that excludes 50 percent of them. (This is, of course, linked to presenting pictures of these individuals that correspond in sex to the descriptions.) One might also call attention to the assumption that God is male, which kids develop long before they get any actual religious instruction.

Since you couldn't get through BABEL-17, I'll mention "Newspeak" from Orwell's 1984, which, by eliminating words like "peace" and "freedom" from the language, supposedly helped "diminish range of thought" exercised by the populace, "since the smaller the area of choice, the smaller the temptation to take thought". Of course, it is debatable that such a universal overhaul in language usage could have been successful in such a short period of time as that suggested by the title. Delany's book is a better example because it describes an artificial language whose lack of a particular pronoun (I, me) has profound effects on the attitudes of those who are brought up to



speak it.

I see only limited validity to your statement "change society, and the language will change by itself." The cause-effect relationship is not quite that simple, since language is one of the means by which change propagates through a society. And it doesn't change by itself -- people change it, and those people start out as a mere handful (who might as well be us). I think you overestimate the natural flexibility of language. New nouns and verbs and usages thereof get introduced every day, but when was the last time someone invented a new pronoun? (The least ephemeral is probably

"thon", a contraction of "that one", which was invented in 1859 as a non-sexist replacement for he and him, but never really caught on, and has not appeared in any dictionary since Webster's International in 1959.)

Getting people to adopt a new pronoun is like getting them to adopt a basic change in grammar. It is much more difficult than getting them to occasionally use "Ms" or "----person" or the other terms that may reflect superficial cultural changes but don't really relate much to ingrained attitudes. Indeed, the traditional solution (using "they" as a non-sexist third person singular) sounds so wrong to most of us that its use is confined mostly to uneducated hillbillies who don't know any better.

To continue talking about language, but in a different vein, I was surprised at your contention that "interface" is literary/psych jargon rather than engineering jargon. It's been used for years by systems engineers, who spend much of their time interfacing between subsystems. Since the term comes originally (I think) from chemistry, engineers probably began using it before most other groups.

Alan Caillou is not simply the "author of a series of popular adventure novels," he's the author of at least three: 6 books about Cabot Cain, 3 about Mike Benasque, and several about Colonel Tobin.

You must have a false impression of Doris Lessing. At least I've never found her novels in the mystery section of the bookstore.

A few issues back, Juanita said "I still encounter people who are shocked to learn that Leigh Brackett is female -- since they've made up their minds that what they'd read was such no-nonsense and gutsy prose that it 'had' to come from a man's brain." I of course figured that such people were relatively rare within hardcore fandom. But then I happened to read Bob Silverberg's introduction to WARM WORLDS AND OTHERWISE just after the news broke about James Tiptree's real identity. In this introduction, Bob notes that little is known about the enigmatic Mr. Tiptree, but asserts that we can be sure of at least one thing -- that Tiptree is male -- because of the strong, masculine, Hemingwayesque prose. I wonder what Bob's reaction was, on learning the truth? (The most astounding reaction I've seen personally is Alex Eisenstein's smacking his brow and saying "Of course! I should have known that a man could never have written a story with a title like 'Your Haploid Heart'.")

I tend to doubt that Bigfoot, whatever it is, is a relative of ours. Any animal of semitropical origin like the primates would have to have become extremely wide-ranging in order to make it up over the Bering Straits land bridge into North America as homo sapiens did, and we would have found its bones all over the place. (The absence of any fossil remains of primates in North America during the last 20 million years or so pretty well eliminates the possibility that Bigfoot is a primate indigenous to North America.)

The new Zebra book, THE SWORD WOMAN, ought to make Jessica Salmonson feel better about liking Robert E. Howard's work.

THE MAGIC OF URI GELLER wasn't interesting so much for what it said about Geller as for what it said about the respectable scientists he's managed to fool. Randi maintains that the claims of psychics should be investigated by magicians, not by scientists. He's a member of the new Committee for the Scientific Investigation of

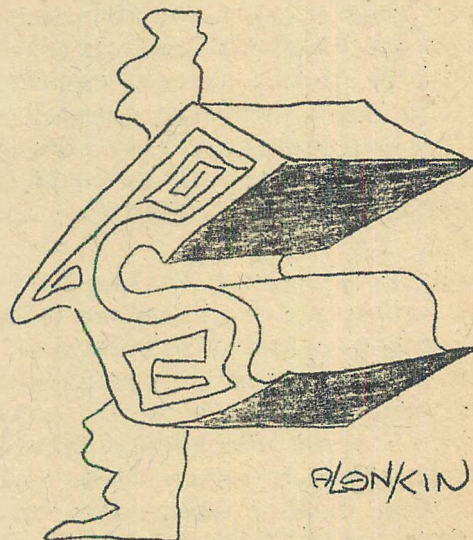
Claims of the Paranormal, which includes DeCamp, Asimov, Carl Sagan, Sterling Lanier, and Martin Gardner, and publishes a semi-annual magazine.

Re Velikovsky: I heard recently of a theory that if the Asteroid Belt were really formed by the breakup of a planet, then quite a bit of the debris could have ended up in eccentric cometary orbits. Someone supposedly calculated back along the paths of the known comets and found that, sure enough, a respectable number of their orbits appear to cross each other at a point about 6 million years ago. I dunno who came up with this or if it is true, but it sounded interesting.

You shouldn't be giving false hopes to youngsters like Anna and C.D. by telling them that schoolmates will become more bearable as they advance to higher grades. (You probably enjoyed your senior year only because you became addicted to high school basketball...) I swear that I was pretty much surrounded by nerds even in college. (Of course, it was a large state-supported university, but Bruce doesn't seem to be faring any better at a relatively small school.) My present co-workers, on the other hand, are quite a weird bunch themselves. I finally got lucky, I guess. Not a one of them discusses sports (spectator sports, anyway). Of course, each of us is weird in his own way. No one else reads fanzines during coffee breaks. But I suppose the three radio hams aren't all that far away from Fandom.

Denny Lien's Vanishing Sock Problem is really quite simple. Washing machines' unique turbulence causes small holes in the fabric of space-time. (If socks can have holes, why not washing machines, after all?). Socks are simply the objects most likely to slip through a small hole into elsewhere. But handkerchiefs are also at risk. (However, since handkerchiefs don't come in pairs, one is less likely to notice one missing.) On very rare occasions, a washing machine in this universe will coincide with one in a parallel universe, and a sock will slip into our universe from theirs. Have you ever found a strange sock in your wash? Have it chemically analyzed -- you will be surprised.

[[I have seen Doris Lessing's name on paperbacks, and as I recall, they were in the mystery section. But since I never actually bought any, my recollection is possibly a bit vague. (I always check the mystery section because one never knows what's going to be stuffed in there, but I don't check it all that minutely.))] Well, of course people change the language; people change the society. To put it more technically: when a change in society makes the coining of a new word useful, then the word will be coined. (Though not immediately; there will be false starts and trials of not-quite-usable words -- such as scientifiction -- before one turns up that is both useful and pleasing to the majority.) Euphemisms can also be coined by pressure groups, and sometimes accepted by society if the pressure is strong enough, but they do nothing to change society's opinion; the word is not the object. Substituting "Depression" for "panic" and then "recession" for "depression" did not change anyone's opinion of the event described. Same for "funeral director," "mortician," and "undertaker"; the words changed but the meaning remained the same. To get anywhere, you have to change fundamental meanings, and you won't do it by merely substituting new words. As for the new pronoun, we're in the false start era now; I've seen both "he/she" and "heesh" used, mostly in fanzines. We don't have one that society will accept yet, but it will come when one is wanted badly enough. "They" may be the successful one, and



never mind whether or not it's grammatical; if enough people use it, the grammar will have to change.// The only Caillou books I'd seen were THE ASSAULT ON.... series.// In my schooldays, the less bearable classmates tended to quit at age 16 (which could occur in any of their high school years, depending on how often they'd failed a grade), which made for an overall improvement. Maybe they don't do that any more.RSC]]

[["Hiser" has also been used in fannish circles, as a useful all encompassing pronoun. I suspect that one got a special boost after the embarrassment of male fans during Lee Hoffman's active fannish career, to cover their chagrin at being caught in chauvinist assumptions. On a general language matter, it would be nice if our culture gradually phased out all non-earned titles -- Mr., Mrs., Miss., Master., Ms., Esq., etc. The terms are wasteful and rapidly losing meaning. I would not want them dropped overnight or even for a number of years, because they do have meaning to a great many nice people of an older generation. But I believe by and large to the younger American those terms of address are becoming antiques not worth bothering with, and I'll be happy to see them go. On the subject of language and people and debates thereon, I find so little of the consideration of how people feel, only abstracts. I think both ends of that spectrum tend to be callous and more interested in their arguments than in the potential effect any changes -- or refusal to change -- will have on the emotions of human beings. Rather than discuss whether or not to use Ms or chairperson or whatever, I'm more concerned with how people deal directly with other people. We do not consider it a discourtesy to clarify a name and its pronunciation when we're introduced to someone, male or female; quite the contrary. Why then not just make it part of that ordinary exchange of human relationships to inquire casually how the person wishes to be addressed? It's done all the time: "Is that Michael, Mike, or...?" It's a rare person who's offended by such a question. The majority of us are flattered by such personal attention to our wishes. To borrow from Tucker, it would be but the work of a moment to extend the courtesy and please a new acquaintance. // Language is changed by people. But sometimes people are unaware that their language causes offense, and if told it is, they henceforth make an active effort to change. It's a slow process, but it can work. ("Why didn't you tell me you didn't like to be called...?" Insensitivity and ignorance, not bigotry, can be eased. The bigot, if told his words offend, keeps right on using them, with additional relish, now that he is assured his ethnic, sexist, religious, color, or whatever verbal stabs are getting through and causing emotional discomfort and pain to the objects of his spleen.) Fandom, of all places, should be a perfect microcosm in which to begin those language changes -- and a number of fan terms have escaped into the greater world. Not enough of them, but gradually we make an impact....now if we could just undo the damage wrought by one such escapee, namely "sci-fi"....JWC]]

Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque NM 87107

Well, look now, we disagree on what constitutes pseudo-science, You listed astrology, the tarot, psi, Velikovsky...I would agree only on Velikovsky. I am in no way certain of the status of psionics. When both the US and USSR governments are conducting serious studies on the subject it indicates that they are either on to something or else are completely deluded. Now, of course, we know that they are completely deluded, however, I was thinking along specific lines. The tarot, astrology, and all that other garbage are, in my mind, simply superstitious nonsense and not even worth classifying as pseudo-science.

No, what I had in mind was more in the line of...alleged(?)...science. The type

of mumbo-jumbo labeled physics or astronomy or chemistry or even sociology and psychology by a vast number of sf writers these days that seems to made up completely out of their imaginations. The "physics" of LeGuin in THE DISPOSSESSED is an example. The sort of "science" written into the stories of, oh, Ballard, Ellison, and a host of today's writers. The old pulp writers, it seems to me, had at least a basic understanding of the sciences...or took the trouble to look them up...where the writers of today don't even bother to crack a reference book. I recall Langdon Jones saying that sf was the easiest thing in the world to write...you just let your imagination take over. But what they are writing isn't science fiction; it is simply fantasy in sf trappings.

[[A pseudo-science is an area of knowledge which calls itself a science but isn't one -- like astrology or psychology. Astronomy is a perfectly good science; nothing pseudo about it. What you're talking about is bad science. (The fact that the average person has problems in figuring his income tax doesn't make math a pseudo-science; it makes the figurer an incompetent practitioner of the science of math. Science fiction writers are, all too often, incompetent scientists -- not to mention incompetent writers, but that's another judgment.) RSC]]

Brendan DuBois, 283 Dover Point Rd, Dover NH 03820

Notice that the pre-publishing blurb for the wombat book from Doubleday says: "Joe Karns Series: #2". Hmm, how about that. I remember what you said in a previous letter, that you hate series but you like money; looks like you might get both.

Yandro came a while again, it was your usual fine state of excellence. Nothing much really to comment on; liked the cover. Loved your review of CURSE OF THE PHARAOHS by Philip Vandenberg. I'm convinced that the only way for writers to make money nowadays is to write one of these kinds of books. You know, write a five hundred page monster on how Jesus was an Ancient Astronaut who fell out of the Bermuda Triangle and turned water into wine by transmutation, and who single-handedly erected the Great Pyramid, Stonehenge, the Wall of China, and the World Trade Towers. Bah. If you haven't already, I suggest you get a copy of THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE MYSTERY SOLVED by Lawrence David Kusche (Warner Books, \$1.95). Well written book, showing that the Bermuda Triangle is fake, a hoax put forth by hack writers. Suggested reading alongside would be the Berlitz book; shows what a jerk he is. (Oops, hope that won't get me a lawsuit.)

[[Well, if people don't buy WOMBAT in some quantity, there isn't going to be a series. (If they do, we already have the gimmick for the third one...) Once in a while you can make lots of money with regular fiction. Barbara Cartland has done it with an incredible number of incredibly bad historical romances. Dan "Marilyn" Ross did it with a number of incredibly bad gothic romances. John Jakes has done it with a series of historical novels that may not be all that bad (I haven't read them and am going on Don Thompson's recommendation). But pseudo-science seems to be the best gamble. RSC]]

NEW ADDRESSES

Morris Dollens, P.O. Box 692, Gateway Station, Culver City, CA 90230

George Barr, 904 Toyon Ave., San Jose, CA 95127

Billy Pettit, 6232 Kingston Road, Oklahoma City, OK 73122

SN Mark R. Sharpe, Beachmasters Unit #2, NAB, Little Creek, Norfolk, VA 23521

Karen Pearlston, 132 Hove St., Downsview, Ont. M3H 4Z7, Canada

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With any luck, this will be published the last week of June 1977, and DEVLINS REVIEW #2 will be out the first week of July.

THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE MAILBOX

Followup on the cactus rustling (or "poaching", as the recent article has it). One thief was stopped with a load of 348 barrel cacti (what he was driving wasn't mentioned; a semi?) One woman defender of cacti spread cholla branches on the front seat of a rustler's pickup truck, with a note saying "The saguaro strikes back." (Which is cute, but unfortunately not particularly effective.)//RICK BROOKS sends the ultimate in mail-order merchandising; chain-letter advertising. As in the usual chain letter, the sucker sends money to the name at the top of the list and adds his name at the bottom. But he's not just contributing cash; he's purchasing a product. Each of the names on the list is selling something; recipos, money-making schemes, pamphlets, etc. I wonder if that satisfied the law, or if the perpetrators could get sued for fraud anyway? Ingenious, at the least.//KELLY FREAS sends an article (via Sandra Miesel) on the shortage of moonshine in Virginia. What the revenuers couldn't accomplish by themselves, they have managed to do with the assistance of a bigger job market and higher sugar prices. Capitalism strikes again.//I keep getting these ads for the American Association of Retired Persons.....Don't push, dammit!//I also got an ad for a new book, WHITE WITCHCRAFT. All about how witchcraft can bring you money, wealth, friendship, and happiness in general. (Well, it can bring you money, particularly if you write a book about it.)//JOHN BRUNNER sends a cutting from NEW SOCIETY on murder, pointing out that firearms murders have increased at a much higher percentage than murders in general. Admitted, John, but that's not the point. Sure, if guns are available, guns will be used. The question is whether or not something else will be used if guns are not available. I say it will be. H. CRAIG SHELDON sends a clipping which notes that "chopstick wounds are common in China". Reason not given, but possibly one reason is gun control? (There is also the point that people who say that gun control is worthwhile "if it saves even one life" - which it might - don't seem to get very worked up over controlling tobacco or liquor, both of which kill more people than guns, except in military actions. Just as many innocent bystanders, too, considering auto wrecks and fires. People are quite willing to ban someone else's idea of pleasure, but not their own - I wouldn't mind a bit if both tobacco and alcohol were declared illegal. Of course, I wouldn't expect such a declaration to stop their use, either, whereas the anti-gun crowd seems to expect firearms to disappear as soon as the laws are passed.)//POCKET BOOKS is sending out heavy publicity on their reprint of WORLDS IN COLLISION. And so we get a new wave of non-science.//MARK OLSON sends a couple of scientific clippings; I liked the one on the metric system. Some years back, a professor distributed a 6" ruler bearing a Celsius/Fahrenheit conversion table. (Well, that's what the clipping said; at the time listed, it would more likely have been a Centigrade/Fahrenheit scale. Anyway...) Later, he discovered one student measuring the temperature of a liquid in an open beaker by noting the depth of the liquid in degrees Celsius. Lovely; that's the sort of scientist who gives Velikovsky a good name. Olson also sent one detailing the latest triumph of the National Bureau of Standards, which "after 18 months of effort by almost two dozen scientists", has produced a standard spinach. (For FDA use in determining toxic substances.)//SANDRA MIESEL sends the metric quote, plus some others, including one on a grass that tranquilizes cattle that eat it, to the point that they sometimes remain in the same position for 45 minutes. The grass (not listed by name) "is common in the mountain areas of the Southwest". It's been known to put horses to sleep for several days...nothing said about people.//Then there's the guy who thinks the entire space program is a hoax; we never landed people on the moon or anything on Mars. It was all a fake. I'm sure his theories and alleged "proofs" will go down well with the people who believe that everything that happens is part of a plot. (Like the nits who believed - I worked with one who did - that the escape of James Earl Ray was all a plot to get him killed before he could reveal anything about the conspiracy. Capturing Ray alive muted the talk, but they'll be ready to believe the next "conspiracy" rumor.)//ALAN DODD sends another horrified article about air guns in England; they're actually daring to make one that looks like an "assassin's rifle". (It doesn't, incidentally, but they think it does.)//DON & MAGGIE THOMPSON send one about "the first female-to-male transsexual operation in which the patient was given a penis capable of erection". All done with hydraulics. Whoopee!//