

# YANDRO

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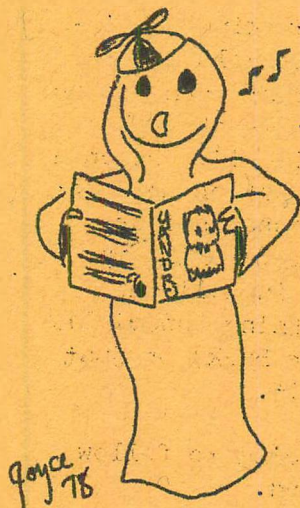
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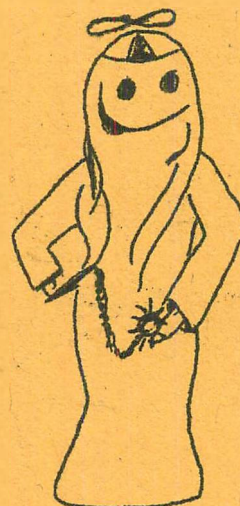
RAMBLINGS

# The States of Reading

## YANDRO\*

247-248 (XXVI: 2/3) 'AUG-SEP'79

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RUMBLINGS

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### CONTENTS

Ramblings (editorial) - - - - -	JWC - - - - -	2
Rumblings (editorial) - - - - -	RSC - - - - -	4
Science Fiction And The Fantastic Universe (speech) -	Kelly Freas - - - - -	6
Returned Changeling (verse) - - - - -	Ruth Berman - - - - -	9
Difugalty #26 (column) - - - - -	Dave Locke - - - - -	10
The First Law In Light of the Second Culture (humor)-	Joe R. Christopher - - - - -	13
Golden Minutes (book reviews) - - - - -	RSC - - - - -	14
Things That Go Bump In The Mailbox - - - - -	the readers - - - - -	33
Grumblings (letters) - - - - -	" - - - - -	34
Strange Fruit (fanzine reviews) - - - - -	RSC - - - - -	72
Aftermath (verse) - - - - -	RSC - - - - -	74

### ARTWORK

Cover by Wm. Rotsler

Joyce Scrivner - Page 1 (to be continued)

JWC - Page 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11

Dave Piper - Page 34

Jann Frank - Page 35, 50, 63, 71

Alex Gilliland - Page 38, 47, 51, 59, 66

Alan Lankin - Page 39, 46, 54, 62

Gerald Giannatanasio - Page 42, 55, 67

Fred Jackson III - Page 43, 70

Wm. Rotsler - Page 58

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I've been wondering if koalas come in dark brown coloring as well as the light brown that is generally shown in photos? It would be nice to have a cocoa koala. RSC

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Next issue, back to regular size (and regular schedule? Well, we can't have every-  
thing.) Happy Hallowe'en to you all. RSC





There is something nervous-making and irrevocable about writing this column. It is almost always the very last thing to be typed, in the putting-together of each Yan. And usually by the time I've reached this stage, I've collated most of the rest of the issue and I have a subconscious urge to somehow, willy-nilly, finish up. As a result, I end up worrying all the while that I'm saying something especially inane, repeating myself (or Buck) or just plain making a bad job of it.

I certainly hope I'm not going to follow that same routine in England.

England. It all seems unreal. But barring last-minute double crosses by the airlines, it really is going to happen. And it's all the fault of Paula Smith and Steve Simmons and many other nice, generous -- and often anonymous -- people. "Thank you" seems insufficient. I can only promise to do my best to appreciate to the limit and to take copious notes and make cartoons and share what happened in a trip report. To all of you, and most especially to Paula and Steve, two lovable young crazies, thank you. (See Rumbblings for further details.)

Last issue or an issue before (or several) I mentioned writing another historical romance. It's, finally, going to be issued, I'm told, December '79. I don't know if it'll be part of a six-book package as DARK PRIESTESS was. But I've seen a cover proof and that's a huge improvement over the ludicrous inaccuracies of DP's cover. Price has gone up, of course. The title the powers-that-be decided on was FIRE OF THE ANDES. (Catalog # 27783, from Ballantine, if anybody's a fiend for keeping records of such trivia.) I must confess this was a hairy one to get launched. It took more than one outline while one editor and then a replacement editor nitpicked and asked for changes. Then, after I got the book done I thought I never was going to hear from the editor. When I did she was asking for revisions. That meant setting aside the fantasy novel I was working on and moving back into another time and universe. And while I was in the midst of the revisions, I got a call from the editor saying she wouldn't be there when the revisions arrived. Whole new staff, I gather, moving into Ballantine. (Del Rey remained serene and stolid, I'm happy to say, so none of this upheaval affected work on the fantasy.) The new editor came in, kept in touch, and matters seem to be rolling okay. Except that I'm supposed to get galleys to read at exactly the time I'll be in England. That may create some problems, but I hope not. Anyway, that one is almost a fait accompli.

The fantasy hasn't been with Lester del Rey too long, so I haven't heard any word yet on whether that one will need revisions or additions or deletions. By next issue...whenever that happens...I'll know more, I trust.

Work aside, it's been a year to make me believe, almost, in astrology. Lots of 11th house friendly stuff, the main event being the three weeks Kay Anderson and I spent exploring the environs of this Midwestern pocket and talking and watching videotapes and jaunting and talking and having fun. Proof, too, that an out-of-state visitor is the finest excuse we can find for exploring all those local exotica we'd always meant to examine but never quite got around to. For years, Buck and I had clipped articles on the Whitewater Canal & RR in southern Indiana and the restoration going on down there, saying we were going to drive down and take a look realsoonnow. And



thanks to Kay's shared interest in such nostalgic and quaint adventures, we finally made the trip. Except for a doggedly determined historian -- who insisted on regaling us at thundering length with tidbits of the past (all true, but all already familiar to us three) -- it was a fascinating day. Old fashioned ceiling fans and the type of railroad car seats which flip-flop for the return trip so you can face front no matter which end of the car happens to be the front...a laborious and clunking ride through some of the greenest and lushest Midwestern woodland and pasturage still around. We also visited the well of the Teays River; elsewhere, I found an old landmark, the site of the Fall Creek Massacre, has been discreetly downgraded into a "meditation corner" by the town fathers of Pendleton, Indiana. Plustoo much more to describe. I felt like I had earned that vacation, and it was all I anticipated.

I really feel guilty looking forward to a second marvelous vacation, abroad, in the same year as those events. But I'm not going to back out of a chance to go to England and see Tudor castles and Roman ruins and Iron Age archaeo digs.

Kay and I visited Wapakoneta, Ohio and the Neil Armstrong Space Museum, and a few weeks later Spacecon was held in the same place. A great Holiday Inn -- courtesy and service to burn! -- literally next door to the museum. Bowers and Hevelin are to be commended for the idea, and Kelly for a spark plug speech. As Kelly stressed, he didn't need to convince the attendees of the worth of a future in space -- we wouldn't have come to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Eagle Has Landed if we hadn't already been convinced. In general, it was lovely to spend a weekend in a space oriented environment without constantly running up against people complaining "they should take all that money they shot up to the Moon and spend it on..." And I keep remembering, that in an era burdened with Viet Nam and what was going to develop into Watergate and secret revelations about military machinations, the space program fueled the economy without drafting cannon fodder, and with loads of spinoffs -- many of which we are just now learning about (NASA's pr being as too-subtle as it is.) It was a thing of mixed motivations, space race and all that. But the military arguments were always secondary to just doing something that had never been done. The science fallout will be with us for decades, I feel sure. And in all the space program, while thousands were dying in a war where the motives were really impossible to sort out, the only people who died in our reach to the Moon were volunteers. And they died either in airplane accidents or in a tragic accident that led to greater knowledge and safety for the explorers who followed -- to some purpose, sad though their deaths were. I refuse to yield to the opinion that the test pilots and astronauts were participants in a sordid wasting of national resources. (There is even an occasional aberrant fantasy that pops up in the dark corners of my mind -- Proxmire or another anti exploration, pull-in-our-heads turtle philosophy expert...diagnosed with a critical medical problem which can only be helped by one of the myriad spinoff developments from the same space program said critic has ripped and scorned. How strong are principles? Will our space program critic nobly refuse to accept the ultra-ultra pacemaker or super new surgical technique with space program developed materials? Death before admitting the program might have produced something to save lives and better existence right here on Earth? I wonder. But of course it's never going to happen.)

Another note entirely: several writers have commented on Sandra Miesel's use of the word "tushes" in "The Pigs of Blackford County." I assure you, gentle readers, the use is quite valid and appropriate to the scholarly and provincial tone of the fantasy. There are more things in a really complete dictionary than are dreamt of in your new abridged student's model. See? Fanzines are educational.

On a final matter: Is anyone else as annoyed by the Tobacco Institute's mealy-mouthed double-paged publicity campaigns in Sunday supplements as I am? The tone of those ads ought to make embarrassed non-smokers out of the most hopeless nicotine addicts. It's surely making anti-smokers out of non-smokers, just in disgusted reaction to the sanctimony of the writing.





Officially, this is two issues of YANDRO. I don't like the idea of double issues, but I like the alternatives less; I didn't want to delay publication of half this stuff, and I certainly didn't want to pay \$1 or so postage on an issue that I'm receiving 50¢ for. So...a double issue.

A lot of our recent activities have been concerned with our trip to England. The Coulsons To Newcastle Fund was a success, and we were presented with a check to cover the cost of our airline fares. However, there will be a Trip Report Issue that will go into detail about all that; the prepar-

ations as well as the trip itself. Probably not until next year, but it will appear. Next issue will probably be our Christmas Issue. Juanita is going to be very busy writing once we get back from England. Then, sometime in the early part of next year, the trip report. For now, we thank everyone who contributed to the Fund (and especially Paula Smith and Steve Simmons, who administered it) and we will be spending a week at the Worldcon and a week sightseeing in England. And then we get back and attend Nasfic....after which neither of us may do anything at all for a couple of months.

We haven't, somehow, been neglecting midwestern conventions, however. (Last year, Juanita said, well, with the trip to England and all - assuming it came off; we weren't counting on it, then - we needn't go to so many US cons. But when it came down to it, I somehow got dragged to Marcon, Midwestcon, Spacecon, and Filkcon, with Seacon, Nasfic, and Chambanacon to come. So we're setting a new record, for us, of conventions attended during a single year. Never been to more than 6, before.)

Looking back, even with the aid of a diary, I can't really find a lot to say about any of the cons so far. (Doesn't bode well for the Trip Report - well, Juanita will be writing some of that.) Marcon was mostly notable for Lori Huff guiding us out to the State Historical Society museum, which was interesting; I usually enjoy museums. We also visited the DeWeeses in March and I spent most of my time buying books and records (though I did manage to make a business trip out of it by doing some work with Gene on a special feature for the Milwaukee newspaper; got a nice little check out of it, later). In May, we were interviewed by Channel 6 tv, Indianapolis. Interviewer Reed Duffy and his cameraman were here for a couple of hours, taking videotapes which were edited down to about 2 minutes on the show. (But the approach was nice; we got shown as "interesting people" rather than weirdos. Made for local fame, anyway. Midwestcon was notable for the hotel, which is getting worse every year; the Marcon hotel isn't too hot, but the Midwestcon one is worse. Not only do we get lousy service and outrageously high room prices, but the indoor swimming pools aren't separated from the rest of the interior so the humidity in the air is ridiculous. I'm not a water breather, Lou.... (And I don't really mind lousy service from the hotel staff; I object to paying high prices and then getting lousy service.) Nice people, and a lot of old-timers showing up, but I think I'd rather see the nice people on personal visits and skip the rest. Spacecon hotel was a distinct shock; not only was the service incredibly good, but when a mundane objected to our noisy parties, the hotel manager tried to ship the complainer off to another hotel instead of hassling the fans. That's the sort of thing one just doesn't expect. Very small con, but enjoyable. Having the hotel next door to the Armstrong Space Museum was a distinct plus. Second time I've been thru the museum (4th for Juanita) but I'll be ready to go again in a year or two. As for Filkcon, Juanita had to drag me to it, kicking and screaming, but I enjoyed myself once there. Much more pleasant than I expected (even if I did get railroaded into the presidency of the Filk Foundation). I wouldn't have believed that I would enjoy a song session that



lasted from 10:30 AM Saturday until 5:00 AM Sunday, but I did. (Well, there were a couple of hours out for the banquet Saturday night, and we actually gave up on the singing about 4:30 - shortly after learning that checkout time was 11:00 AM - but there was some sort of singing going on almost constantly during those hours.) Missed people like Steve Simmons, Marty Coady, Moonwolf, Murray Porath, etc., but Juanita and I counted up 15 singers present, including Bill Maraschelle (not sure of that spelling) who showed up first at Spacecon and promises to be a fine addition to the group.

The main social event of our summer so far, though, wasn't a con but the 3-week visit of Kay Anderson. In addition to talk, we went to flea markets, gun shows, museums, rode the Whitewater Valley Railroad, drank water out of the prehistoric Teays River, etc. Lots of etc. (Incidentally, Kay, as we drove back from Filkcon in Chicago, Juanita noticed a sign just off the Tri-State, advertising the World's Largest Flea Market. We didn't investigate.) The flea market seems to be the most popular method of merchandising around here - especially if you're merchandising junk. Theoretically, it's designed for people who are buying and selling old items that don't quite qualify as antiques; old tools, tin cans, jars, marbles and all the junk broadly classified as "collectables". I never mind looking at one; sometimes you get books and magazines cheap. But the thing is broadening; some dealers make regular rounds of flea markets in their area, and sell cheap modern items instead of used material. Very garbagem; decorated ashtrays, cheap pocket knives, junk jewelry, and so on. Plus some craft items; afghans are big around here for some reason (the type of afghan that you throw over the back of a couch, not the kind that bites you in the leg), woodworking, and so on. Kay was fascinated to discover that she could buy seashells cheaper in the middle of Indiana than she can on the California coast.

Also, now that Juanita has her electronic toys (the videtapers) I got myself one; a Radio Shack turntable, Hitachi amplifier, Hitachi tape deck, and AAL speakers. At the moment the turntable is back for repairs; it wasn't rotating up to speed. Probably because it sat around on the dealer's shelf for a year and the lubricant dried out. I wanted a turntable with 3 speeds, and was appalled at how hard it is to find one these days. The Radio Shack turntable is a year old because they just happened to have it unsold, and their current model only has 33 and 45 speeds. I guess people with 78rpm records can either buy a cheaper all-in-one-unit player, or spend some fabulous sum for a turntable; the stuff in my price range no longer has 3 speeds. (I can remember when 78rpm was the only speed; having it phased out makes me feel old. I grew up with a handcrank Brunswick console player. It had one big advantage; you could still have music when the electricity went off - which it did with great frequency in those days.) Anyway, once I get this setup fully operational I'll be able to enjoy my music more. (Not to mention getting these tapes copied from Graham England; I promised to do it for him 6 months ago.)

So far, we haven't quite drowned, but it's been a wet summer. I had to go into the garden with a scythe after one spell of rain. The weeds have crowded out most of the crops, though the beans and tomatoes are holding their own. Black raspberries were large and delicious this year; one consolation. Every couple of weeks we get out the power mowers and make hay in the yard. (I'm glad we have Lawn Boy mowers, which will go through weeds two feet tall without any particular problem.) The humidity is adversely affecting my breathing, though so far it hasn't been serious. Discomfort, but no days lost from work as yet. I admit to being somewhat tired of it, though. I wasn't cut out for life in a tropical climate, evidently.

If I seem to have little to write about, it's because I haven't been doing anything all that interesting. Juanita continues with her writing; the Incan historical romance will be out this winter, a swords and sorcery novel has been completed, and she starts on her science fiction series when we get back from England. Meanwhile, I dither..... Though when Linda Sannita heartlessly mentioned that my description of a "work in progress" was the same one I'd given 3 years ago, she may have spurred me into actually getting down and writing something. Maybe....

For now, on to England!



# SCIENCE FICTION & THE FANTASTIC UNIVERSE

ADDRESS AT SPACECON BY

10 YEARS AFTER: APOLLO XI

Kelly Freas

My acquaintance with Rusty Hevelin and Bill Bowers arouses some suspicion in me that I am expected to give a long and passionate speech about the space program -- or what's left of it -- on its excitement, its beauty, its infinite and inexpressible value to man...Well, I'm not. I feel quite certain that any one of you in the audience could do it as well or better. Certainly you need no sales talk; if you did, you wouldn't be here.

But you have given me a soap boax -- so hang on. I'm going to talk about science fiction and its readers, and a little bit about the quote Real unquote world.

Science fiction, people are fond of saying nowadays, is the in thing. Sci-fi, as they insist on calling it, is all a-boom; movies are making millions, publishers are fighting to print or reprint every clinker they can find; authors are getting rich; and even artists are eating too much and too often, instead of decently starving in the traditional manner. Even television begins to show the effects: never mind that Battlestar Galactica is simple minded, hammily acted, and idiotically plotted -- it's still the best show on the tube for we "sci-fi" buffs," and it is ALMOST science fiction.

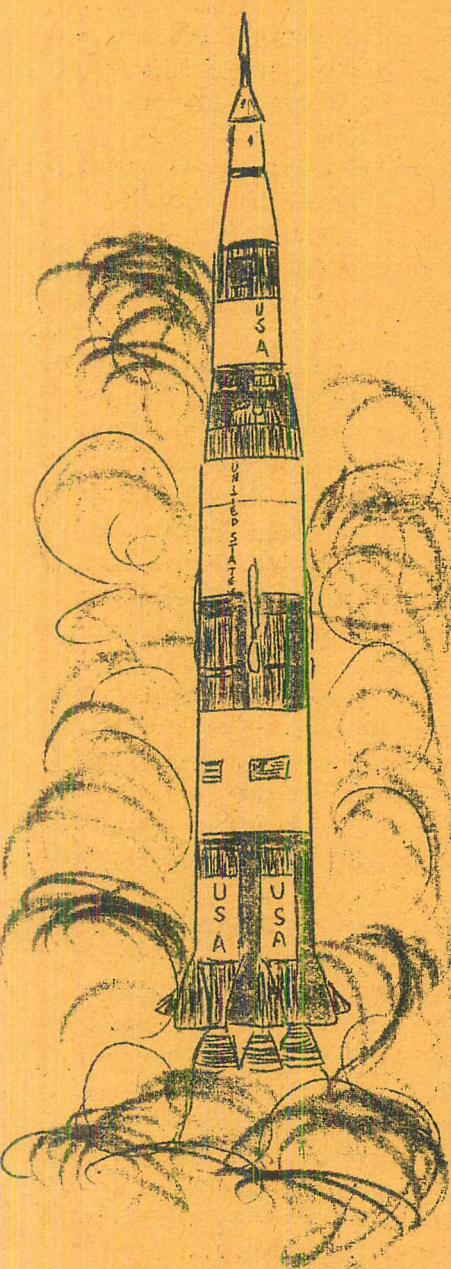
Even fandom is coming dangerously close to respectability; I attended a convention a few weeks ago at which all the male committee members wore tuxedos.

"Such," said Lucretius, "are the crimes to which devotion leads."

It seems obvious that with such a head of steam, our skiffy-boom is going to stay in orbit for a while -- now that we don't have to fear Skylab's coming down on somebody's head to send us all back to our literary ghetto in disgrace.

I THINK we are good for about three to five years, before times change so much we can't recognize ourselves; and I think the greatest danger to us and our favorite form of reading matter is that of absorption into the mainstream, in which we will cease to exist as an individual entity.

It almost happened before, in the mid-fifties, when a number of our best authors improved themselves right out of the field. There weren't any thirty -- fifty -- hundred thousand dollar advances for s.f. writers in those days -- and some of the writers who snarled most viciously at the very thought of prostituting their art were the first to grab at eleven cents a word in the slick magazines instead of the three and a half cents to which they were accustomed.





Fortunately, our field has always been blessed by more bad writers with good ideas than by good WRITERS with lousy ideas. The latter have always found a much better market in the mainstream slicks and in publishers who wanted to publish some science fiction without really being certain what the stuff was. That situation seems to have changed a bit recently -- but not necessarily for the better...

The real threat to our genre as an entity -- to s.f. as a particular field of interest, with its fandom, its fanzines, its conventions, and its very special warmth as a community of interest -- is a good deal more subtle -- and dangerous.

It is simply the disaster of seeing dreams come true.

We are LIVING in the world dreamed up for Buck Rogers by Phil Nowlan, and designed by Frank R. Paul. If you don't believe me, drive past the south east skyline of New York someday; it's straight out of an old Argosy illustration.

But they have taken away our giant incubators and bussbars and given us silicon diodes and optical fibers, just as they took away brass brassieres and miniskirts, and gave us maxiskirts and the layered look. And while they were giving us our so-called freedom in the sexual revolution, somehow the apartments got too expensive to rent; and nobody DARES park on a dark road anymore -- even if they could afford the gas to get there.

Our fantasies are rapidly being buried under an avalanche of reality -- and if there is anything in the world we want to avoid, reality is it. Most of you won't remember that startling announcement that the Russians had put Sputnik into orbit; but S.F. publishers are still trying to forget. S.F. sales dropped faster than that bird took off -- a dozen magazines failed within six months.

We don't like the world to impinge on our sensawunda.

It doesn't mean that we are afraid of reality or are trying to escape it; it is simply that we have encountered the present world, or a reasonable facsimile thereof, in our reading often enough for it to be, not only familiar, but somewhat old hat. Even worse, many of the solutions to the problems in the stories were better than the ones presented to us in the "real world"; we are firmly convinced almost to a man -- or woman -- that anything the mundanes (read Washington, or Wall Street, or the front office) can do, we would have done better. We are great second-guessers.

What this adds up to generally appears as a sort of mild (sometimes almost unconscious) resentment of the "real world", perhaps because of an unadmitted fear that it may somehow sully our dreams.

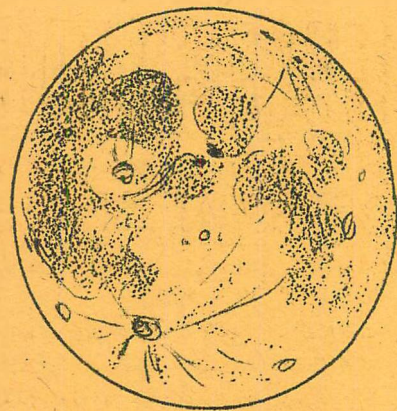
I have a good friend who has been in science fiction for as long or longer than I have -- and who absolutely refused to have anything to do with the space program. Finally his wife lay down the law -- "This is what you've spent your whole life working for, you jerk," -- and grabbed him by the ear, and hauled him off to Cape Canaveral to watch a shot. He was, of course, enthralled. But the giveaway is that what excited him was not the realization of a dream, but all the things he discovered at the Cape which had NOT been dreamt of in his philosophy.

And there, my friends, is the kicker. Out there in the real world are things even more exciting than dreams -- and they all need people like us to do something about them. You may remember when Bjo Trimble organized the campaign to save Star Trek the first time -- and deluged the networks with 200,000 letters from fans. Now, as a long time Bjo freak, I will be the first to insist that she is one in a million -- but that means that somewhere there ought to be two hundred more Bjos. It's a thought to boggle the mind.

200,000 letters pushing the space program?

200,000 letters pushing the ERA?

200,000 s.f. fans writing letters to the editor, the mayor, their senator, their congressman; all pushing the ideas of value that no one else will bother to promote?





Look:

In January 1978 the issuance of Patent #4-041-476 was announced by the OMTEC Replication Corporation. The replicator is simply a device which will take a computer design, and, using a combination of laser technology and photochemistry, produce a three dimensional artifact.

Think about it.

Put a replicator in orbit, with proper support equipment, pick up space debris for raw materials, or mine the Moon. You don't launch machine tools, lab equipment, or home furnishings. You broadcast appropriate data by radio. The cost of establishing a space settlement would be reduced to a silly millifraction of present costs merely by replicating a model, designed on Earth by a computer.

And what does this mean to you? Well, how much talk have you heard about it? Look it up in Space Age Review. Write letters of inquiry, letters of statement -- to anybody you can think of.

This is an invention comparable to the discovery of fire; it will revolutionize this world and others -- if it doesn't get swept under the rug.

Another one:

June 14, 1977. Patent #2-029-747. Molecular Research Co., Houston, Texas.

A method of preparing and utilizing organic polymers. Sounds dull enough.

Certainly has not attracted much notice: publication in forty magazines, a reprint in Studio Photography, June 1978.

But this patent contains the already proven solution to the energy problem. Oil for our cars and plastics for the next two hundred and fifty years -- all from North American sand and tar deposits -- at prices no higher than the present.

More -- the big complaint about coal is greater air pollution, right? There is a system of "air mining" by which the materials recovered from combustion of coal would themselves be worth more than the cost of the energy produced while burning it!

Roll that one around for a while.

Who wants it? The oil companies, who are making bigger profits than ever? The coal companies -- who are running in the black for the first time in a decade? The government, to bury in the archives till it's required for World War III?

Nobody wants it but us, fellas!

There is the matter of fusion power; there is the matter of virtual stoppage of that disease wrongly called old age; there is the problem of putting the necessities of life where and when they are needed -- there are a hundred other vitally important issues upon which no one in any part of the establishment as it exists will or can take action.

But action can be taken. A million investors each with a dollar in his hand may not be as good as one backer with a million bucks -- but it can get a show on the road. And we don't even need to invest. All we need do is talk -- and ask questions.

Here we sit -- two hundred thousand or more of us, with nearly five hundred fanzines which circulate all over the world, with a cadre of techies who can give Ma Bell ulcers, and an array of experts on every subject in the world or out of it. We have, in fact, one of the best communication networks in the world today, if we choose to use it.

Our founding fathers put their whole faith for the future of the United States of America in the wisdom of an informed electorate. In the culture of the 1970's we are not particularly significant as a voting bloc -- but as a source of information, as a continuing source of embarrassing questions, as gadfly, as -- in short -- informed, literate, cohesive rabble-rousers, we have it in our power to shake the whole consumer economy by the scruff of its silly neck.

We CAN have the millennium within thirty years -- and wouldn't it be nice to know that, even if no one ever hears of our part in it, WE made it happen?



Science fiction people can do the job. We are the only ones with the talent,  
the knowledge, the imagination to do it.  
Start shouting, folks.

[[The above thanks to Kelly, who was not planning on having the ideas broadcast,  
but had no objection if the fans present wanted to spread the word -- and we wanted  
to. And profound thanks to Michael Hahn, who volunteered on the spot to transcribe  
Kelly's notes and get them to fan editors who wished to share the address with a  
larger audience. Not only did she do the copying, but when our stencilling deadline  
ran right on the heels of Spacecon, she promised to get the copy to me in time for  
me to include it in this issue -- and she did. A sterling example of the enterprise  
and enthusiasm Kelly was talking about. Whether it's the particular devices and ex-  
trapolations he mentions or other on-the-shelf projects that could alter the future  
for the better, we have the voices to prod and push and just maybe make things hap-  
pen. Here's your chance to be one of those potential rabble rousers. Go to it.  
Reproduction of the address is encouraged, of course, with due credit to Kelly and  
his amanuensis, Michael. All misspellings and typos, though, are blamed on...JWC]]

uuu mm uuu mm uuu mm uuu mm uuu mm

## RETURNED CHANGELING

by

RUTH BERMAN

He bowed over Mab's hand

The gesture itself hid his smile

At the quaintness of it.

After a life of jacket and slacks among strangers,

His arrival, in robes and hose, in this secret land

Puzzled him.

He was used to being alone,

But here, at home, he was lonely

Among the faces with his eyes.

(copyright 1976 by De Kalb College)



## "AFTER TELEVISION WHAT?"

DAVE LOCKE

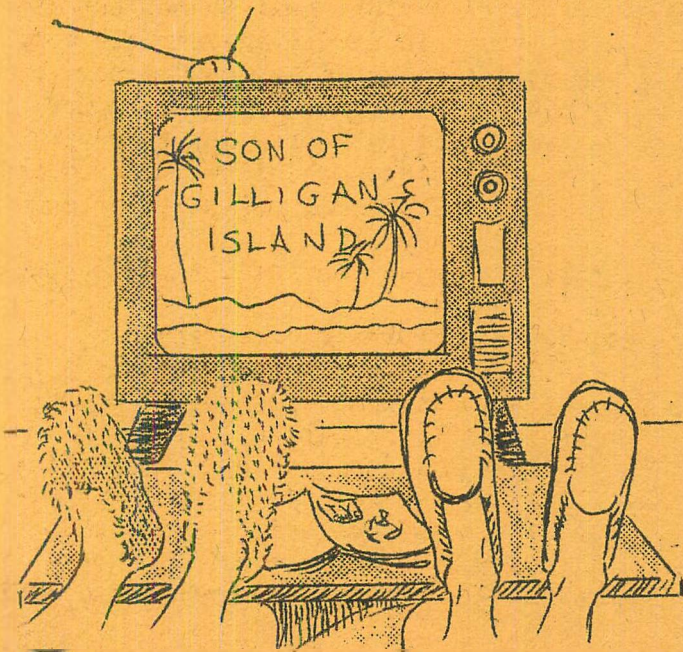
We don't watch much television anymore. It isn't that we're too good for it, though we'd often like to think so, it's just that one day we realized our brains were turning slightly mushy.

Back when I was watching television I did enjoy much of what I was seeing. There were a few series that had a great capacity to amuse me for the moment. Unfortunately there were a few too many like that, and the next day I'd have been hard-pressed to give the plotline of anything I'd watched the night before, except of course for the tennis matches on the PBS station (basically they concerned a couple of people who for some reason enjoyed beating the hell out of a white, fuzzy little ball).

Finally I decided that I was going overboard on the whole subject of television, and that there were many more things in life than whether or not Columbo would piss somebody off by dropping cigar ashes on their carpet. I mean, I had yet to see a live musical (finally went to MAN OF LA MANCHA, featuring Richard Kiley, and dozed fitfully because Jackie kept punching me in the ribs whenever my snoring got louder than that of the fellow sitting on the other side of her), and I had never deliberately been to a musical concert (the Hulans and I once attended a performance by comedian George Carlin, and had our eardrums blown out because we sat under a big-ass speaker as two rock groups spent an hour warming us up before George came on; for this we had rushed through a dinner, broken highway speed limits, and generally hauled ass to avoid missing anything). (In case you're curious, Jackie and I took in a Jimmy Buffett concert, where I felt moved into mediating a fight between her and a young woman sitting in front of us who insisted upon shouting words of endearment to Jimmy while he was performing his numbers. I think Jackie's argument was that we had paid time and money to hear Jimmy perform, not to hear this woman scream her lungs out and otherwise disrupt our capacity to enjoy his performance, and the young woman's position seemed to be that Jackie was trying to cramp her style. Each had short

fuses, and for some reason I stepped into this with all the trepidation of a referee in a match between Godzilla and Megalon. It was touchy. I won't presume to tell you that I'm a high-class negotiator or arbitrator, as I did have somewhat prejudiced feelings in the matter, but the young woman did wind up apologizing, offering us beer and liquor, and, most importantly, saving her enthusiasm and expending it with more propitious timing. Did I enjoy the concert? It was okay. It was different. If I had it to do over again I'd stay home, put our collection of his albums on the stereo, get something tall and wet with ice cubes, and snuggle up on the sofa. I'm definitely a low-life.)

So I got away from television. Sort of. We watch news broadcasts, and occa-





sional specials which seem to be of palpitating interest. I, as distinct from "we," watch an occasional boxing match or a game of tennis. But not baseball or football. I don't know how universal it is, but out here there are a great many fans who are also fans of baseball and football. Those few of us who escaped having a taste for such things tend to regard ourselves as fortunate at being able to devote all that time to the pursuit of other eccentricities. The reaction of these peers of mine, as regards my watching eight straight hours of televised Wimbledon tennis matches two days in a row, allows me a more balanced and tolerant viewpoint when addressing people who would foolishly waste the same amount of time watching baseball or football.



In general, though, I don't watch much television. Well, to somewhat date this document, I'm currently unemployed and in an effort to amuse myself I do seem to have the set on more than I did before dropping out of the work-a-day world (at least, I'm hoping this statement will be dated by the time Yandro comes out. Regardless of my capacity to enjoy not working, this time it is not fiscally healthy.) The last time I was unemployed I suffered a great curiosity as to what the soap operas were like, but quickly satiated myself ("Does John love Mary, did Joan poison her only child, is George being unfaithful to his three wives, can Alice survive the trauma of being gang-raped at a fraternity initiation ceremony, will Marge cuckold Albert for the two-hundredth time? Tune in tomorrow for LOVE OF LIFE.") This time I'm watching the TODAY show all the way through, and then I watch DONAHUE as he tries to cope with the foibles of humanity. Well, all right, sometimes I watch the 3:30 movie. But only if it's something I can't resist, like a reshowing of THE NIGHT STALKER (I'll confess: I've seen it three times now. As deftly written and handled as it was, I really doubt I'd subject myself to it time and again if it didn't star Darren McGavin. Okay, I'm a low-life).

As a consequence of watching less television (or, lately, trying to watch less television), our movie attendance has escalated. This may be a natural byproduct, even. I won't tell you that we always pay to see something which is better than the fare offered up for nothing on the tv set which is sitting right next to me, but maybe this is because we dilute our odds by trying to entertain my eleven-year-old son. Do you really think that Jackie and I, of our own volition, would pay good money to see BUCK ROGERS IN THE 25TH CENTURY, GREASE, SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER, and a few other features which we managed to live through because we had enough foresight to stuff a flask into Jackie's purse? Well, it "gets us out of the house," allows us to avoid board games such as Battleship and Six Million Dollar Man, and may allow my son to live past puberty. Also, we like popcorn.

When we're on our own volition we usually fare better at the movie theater, but not always. Sometimes we blow it.

Usually, if it's just the two of us, we do a pretty thorough screening of a movie before we intrepidly shell out hard cash for it. This means that we read a lot of reviews, quiz fans and mundanes who have already seen it, and discuss it amongst ourselves ("I don't care what the plot is, I'll play solitaire before I'll watch a Clint Eastwood movie." "I don't care how many New York critics had orgasms, I think Woody Allen is the biggest dipshit since Soupy Sales."). After this careful and extremely thoughtful analysis we will come to a decision on which movie to trot off and see. For some reason one of us is often disappointed, despite careful negotiation, though frequently enough we will both leave the theater in a cheerful mood (THE



GOODBYE GIRL, LOVE AT FIRST BITE, and the remake of INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS come readily to mind). Once in a while we both get burned.

I remember the night we went to see ROCKY HORROR.

You may be able to tell, right at the start, that this is not going to be a good review of THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW. I know I've already used "dipshit" once in this column, but I've just sat here for ten minutes and have failed in my efforts to come up with some other expression which satisfies my urge to be succinct.

Well, to each their own opinion, right? Here's mine. I have never had such an interesting experience in waiting to see a movie.

We went to see it because we had heard and read such a great deal of conflicting opinion about it. I don't really need to elaborate on that. If I had to guess as to whether 2001 or ROCKY HORROR has received the most wordage in the fan press, I'd be hard-pressed. I wouldn't be any better off if I had to guess which side had the majority in the polarization of opinion on either movie. I just dunno. All I can do is tell you how it went for us. Concerning ROCKY HORROR we finally discovered our curiosity all athrob, grabbed a few bucks, and went.

Hermosa Beach has a theater which plays ROCKY each Friday and Saturday at midnight. The Saturday showing was for the participatory troops, and Friday was for those seeing the show for the first time. At least, that's what the theater was shooting for. Discipline was a bit lax. Every time this one fellow appeared on the screen several people around us would shout "Asshole!" They'd start clapping prior to a musical number, chant along with it when the number started, reveal dialog before it was given, throw candy at the screen, and at one point they held up lit matches or cigarette lighters. For sure it was A Different Kind of Audience. We're glad we didn't go on Saturday.

Standing in line outside the theater was really the high point of the evening. Reminds me of the street scenes in AMERICAN GRAFFITI. Actually, I saw AMERICAN GRAFFITI after seeing ROCKY HORROR, and my comment was "that reminds me of the time we saw ROCKY HORROR!"

There were teenies all over the place. Drag racing in the street. Leaning out of car windows and screaming at the teenies standing in line for the movie. We had been dropped into a Young World, and were almost alone (after going through the line we discovered one or two \*cough\* fellow oldsters in the audience, but while in line our wrinkles seemed conspicuous).

As Jackie was going to buy the tickets, I remember hoping that she wouldn't embarrass us by getting up to the ticket window and saying: "Two adults, please."

As for the movie, it struck me as a bisexual wetdream. Given that, however, I'd even be puzzled as to what a bisexual might see in the thing.

The dialog between Jackie and myself, which went unnoticed amongst everyone else's general excitement, was something like: "Do you think we could start enough ruckus to get ourselves thrown out and get our money back?" "No, the ushers are too busy trying to cope with everyone else to pay attention to anything we might do." "Shall we leave now, or do you think the next row will notice if I throw up on them?" "Damned if I'll pay this much money and not see how dippy this turns out to be. Besides, if you barf someone might think you're just an enthusiastic fan who got carried away."

What this movie might possess in the way of being different it more than loses in cardboard stereotyping and the naiveté of its contrived situations. There's no humor in it. It merely strains to set up a message which isn't too clear. I've read fan reviews which seem to say the message is that decadence can be cool even if it aims for the bottom of the barrel, because after all the world is going to hell in a handbasket anyway. The only message I got was that I'd have been better off watching a fifteenth rerun of GILLIGAN'S ISLAND.

Well, to be honest, it was different. Also to be honest, that's all it was. Merely different. There were no other virtues to titillate any of our interest buds, but there were enough major and minor flaws to stare that this movie's "differentness" was insufficient to make it really watchable.



However, we really got a kick out of standing in line with a hundred pimply teenage pubescents. Hard to believe as it may be, the two of us were vanguards in showing them how to warm up on a cold night. While the rest of the line stood around with their bare faces hanging out, trading gaucheries and wondering what to do with their hands, we wrapped ourselves up in each other and demonstrated an alternative to the gas shortage. Conspicuous at first, we became role models for several. Unfortunately, in the darkness of the theater and left to their own devices, no one else seemed to approach the movie with the same good taste that we had. While acknowledging that everyone has the right to their own rotten, lousy taste, at no point during the showing of ROCKY HORROR, with its accompanying audience enthusiasm, did we question our own critical faculties. While "it sucked" may not be the epitome of literary or cinema criticism, the phrase serves well to express our consolidated opinion.

Still, we did not immediately return to television after this eventful encounter. Being hardy souls, it took more than one taste of the lash before we deemed it necessary to run up the plank.

As a matter of fact, we're still not exactly on the plank. We've progressed from watching zero television to watching some television, that's all. As an aid to muting our will powers, we possess only a portable black-and-white television set. We have also refrained from having it repaired so that the picture and sound might be of entrancing quality. All of this helps.

Instead of watching television -- well, okay, instead of watching a lot of television -- we occupy our time with perverted things like reading and talking. I'm almost ashamed to admit it. Brings out the guilty feelings.

I have to cut this short. There's a special episode of POLICE STORY on tonight, and it sounds too good to pass up. Ordinarily we wouldn't delve into such plebian things, but this one looks to be of suitably high quality. Besides, I'm bogged down on Will Durant's THE STORY OF PHILOSOPHY.

But really, we don't watch much television any more.

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## THE FIRST LAW IN LIGHT OF THE SECOND CULTURE

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by ..... JOE R. CHRISTOPHER ~

The meeting was held in a room near the office of the woman who essentially developed the intelligent, humanoid robot. There were seven people around the conference table, all but one scientists -- yet including that one humanist, brought in in a traditional gesture of "enlarging the collective point of view". He seldom spoke.

The developer said, "Can anyone see any dangers or problems with the First Law?" Without pausing, she continued, "Actually, I doubt that there are any problems. The statement is simple and all inclusive. We have given it great thought." It was not clear if she were using the royal we; at any rate, she paused for a moment of self-congratulation, in contrast to her usual robot-like regularity. The event obviously moved her greatly.

She continued, "I defy anyone to point out any flaw in in." Then she picked up the sheet before her and read the first of the three statements printed on it: "'A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.' I defy anyone to find anything wrong with that."

There was a moment of silence. Then the humanist said quietly, "The or should be nor."



# GOLDEN MINUTES

IN MEMORY YET GREEN: The Autobiography of Isaac Asimov, 1920-1954 (Doubleday, \$15.95) Maybe Asimov is a genius after all. Who else could spend over 700 pages on the first half of his autobiography and make it interesting? Particularly since nothing of great interest happened to him? This volume takes him from childhood thru publication of his major works of fiction, and stops just as he is getting started as a popular science writer. Must of his personal philosophy - and how it developed - is of course included. (I have one quibble, with the phrase "...so tightly is sexual achievement tied in with self-esteem..." For you, maybe, Ike. I had self-esteem long before I experienced sex.) On the whole, it's an extremely enjoyable book, both for the personal details and the glimpses of other people in and out of the science-fiction field.

THE WAY THE FUTURE WAS, by Frederik Pohl (Del Rey, \$8.95) A somewhat complementary volume to the Asimov, since Pohl operated in many of the same circles. This deals almost entirely with Pohl's experiences in the science-fiction field, rather than being an autobiography. (Subtitle is "A Memoir".) This one is interesting for the events it describes; Pohl has (or at least shows) almost no insight into the people involved. But the descriptions of what happened are quite fascinating. The differences in the books are manifold; Asimov is sitting down and casually relating the story of his life to his friends, while Pohl is concocting a formal entertainment, with humor and drama nicely balanced. (Which is not to say that Asimov is any more "honest"; he's just less formal in his presentation.) It's an interesting book, covering the science fiction world from 1930 to the present, with the major emphasis on the 1940s and 1950s. (And I disagree with his explanation of "how falling in love happens" even more than I do with Asimov's comment on self-esteem.) But on the whole, I enjoyed it.

THE SILMARILLION, by J. R. R. Tolkien (George Allen & Unwin, £4.95/Ballantine, \$2.95) On the whole, I did not enjoy this. Academics should like it; it is the background material for the world depicted in THE HOBBIT and LORD OF THE RINGS; primarily the myths and legends. (Or, as Tolkien would probably have put it, THE HOBBIT and THE LORD OF THE RINGS were commercial novels taken from the literary world created in THE SILMARILLION.) It is in no sense a story; it's a religious work from an alien world, and quite Biblical. (Rather excessively Biblical, in my opinion.) The characters are mythological - obsessively so. If you like that sort of thing, fine; you'll love this one.

PRINCE CHARLIE'S BLUFF, by Donald Thomas (Viking) I bought a remaindered copy for \$1.49. This is the sort of alternate-world story I particularly like; the subtitle is "A Novel of the Kingdom of Virginia". Briefly, after Wolfe's rash attack on Quebec has been destroyed by the French, the Highland regiments involved make a deal with their French captors to join various rebellious elements in Virginia and create a kingdom for the Stuarts out of the southern American colonies. The book, taken from the journals of one of the Highland officers, tells how they succeed, and hints at future developments. Quite well done in most respects. The British fail at Quebec partly because William Pitt never becomes Prime Minister (and because Amherst's army is conveniently destroyed offstage). And just possibly, though it's not mentioned, because the French aren't handicapped by the services of Francois Bigot... At any rate, while the author never really convinced me of the likelihood of his events, they make an entertaining story, one well worth your money if you can find a copy at this late date.



MAJOR CORBY AND THE UNIDENTIFIED FLAPPING OBJECT, by Gene DeWeese (Doubleday Signal, \$5.95) A moderately embarrassing book, for me. Gene and I wrote this thing up 3 or 4 times in slight variants - including a juvenile version, once - and it never sold, largely because we never had a decent ending. So Gene works out a better version all by himself, and sells it....the plot started out being very familiar to me, and became progressively less so as the story continued. Signal Books are the Doubleday line for the literarily retarded teenager, which mostly means that the author can't use any big or even mediumsized words. But, despite what you may think, that's not that much of a restriction, and Gene makes a very good juvenile novel out of the book. Bug your friendly local librarian into buying a copy.

THE WHITE DRAGON, by Anne McCaffrey (Del Rey, \$8.95) Though by the time the review appears, there will undoubtedly be a paperback edition. It's billed as Vol. 3 of the Dragonriders of Pern series, but it's closer to Vol. 5, since her juveniles for Atheneum also fit into the series. Anyway, it's the usual good McCaffrey job. Lord Jaxom is perhaps not as interesting a character as F'lar and Lessa, but the story is well told and well worth reading. Don't miss it.

DRAGONDRUMS, by Anne McCaffrey (Atheneum, \$8.95) This isn't billed as Vol. 6 of the series, but that's about what it is. Plot dovetails neatly with that of THE WHITE DRAGON; central character is Piemur, who graduates from chorus boy to apprentice spy in the course of the book. If anything, Piemur is a better character than Jaxom, though the plot is considerably simpler to make the book acceptable to a juvenile audience. And if you want the entire dragonrider series, you have to have this one - as well as McCaffrey's two earlier books for Atheneum. (Even if you don't want the entire series, this is a good enough book to warrant spending your time on it.)

THE STAND, by Stephen King (Doubleday, \$12.95) A terribly symbolic novel of a biological Armageddon. King starts off slowly, with a brilliant depiction of several very real characters. But the farther he goes, the more symbolism takes over and characterization is ditched in favor of deliberate stereotyping. I suppose the book may say something to the profoundly religious reader, but it put me to sleep about halfway through, when the slowness of the pace becomes glacial, and psychology begins to look like padding. Even the images started to get boring. I might have liked the book if it had been 500 pages instead of 800, but as it is, I don't recommend it.

THE BEST OF AVRAM DAVIDSON, ed. by Michael Kurland (Doubleday, \$7.95) Actually, this is worth the money just for Avram's Afterword on artists and art, but you also get a Foreword by Peter Beagle, an Introduction by Kurland, and eleven stories with auctorial commentary plus one chapter of a novel. (I abhor the latter; novels should not be excerpted. You want to read THE PHOENIX AND THE MIRROR, buy a copy of the book - Avram probably still has some to get rid of. Stories are "Or The Grasses Grow", "The Golem", "King's Evil", "The Ogre", "The Trefoil Company", "What Strange Stars and Skies", "The Necessity of His Condition", "The Sources of the Nile", "The Unknown Law", "Now Let Us Sleep", and "Help! I Am Dr. Morris Goldpepper". They're all good stories; if you don't know Davidson's style by now, go buy a copy and find out about it. If you do know his style, then you should definitely want the book. One of the better items of the year.

THOSE WHO FALL FROM THE SUN, by Josephine Rector Stone (Atheneum, \$6.95) Anti-technological science fiction, which always annoys me. Humans have become slaves to the Techmen, and the girl protagonist must find a way to reaffirm the human will. It's well enough written for a juvenile, and my snarls at authors who sit down at their electric typewriters to inform us that technology kills the human spirit may not be shared by the readership. But for the record, I disliked it.

CEMETERY WORLD, by Clifford Simak (secondhand) I recently picked up this Book Club edition of a very nice Simak adventure story. Nothing brilliant, but good entertainment, and recommended.



COWBOY HEAVEN, by Ron Goulart (Doubleday, \$7.95) The usual Goulart farce, this time in a future (though not very) showbiz world. Fans of a certain sf author may or may not be amused by a character named Harlo Glasspants, premier gossip columnist. The plot is even sillier than usual, but it's an enjoyable lightweight book.

THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FICTION YEARBOOK, ed. by Colin Lester (Quick Fox, \$7.95) A trade paperback covering the world of science fiction. This is the 1979 edition; frankly, I bought it because I think it will be the only edition and in times to come will be an intriguing curiosity. (But it may well fool me; fans do occasionally spend enormous amounts of time on marginally useful projects.) The book has sections covering books, magazines, fanzines, organizations, agents, anthologies, criticism, translators, libraries, book clubs, book sellers, pseudonyms, conferences and workshops, conventions, awards, artists, films, TV, radio and drama, music and recording, apas, miscellaneous services, name-interests and fringe interests. It also has what I consider a ridiculously complicated coding system - giving every entry in a list of authors or fanzines a separate entry code, for example. (Some of the complications of the code system are in an effort to condense information; the entry codes are used for cross-referencing, but in general seem to take up more room than they save.) Anyway, this may come in handy for answering questions - I don't know, since I haven't tried it yet. I have absolutely no use for it myself (except as a curiosity) but if you do, here it is. It provides addresses of local fan groups, for example (don't take the history given too much to heart, though; I note the history of ISFA is wrong), and the addresses of most continuing conventions, mail-order booksellers, etc. I suppose it's all useful to someone, even if not to me.

DREAMSNAKE, by Vonda McIntyre (Dell) I don't know the price because Dell sent out copies of the SF Book Club edition to SFWA members to publicise it for a Nebula; I wouldn't even guarantee the Dell edition is out yet. I haven't seen one. This is a novelization of "Of Mist, Grass, and Sand" and its sequels, plus new material. (Once the sequels started, it was pretty obvious they were parts of a novel, anyway.) It's a good book; an original background, good enough characters, and a fairly sturdy (if well-worn) plot. The background alone makes it worth reading.

THE BOOK OF FAIRIES, by Beatrice Phillpotts (Ballantine, \$8.95) Reproductions of "serious" paintings (as opposed to both illustrations and primitives) of fairies, done by British artists between 1880 or so and 1950 or so. There is a good variety of styles and subjects, though Shakespeare is a major influence. I'm not all that fond of classic paintings, but I was rather taken by one of Turner's misty landscapes and a "Midsummer Night's Dream" interpretation by Francis Danby. There should be at least a few interesting items for anyone who likes painting at all.

THE OFFICIAL BATTLESTAR GALACTICA SCRAPBOOK, by James Neyland (Grosset & Dunlap, \$6.95) The title tells it; photos and biographies of the actors, a synopsis of the alleged plot, and a few comments on the special effects. (Looking thru it, I kept wondering why no color shots of the special effects; then I ran across one and discovered why. What looked pretty good on the screen looks phony as hell in a still photo.) If you liked the show.... (If you liked the show well enough to spend money on this, you're never going to be one of my close friends.) Otherwise, one does get some fairly good photos of Jane Seymour and Maren Jensen. Seymour in particular was about the only thing the show had going for it; when they killed her off, I quit watching.

AN ATLAS OF FANTASY, by J. B. Post (Ballantine, \$8.95) Revised edition - revised size, too, I think. This one is laid out horizontally, 11 x 8-1/2. "Fantasy" is not used the way we use it; "An Atlas of Nonexistent Lands" would have been a more accurate title, as maps of Treasure Island and Barsetshire are included along with Middle-Earth, Hyboria, Poictesme, Barsoom, Dalarna, etc. And some maps, for cost or other reasons, are omitted (Juanita was disappointed to not see the maps produced by the various Brontes.) Not a definitive book, but interesting if you enjoy maps. Reproduction is fair to good, also for various reasons.



SCIENCE FICTION: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY, by Sam Lundwall (Grosset & Dunlap, \$7.95) Might be more accurate to call it a history of European science fiction, but that makes it far more useful than another book about the American variety. He provides some interesting information - pushing the first mention of "science fiction" back to 1851, for example. And I find his cynicism about utopias rather agreeable. But he does have some strange ideas, and a determined anti-technological bias that looks a bit strange coming from a proponent of science fiction. In promoting the work of Jarry as opposed to science fiction writers, he says "They are all imaginary solutions, so why bother with them?" Everything in fiction leads to an imaginary solution, Sam, so why bother with anything but textbooks? (Which, of course, is what he's written here, but it seems a bit egotistical to assume that a textbook is worth more than the field on which it's based) Also, in commenting on the pioneer Russian writer Odoyevskiy, he says "He did not, however, foresee Communism in Russia; instead he predicted a harsh totalitarian government..." Even a Swedish socialist should know enough of the world to recognize an accurate prediction when he sees one. Well, if you can stand the anti-American bias, which Lundwall freely admits in the back of the book, it's a good history of European s-f literature, and if Sam has become a bit snobbish in his old age (magazine science fiction in the old days was fine for children, he admits patronizingly) he's still a better writer and more accurate scholar than someone like Rottensteiner. Buy the book; it's worthwhile.

GNOMES, by Wil Huygen and Rien Portvliet (Abrams) No price listed; I think I paid around \$8 or \$9 to the Quality Paperback Book Club. A charming volume on the natural history of the gnome species. Every imaginable aspect, and a few I never would have thought of, is covered, and in a dead-pan earnest style. Illustrations are nothing short of brilliant.

LORD FOUL'S BANE, by Stephen R. Donaldson (Ballantine, \$2.50) Together, these THE ILLEARTH WAR, by Stephen R. Donaldson (Ballantine, \$2.50) are the Chronicles THE POWER THAT PRESERVES, by Donaldson (Ballantine, \$2.50) of Thomas Covenant The Unbeliever. To be honest, I quit about halfway through the first book. The protagonist is a very well-realized character, and is also a highly emotional double-dyed bastard. I assume that he matures along the way; that this may well be the theme of the books. But I didn't really care whether he did or not, and the remainder of the characters were stick-figures. Style is somewhat of a cross between J.R.R. Tolkien and John Bunyan, and it's very well handled if you like that sort of thing, but I don't. So, if you enjoy a very slowmoving swords-and-sorcery epic with a somewhat more literate archaic style than the average and an excellent example of anti-hero as protagonist, you should by all means get this trilogy. (If you're like me, save your money.)

THE SUDDEN STAR, by Pamela Sargent (Fawcett, \$1.95) Good picture of a decaying society. I generally dislike jumping the point of view from character to character each chapter, but Sargent makes her society interesting enough to keep me reading. Depressing, but very well done - except possibly for the note of hope at the end, which wasn't too believable.

THE WICKED CYBORG, by Ron Goulart (Daw #311, \$1.50) Something new for Goulart; a robot that not only works but functions as a superman. The rest is the lightweight, more or less humorous story (not a gothic parody, despite the blurb, but a typical young-man-setting-out-to-gain-his-inheritance thing with the usual Goulart twists. A nice hour's entertainment.

TIME STORM, by Gordon R. Dickson (Bantam, \$2.25) Some of the book appeared as short stories in F&SF; our hero and the girl and the pet leopard Sunday wandering across the blasted landscape. The book is far more - over 400 pages - and is one of the best adventure novels of the year. The philosophy seems a bit simple for the grandiose technical concepts, but overall it's an excellent book and if you don't already have a copy, go buy one. Nice cover, too; uncredited.



UP THE WALLS OF THE WORLD, by James Tiptree, Jr. (Berkley, \$1.95) Two interesting assortments of characters, and total confusion when they meet. The aliens in particular are excellently done, and the background of their civilization is sketched in expertly. (The humans are fairly interesting, but there is the feeling that one has met them before, in someone else's insightful novel.) Even with this mild caveat, however, it's an outstanding book; the aliens and the reaction of the human minds confronted with them is one of the best stories of the year.

THE HOLMES-DRACULA FILE, by Fred Saberhagen (Ace, \$1.95) Somewhat of a sequel to The Dracula Tapes, though it's not necessary to have read the previous book to enjoy this one. This time, Dracula and the Great Detective team up to save the world from a mad scientist. I'm not an expert on the Holmes canon, but I suspect Saberhagen bends it a trifle, even though this case is mentioned briefly in the original writings. But it's a very funny and entertaining book for anyone who doesn't take either Holmes or Dracula too seriously. Recommended.

THE MAD THRONE, by Brad Munson (Fawcett, \$1.75) A fairly interesting adventure-fantasy. Very little is explained or even believable, but if you read fast and don't ask questions it's quite entertaining. The alien world is a fairly standard swords-and-sorcery realm, but the writing is breezily competent if not particularly brilliant. (On the other hand, if you're used to a logical plot and an explanation of the science, you won't like it.)

AND HAVING WRIT, by Don Bensen (Ace, \$1.95) An alien spaceship, about to crash into earth, shifts to an alternate probability. (You shouldn't need to be told that the year is 1908 to know the takeoff point for this one.) The aliens are taken to our leader - Teddy Roosevelt, about to bow out of office - and begin influencing the world. Actually it's not too believable as alternate history, but it's a lot of fun to read. Recommended.

THE OUTCASTS OF HEAVEN BELT, by Joan D. Vinge (Signet, \$1.75) Two cultures - but three factions - try to save themselves and, more or less inadvertently, wind up saving each other. Well-written sf-adventure, and the Morningside culture is fascinatingly revealed. (I think it's the first book I've ever read that made plural marriage sound attractive.) Very good.

GODSFIRE, by Cynthia Felice (Pocket Books, \$1.75) A fascinating feline civilization, interacting with human explorers. Hero is one of the better aliens in science fiction, and the culture is more interesting than most; early civilization instead of barbarism, with the viewpoint of a trader and scholar rather than the usual nobleman. Recommended.

CADUCEUS WILD, by Ward Moore (Pinnacle, \$1.75) An updated revision of a 1959 serial. Having the world taken over by one or another profession was big then; this one featured a medical totalitarianism. (Which you might not consider too far-fetched, especially if you've paid any hospital bills lately.) Even if the idea is a little dated, Moore is a good writer and has produced an entertaining adventure. (And you just might worry a little more the next time you have a medical insurance premium due.)

ACROSS THE ZODIAC, by Percy Greg (Popular Library, \$1.95) A science fiction "classic", abridged by Benjamin Appel. Which, as far as I'm concerned, means that it's still too dull to be entertaining and lacks the historical value of the original. Still, I'm sure it's more readable than it was, and if you really like archaic fiction you might enjoy it. It's a dystopia, and was probably a refreshingly original story when it first appeared.



FIRESHIP, by Joan D. Vinge (Dell, \$1.75) Two novelets, the title story and "Mother and Child". The latter is a moderately grim story of a woman in a barbaric kingdom and her attempts to deal with her own people and aliens. It will be the most admired by the critics. The title story is a fairly typical adventure plot with the protagonist a blend of two human minds and a computer; he even has difficulty in understanding himself. A good adventure story; together the two make an excellent book.

THE FADED SUN: KESRITH, by C. J. Cherryh (Daw #300, \$1.95) An alien culture; a warrior race, one which has been hired by another set of aliens to fight humanity, and is then doublecrossed at the peace table. A few of their former bosses are still on their planet, most of their own warriors are dead, and the humans are sending in a delegation to take over. It's a good adventure novel, and a fairly good study of honor - from a race which makes it their religion to the humans who have it sometimes to the villains who have none at all.

THE EAGLE AND THE SWORD, by Harvey K. Schreiber (Popular Library, \$1.75) This is marketed as swords-and-sorcery, but it's not, really. It's a not-too-historical novel centering about the early life of Attila the Hun. There's some sorcery and a lot of personal combat, but not really any fantasy. Still, fantasy-adventure fans might like it. Writing is competent if not brilliant.

EARTH MAGIC, by Alex & Cory Panshin (Ace, \$1.95) Basically, the story of the coming of age (and civilization, if not wisdom) of a young barbarian. The Panshins do a much better than average job of depicting a society which believes in its gods and its sorceries.

THE PANORAMA EGG, by A. E. Silas (Daw #302, \$1.75) Rather tired plot - finding one's-self by entering a dream-universe. Silas tells it well enough, and the background is moderately interesting, but the characters didn't move me. Nice cover by van Dongen.

THE SPACE GUARDIAN, by Max Daniels (Pocket Books, \$1.75) Somewhat better than I expected; girl super-agent goes looking for her father. Descriptions are sometimes bad enough to be painful ("normally uptilted lips"?) but the characters are interesting enough. (Names, on the other hand, are terrible; Lahks, Stoat, Ghrey, Mhoss - one wonders if Daniels was imprinted by Sixth Fandom.) Lovely Vallejo cover. Story....I rather liked it, but it's not really very good.

LADY OF THE BEES, by Thomas Burnett Swann (Ace, \$1.25) You can tell from the price that this has been around awhile....This is a revision/enlargement of "Where Is The Bird of Fire?" and it's an excellent fantasy based on the mythical founding of Rome. Highly recommended.

THE TOURNAMENT OF THORNS, by Thomas Burnett Swann (Ace, \$1.50) An enlargement/revision of "Manor of Roses". And, in my opinion, much superior to the original story, which I never liked much. English myth this time; the mandrake legend. Recommended; anything by Swann is recommended.

THE DARK DESIGN, by Philip José Farmer (Berkley) Third in the Riverworld series. It's a series I've never liked, though it's enormously popular with other fans. Everybody who ever lived has been reborn on another world, more or less jumbled up as to chronology. Our heroes include Richard Burton, Tom Mix, Mur ed-Din, and other ill-assorted types; Sam Clemens and Herman Goering were featured in earlier books. Most fans love the grandiose concept; I'm not sure why I don't like it. (Probably because I don't think the story lives up to the idea behind it.)

THE LOST TRAVELER, by Steve Wilson (Ace, \$1.95) This is blurbed as "A science fiction western and motorcycle quest epic". It's not that bad, actually; not quite. Part of the problem is that I keep checking things on the nice little map in the front, and the map bears very little relationship to the story. But a good share of it is that the premise is the most idiotic thing I ever read.



Maybe you can swallow the idea that the descendents of the Hell's Angels in the new barbarism nobly allow themselves to be restricted to spear guns and the like while the military has rifles and ordinary citizens own shotguns; I'm afraid I laughed so hard I rolled around on the floor. (Norman Spinrad evidently didn't; he says it "captures the essence of the biker soul". Well, considering what the biker soul might be like, maybe it does.) I couldn't swallow the premise that a US broken up into little fiefdoms could still retain sophisticated manufacturing techniques, either. (Oil is scarce, but spare parts, vehicles, weapons, etc. are commonplace.) Given this sort of background, the "quest" plot is about what you'd expect.

DOOM STAR, by Edmond Hamilton (Belmont-Tower, \$1.25) Fairly typical Hamilton space-adventure. Villain has secret of "poisoning" suns. It's good light entertainment; Hamilton always told a story well. I haven't seen this one in pb before, that I can recall; it's the sort of thing that inspired "Star Wars" and I hope it reaches the same audience.

BARNARD'S PLANET, by John Boyd (Berkley, \$1.25) Scientific investigation of a thoroughly alien planet - and, of course, the emotional interactions of the scientists. Boyd does a fair job on both, though I'd like to know why the hydrogen-fixing bacteria on page 76 turned into nitrogen-fixing ones on page 88. Nothing exceptional about the book, but nothing exceptionally bad, either. Moderately entertaining.

A FAR SUNSET, by Edmond Cooper (Ace, \$1.50) Another spaceship landing on an alien planet. Cooper uses far less science than Boyd, and his primitive society is strictly human. A rather mediocre adventure, with a perfectly splendid cover by David Bergen.

JOURNEY, by Marta Randall (Pocket Books, \$1.95) "Family" on an alien planet. Well, not that bad; the technical aspects of plotting and characterization are well enough worked out, and the characters are occasionally quite interesting. But in this sort of novel there must be all sorts of complications and contrived misunderstandings to keep the plot rolling, and Randall never convinced me that her characters were real; the book was too much like a big complicated mechanical toy. For those readers who think this sort of thing is "real life", it's probably an excellent book; I see from the blurb that Charlie Brown thought it was great stuff.

STEEL MAGIC, by Andre Norton (Archway, \$1.50) "Archway" is a poor name for books in this area, being also the brand name of an exceedingly soft and sticky assortment of cookies. Well, this isn't sticky if you remember that it's meant for small children; not the teen-age readers of Norton's usual books, but the 8 to 10 year old crowd. It's a somewhat simplistic version of modern children catapulted into Arthurian times; but for the intended age level it should be both exciting and educational - it tells more about Arthur and his associates than I knew at that age.

THE ILLUSTRATED ROGER ZELAZNY, ed. and adapted by Byron Preiss (Ace, \$2.50) A high-quality comic book in pb format. Illustrator Gray Morrow does an outstanding job by comics standards; more or less acceptable by adult ones. Stories are "Shadowjack", "The Furies", "A Rose For Ecclesiastes", and "The Doors of His Face, the Lamps of His Mouth". "Shadowjack" seems to be new for this volume; I would guess that the others were cut for comics adaptation, though I didn't check them word for word. In addition, there are two sets of illustrations; one for the Amber series and one for Zelazny stories in general. You can get the stories elsewhere; buy it, if you buy it at all, for the illustrations. I don't recommend buying it at all.

THE FRACAS FACTOR, by Mack Reynolds (Leisure Books, \$1.50) Third in the Joe Mauser series. Not too well proofread. I rather like it, though; Reynolds, surprisingly enough, is one of the very few sf authors who has imagined a future social system which might very well work. Certainly it's far above the usual run of such things. Plot and characters are fairly standard; hero rebels against society, joins Underground, etc. But done as well as most authors manage it, and, with the background, enough to make this well worth reading.



THE VEILS OF AZLAROC, by Fred Saberhagen (Ace, \$1.95) An absolutely fascinating book. It's based on theoretical physics, but I have no idea how much is theory and how much Saberhagen's imagination. The world Azlaroc is probably the most fascinating stellar object ever invented; far more interesting than Ringworld or Dune or any of the better-known places. The stories of the people shaped by it are also quite good, if perhaps not quite as intriguing as the place itself. Highly recommended.

YURTH BURDEN, by Andre Norton (Daw #304) One of Norton's homilies on how everyone must work together for the benefit of society. (Well, it's a popular viewpoint even if I'm cynical about it.) Competently told, and the heroine solves a definite problem for her people. It's a good adventure story whether you agree with the theme or not. Nice Gaughan cover; I was interested in his use of a Ganine chess set for some of his models. It certainly provides not-quite-human statuary.

THE WEB OF THE CHOSEN, by Jack L. Chalker (Del Rey, \$1.75) A planet that traps and changes anyone who lands on it. I didn't think much of any of the characters, but it's a nice plot, well worked out and with no loose ends. Even if I wasn't very interested in the people, I kept reading to see what happened next. An unusual - if not too believable - rebellion against a stifling society. I'll be glad when sf picks up the next social fad, but this is a pretty good example of doing-your-own-thing science fiction.

HAMMER'S SLAMMERS (Ace, \$1.95) by David Drake - Military science fiction. Fairly good war stories. Protagonists are mercenaries who do what they're hired to do, whatever their personal convictions, which leads to some agonized soul-searching. The brutality of war is emphasized; all in all, it's not exactly an entertaining book, but it's a very readable one. Comparisons with Jerry Pournelle's Falkenberg series are inevitable, as the series are quite similar. If anything, Drake is less romantic than Pournelle. Otherwise, they're much alike.

AGAINST TOMORROW, ed. by Robert Hoskins (Fawcett, \$1.75) A general-type anthology; in an introduction, Hoskins presents it as the third volume in a sort of survey of the field from its earliest forms to date, with the two WONDERMAKERS anthologies the previous volumes in the series. This includes "Wanted In Surgery" by Harlan Ellison, "All You Zombies" by Robert A. Heinlein, "Rainbird" by R. A. Lafferty, "The Peak Lords" by Miriam Allen de Ford, "Prototaph" by Keith Laumer, "Broken Image" by Thomas N. Scortia, "Young Girl at an Open Half-Door" by Fred Saberhagen, "Here Is Thy Sting" by John Jakes, "Reason For Honor" by Robert Hoskins, "How The Whip Came Back" by Gene Wolfe, "Mektopia" by Richard Lupoff, "Paradise Regained" by Ted Cogswell and Ted Thomas, "Think Only This of Me" by Michael Kurland, "The Legend of Cougar Lou Landis" by Ed Bryant, "Un Bel Di" by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, "A Personage of Royal Blood" by Willo Davis Roberts, "Final Examination" by Scott Edelstein and Jonathan Phillips, and "Mirror Watch" by Alan Brennert. A good variety of stories and styles. The Heinlein, Lafferty, Saberhagen and Wolfe stories are well worth reading, if you haven't already encountered them. Of the rest, only the Roberts makes me wonder why it was selected.

THE HUGO WINNERS, ed. by Isaac Asimov - V3 Book 1 (Fawcett, \$1.95) More or less self-explanatory. This covers the short fiction winners from 1970 thru 1972; "Ship of Shadows" by Fritz Leiber, "Ill Met In Lankhmar" by Fritz Leiber, "Slow Sculpture" by Theodore Sturgeon, "The Queen of Air and Darkness" by Poul Anderson, and "In-constant Moon" by Larry Niven. Not among the better years for the Hugo, though the Anderson and Sturgeon stories are excellent. Still, all the stories are reasonably good, and if you didn't read them when they first appeared, you should now.

ISAAC ASIMOV PRESENTS THE GREAT SF STORIES: 1 (Daw #329, \$2.25) An unwieldy title, but undoubtedly effective. This seems to be the first of a series to cover the science fiction field year by year; this year is 1939, the year of the first big "boom" in the field. And the year of some very excellent stories, as evidenced by the contents page. Frequently anthologized, but a must if you haven't previously



read them. Includes "I, Robot" by Eando Binder, "The Strange Flight of Richard Clayton" by Robert Bloch, "Trouble With Water" by H. L. Gold, "Cloak of Aesir" by Don A. Stuart, "The Day Is Done" by Lester del Rey, "The Ultimate Catalyst" by John Taine, "The Gnarly Man" by L. Sprague de Camp, "Black Destroyer" by A. E. van Vogt, "Greater Than Gods" by C. L. Moore, "Trends" by Isaac Asimov, "The Blue Giraffe" by de Camp, "The Misguided Halo" by Henry Kuttner, "Heavy Planet" by Milton Rothman, "Life-Line" by Robert A. Heinlein, "Ether Breather" by Theodore Sturgeon, "Pilgrimage" by Nelson Bond, "Rust" by Joseph E. Kelleam, "The Four-Sided Triangle" by William F. Temple, "Star Bright" by Jack Williamson, and "Misfit" by Heinlein.

THE BEST OF MURRAY LEINSTER, ed. by J. J. Pierce (Del Rey, \$1.95) Includes "Sidewise In Time", "Proxima Centauri", "The Fourth-Dimensional Demonstrator", "First Contact", "The Ethical Equations", "Pipeline To Pluto", "The Power", "A Logic Named Joe", "Symbiosis", "The Strange Case of John Kingman", "The Lonely Planet", "Keyhole" and "Critical Difference". Some excellent material, not too often reprinted, partly because Leinster did his best work in novelet length. By all means read "Sidewise In Time" (the first alternate-worlds story), "First Contact" (which gave its name to a whole sub-category of science fiction), "The Power", and "The Strange Case of John Kingman". The others are good; these are outstanding.

MURDER AND MAGIC, by Randall Garrett (Ace, \$1.95) The collected "Lord Darcy" series; the best examples of mystery-fantasy ever written. Four novelets are included; "The Eyes Have It", "A Case of Identity", "The Muddle of the Woad", and "A Stretch of the Imagination". Highly recommended. Garrett's alternate-world detective is, so far as I recall, unique in science fiction/fantasy.

THE BEST OF ANALOG, ed. by Ben Bova (Ace, \$2.25) Copyrights here cover a 6-year period; 1972 thru 1978. Stories include "Persephone and Hades" by Scott W. Schumack, "Common Denominator" by David Lewis, "The Four-Hour Fugue" by Alfred Bester, "How I Lost the Second World War and Helped Turn Back the German Invasion" by Gene Wolfe, "A Song For Lya" by George R.R. Martin, "Unlimited Warfare" by Hayford Peirce, "Tricentennial" by Joe Haldeman, "The Present State of Igneous Research" by Gordon Dickson, "Child of All Ages" by P.J. Plauger, "The Hole Man" by Larry Niven, "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand" by Vonda McIntyre, "A Thing of Beauty" by Norman Spinrad, "When I Was In Your Mind" by Joe Allred, "Unified Field Theory" by Tim Joseph, and "Home Is The Hangman" by Roger Zelazny. Some of them - the Wolfe, Martin, Plauger, McIntyre, Niven and Zelazny - are good to excellent stories (and can generally be found in other collections). For the rest, they're pretty forgettable. Save your money on this one.

THE 1979 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF, ed. by Don Wollheim with Art Saha (Daw #337, \$2.25) Includes "Come To The Party" by Frank Herbert & F.M. Busby, "Creator" by David Lake, "Dance Band On The Titanic" by Jack Chalker, "Cassandra" by C. J. Cherryh, "In Alien Flesh" by Greg Benford, "SQ" by Ursula le Guin, "The Persistence of Vision" by John Varley, "We Who Stole The Dream" by James Tiptree, Jr., "Scattershot" by Greg Bear, and "Carruthers' Last Stand" by Dan Henderson. Two of them are on my own list of the best of the year; the others fail to thrill me - but they do provide more of a variety of style than my choices would. A reasonably good collection.

CAPITOL, by Orson Scott Card (Ace, \$1.95) Five stories that have appeared in the magazines - "A Thousand Deaths", "Second Chance", "Breaking The Game", "Lifelooop" and "Killing Children", and six which are apparently original with this volume. As a whole, they chronicle a world and a society. It's not a terribly pleasant world, but it's interesting enough for the reader. The ideas are good. The style tends to shout at you that this is significant, dammit, so pay attention! It's a style I dislike, so I didn't much like the book. But the writing is good enough; try this one for yourself.

And, starting on the next page, we have the reprints.



CONAN, by Robert E. Howard, L. Sprague de Camp & Lin Carter (Ace, \$1.95) The first CONAN OF CIMMERIA, by Howard, de Camp, and Carter (Ace, \$1.95) three volumes of CONAN THE FREEBOOTER, by Howard and de Camp (Ace, \$1.95) the original Conan canon. Theoretically, de Camp and Carter made their additions by completing unfinished Howard stories, or writing from Howard outlines. These are what gave "swords and sorcery" its name - and, compared to a lot of other entries in the field, they're pretty good, though they pall when read in any quantity.

CONAN AND THE SORCERER, by Andy Offutt (Ace, \$1.95) An "illustrated novel". It was originally a trade paperback; this is the first time at regular size and price. Story has the feel of the originals, and I think reducing the size of the illustrations helped them.

STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, by Robert A. Heinlein (Berkley, \$2.50) The novel that started a cult. It's an excellent story (the last Heinlein novel of which that can be said) of a moderately alien superman. This edition sports a particularly hideous cover; Valentine Michael Smith may resemble many things (to many people) but representing him with a painting of John Ritter in a nightshirt is ridiculous.

DRAGONQUEST, by Anne McCaffrey (Del Rey, \$2.25) The second volumes in each of the DRAGON SINGER, by Anne McCaffrey (Bantam, \$1.95) two "dragon" series; QUEST is in the original, "adult" series, and SINGER in the "juvenile" offshoot. Though actually there isn't that much difference in them, and dragon-lovers will want both. SINGER is actually the second half of the book about Menolly that began with DRAGONSONG; it's a much closer sequel than QUEST is to DRAGONFLIGHT. Both are excellent books, and recommended, though if you haven't encountered the dragons of Pern you should really begin with the first novel and work your way through the series. All of them should be currently available in pb.

GATHER, DARKNESS! by Fritz Leiber (Del Rey, \$1.95) A revived witch-cult battling an oppressive theocracy, both sides using superscience. A classic. I never liked it as well as I did Heinlein's IF THIS GOES ON, but it's probably superior from a modern psychological viewpoint.

THE SILVER EGGHEADS, by Fritz Leiber (Del Rey, \$1.75) A farcical future world. I never much liked it, but it's very popular, and Leiber's rather acid comments on the future of authors do have a certain sting to them.

THE QUESTOR TAPES, by D.C. Fontana (Del Rey, \$1.75) Based on the short-lived tv show - never got beyond the pilot film, as I recall. Wasn't bad on tv; not all that great in print.

ALL JUDGMENT FLED, by James White (Del Rey, \$1.75) First contact, with an alien spaceship containing an apparently psychotic crew. Well handled; recommended.

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO MIDDLE-EARTH, by Robert Foster (De. Rey, \$2.75) A glossary of all names used in the series; this edition has been expanded to include the SILMARILLION. There is also a chronology of events and various genealogical tables. It's a thick book of almost 600 pages; I can't imagine it being all that useful, but I suppose it is, for dedicated students of Tolkien's writings.

THE KAR-CHEE REIGN and ROGUE DRAGON, by Avram Davidson (Ace, \$1.95) Two novels about how humans turned the tables on alien conquerors and their dragon pets; from dragons hunting men for sport to men hunting dragons for sport. Very well told (naturally; Avram's stories always are). More or less lightweight adventure, though with a moral here and there; recommended.

FALCONS OF NARABEDLA, by Marion Zimmer Bradley (Ace, \$1.75) As I recall, this is Marion's first published novel. It's sort of disguised Darkover; I'm surprised it hasn't been rewritten to fit it into the series, but perhaps it can't be. At any rate, it's an interesting adventure novel; perhaps not top quality, but very readable.



THE BLOODY SUN, by Marion Zimmer Bradley (Ace, \$2.25) This one has been revised to eliminate discrepancies with the later Darkover books. I can't say I noticed much difference, but then I merely read the Darkover stories; I don't study them. In addition, an original short story has been added, "To Keep The Oath". It's a fairly simple plot, but it involves the Free Amazons so it should please Marion's fans. Worth reading if you haven't already read the earlier version of the book, but then all Marion's books are that.

THE ALTERNATE UNIVERSE and CONTRABAND FROM OTHER SPACE, by A. Bertram Chandler (Ace, \$2.25) Book 4 in the John Grimes series, comprising two earlier novels. I tired of Grimes eventually, but I read it longer than I do most series of the type. Chandler's plots and characters are simple, but the backgrounds are usually interesting and original.

THE MAN WHO AWOKE, by Laurence Manning (Del Rey, \$1.75) One of the classics; first published in 1933, it's perhaps the first ecological sf novel. Writing is a bit crude, though better than the average of the time.

THIS FORTRESS WORLD, by James E. Gunn (Berkley, \$1.75) A fairly standard adventure novel from 1955; the overthrow-the-dictator plot. Gunn's characters are a bit better than most, and I always rather liked it, though it's not terribly memorable.

GRAY MATTERS, by William Hjortsberg (Pocket Books, \$1.75) I don't think I finished this one the first time around. An overthrow-the-computer story, when most of humanity is reduced to brains dreaming in tanks of nutrients.

A CASE OF CONSCIENCE, by James Blish (De. Rey, \$1.95) One of the few classics of religious/philosophical science fiction. Is the planet Lithia free of original sin - or is it an embodiment of original sin and a creation of the Devil? Theologists have argued with some of Blish's premises, but it remains an excellent book.

FROSTWORLD AND DREAMFIRE, by John Morressy (Popular Library, \$1.75) A lone alien battles an uncaring cosmos for his rights. Nice idea; fair story.

HOUR OF THE HORDE, by Gordon R. Dickson (Daw #303, \$1.50) Earth as a pawn - as a part of a pawn, actually - in a galactic war. Fairish space-opera.

A PLAGUE OF PYTHONS, by Frederik Pohl (Del Rey, \$1.75) Possession, by...aliens? Neatly plotted, nice ironic conclusion, but it never appealed to me very much.

THE WEAPON MAKERS, by A. E. van Vogt (Pocket Books, \$1.75) One of van Vogt's very few readable novels. Sequel to THE WEAPON SHOPS OF ISHER, as I recall. You won't be losing too much if you skip it, but it's better than most of the author's work.

THE ENEMY STARS, by Poul Anderson (Berkley, \$1.75) This edition revised to bring technical details up to date. A future society and interstellar exploration, and the theme of why men explore. Generally good.

SEA-HORSE IN THE SKY, by Edmund Cooper (Ace, \$1.75) Kidnapped by aliens and dumped on a strange planet to survive or not. A free-swinging adventure story, but if you don't buy it you won't miss a thing.

RETIEF UNBOUND, by Keith Laumer (Ace, \$1.95) Hmm. This seems to be an original book rather than a reprint. Contains the novel "Retief's Ransom" and the short stories "Protocol", "Sealed Orders", "Aide Memoire", "Policy", and "Palace Revolution". I find Retief's galactic diplomacy moderately amusing in small doses, but it palls quickly. Recommended if you like farce.

LEGACY, by James Schmitz (Ace, \$1.95) Originally "A Tale of Two Clocks". Superwoman Trigger Argee looking for a missing scientist. Okay as adventure.

HIGH SORCERY, by Andre Norton (Ace, \$1.95) Two short novels and three shorter works. All fantasy; generally very good. More or less constantly in print since 1970.



THE YEAR OF THE UNICORN, by Andre Norton (Ace, \$1.95) Fourth or fifth novel in the Witch World series; Ace ought to number these things. Basically, it's a gothic romance set on Witch World, and one of the first of Norton's books in which mental powers predominate entirely. (And it is, of course, very well told.)

PICNIC ON PARADISE, by Joanna Russ (Berkley, \$1.75) Russ's two first novels, if AND CHAOS DIED, by Joanna Russ (Berkley, \$1.95) memory serves. PICNIC is feminist swashbuckling, the heroine a superwoman named Alyx. Getting in touch with a society based on psi powers. Everybody but me thought it was great stuff, but I couldn't either empathise or sympathise with her protagonist - or believe in her, for that matter. I wouldn't recommend either book.

PILGRIMAGE TO EARTH, by Robert Sheckley (Ace, \$1.75) Two collections of short UNTOUCHED BY HUMAN HANDS, by Sheckley (Ace, \$1.75) stories by a writer who DIMENSION OF MIRACLES, by Sheckley (Ace, \$1.95) generally came up with brilliant ideas and (unlike many "idea people") perfectly competent craftsmanship. The short stories are better than the novel; Sheckley did better in shorter works. They're none of them really classic stories, but they're all very enjoyable and well worth reading.

WITCH HOUSE, by Evangeline Walton (Del Rey, \$1.75) A really nasty horror story; somewhat overwritten, as that type of story is apt to be. Moderately interesting.

SONG OF RHIANNON, by Evangeline Walton (Del Rey, \$1.95) Books 3 and 4 of Walton's THE ISLAND OF THE MIGHTY, by Walton (Del Rey, \$1.95) version of the Mabinogion. I'm sure it sticks close to the myth, but myths tend to be populated by such damned idiots that I find reading about them hard work. If you enjoy that sort of thing, I'd say this was about as good as you'll find. Rather bad covers by Howard Koslow.

I AM LEGEND, by Richard Matheson (Berkley, \$1.75) Matheson's first horror novel HELL HOUSE, by Richard Matheson (Bantam, 95¢) and, as far as I recall, his most recent one. (I bought HELL HOUSE when it first appeared; there's been a reprint recently at a higher price, which reminded me to read the one I had.) LEGEND has been made into a bad movie and is considered a classic. The science is nonexistent and even some of the action is dubious, but it's the sort of book for which you can ignore a lot. It has impact. HELL HOUSE was made into a somewhat better movie, but the book version is a rather mediocre story; the horror is clinically interesting but not impressive. It's not a bad book; in fact it's quite readable. But it's never going to be regarded as a classic of anything.

SHOCK I, by Richard Matheson (Berkley, \$1.95) Two collections of Matheson's THE SHORES OF SPACE, by Matheson (Berkley, \$1.75) short stories, 13 in each. Both are excellent books. Matheson was an apparently endless supply of weird and occasionally terrifying ideas, from an unusual source of accident statistics to a search for the source of dirty jokes. Highly recommended.

CITY OF THE BEAST: or WARRIORS OF MARS, by Michael Moorcock (Daw #321, \$1.50) LORD OF THE SPIDERS, or BLADES OF MARS, by Michael Moorcock (Daw #326, \$1.50) MASTERS OF THE PIT, or BARBARIANS OF MARS, by Michael Moorcock (Daw #330, \$1.50) Moorcock's Martian trilogy, imitating Burroughs. (Originally written by "Edward P. Bradbury" - EPB instead of ERB. Cute, no? No, I thought not.) In an introduction, he says these are in the nature of a tribute to Burroughs, and they are certainly among the best of the imitations. Mike wasn't trying to be original and produce a long-running swords and sorcery series of his own; he was coming as close to the Burroughs style and traditions as he could, and the books are precisely as dreadful as Burroughs' own attempts.

THE BOOK OF SKULLS, by Robert Silverberg (Berkley, \$1.95) Silverberg is a writer with a large and vocal following - including many critics of the field - who consider him one of the great writers of the field. I don't think I've ever finished any of his novels, and if I did it was a struggle. (But his nonfiction is great.) Make up your own mind on these.



BEYOND APOLLO, by Barry Malzberg (Pocket Books, \$1.75) I don't read Malzberg.

SIVA, by Walt & Leigh Richmond (Ace, \$1.95) Originally "The Lost Millennium". I don't remember a thing about it, but reading the introduction to this edition was enough to prevent me from refreshing my memory. I like science-fiction; I do not like pseudo-science, even when sugar-coated with fiction.

THE UNIVERSE AGAINST HER, by James H. Schmitz (Ace, \$1.75) The first of the Telzey Amberdon books. As I recall, I liked it; the series didn't begin to pall until a book or two farther along.

MISSION OF GRAVITY, by Hal Clement (Del Rey, \$1.75) A stf classic; if you haven't read it, by all means do so. It's a good story, and Barlennan is one of the more fascinating characters in science fiction.

HEROES AND VILLAINS, by Angela Carter (Pocket Books, \$1.75) A science fiction gothic. Best avoided; even the Vallejo cover isn't up to par on this edition.

THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF MANKIND, by Cordwainer Smith (Del Rey, \$1.95) Another Smith anthology; amazing how many different books can be achieved out of a limited number of short stories. Popular with most fans but not with me.

FIGURES OF EARTH, by James Branch Cabell (Del Rey, \$2.25) The first book in The Chronicles of Poictesme. I found it very interesting the first time around; I seem to be unable to read it a second time. In an introduction, Lin Carter tells us what a great writer Cabell is. Sophisticated, undeniably; usually entertaining, but great? Perhaps... Anyway, this is a sophisticated, ironic fantasy, by a writer who does not mistake a large vocabulary for sophistication.

ATLAN, by Jane Gaskell (Pocket Books, \$1.95) The 3rd, 4th, and 5th books  
THE CITY, by Jane Gaskell (Pocket Books, \$1.95) in the Atlan series. The last  
SOME SUMMER LANDS, by Gaskell (Pocket Books, \$1.95) est one is brand new; the others are reprinted. #5 gives you a lot for your money; 360 pages of small print, if you can wade through the somewhat tortured prose; I gave up on this series after the first book. Nice Vallejo covers on this set, though.

TWO HAWKS FROM EARTH, by Philip José Farmer (Ace, \$1.95) An expanded version of "The Gate of Time". An alternate-world adventure, unpretentious and highly entertaining.

DARE, by Philip José Farmer (Berkley, \$1.95) An alien world peopled by groups removed from Earth; the Roanoke colony, a Turkish caravan, a Genoese ship, and a Chinese town (all of whom actually disappeared from Earth between 1587 and 1592). A fairly lightweight adventure, but quite entertaining.

TRAITOR TO THE LIVING, by Philip José Farmer (Del Rey, \$1.75) Mechanical communication with the dead. Mediocre.

CITY OF THE CHASCH, by Jack Vance (Daw #339, \$1.75) The first two books in his  
SERVANTS OF THE WANKH, by Vance (Daw #342, \$1.75) Tschai series. (Actually it isn't a series; it's one novel broken into 4 parts. It's also very entertaining space-opera.) Recommended, but you have to get the other two books, too.

SPACE OPERA, by Jack Vance (Daw #326, \$1.75) OPERA was one of Don Bensen's  
THE PALACE OF LOVE, by Vance (Daw #325, \$1.75) ideas that didn't quite work out; I think he had the title and assigned Vance to do something with it. The results, working both sides of the original pun, are mediocre. PALACE is the third in the Demon Princes series (as several people mentioned last time, there were three published, not two as I said.) It's not all that great, either.

THE GODMAKERS, by Frank Herbert (Berkley, \$1.95) A sort of psychological space-opera, or maybe philosophical would be a better term. Either way, it's mediocre.

SAGA OF LOST EARTHS, by Emil Petaja (Daw #340, \$1.95) Includes "The Star Mill" as well; a combination of two books based on the Kalevala. A very interesting idea; unfortunately, Petaja isn't all that good a writer. He does his best on this, though, and the results are quite readable, if not a classic.



CYBORG, by Martin Caidin (Del Rey, \$1.95) The original novel on which "Six Dollar Man" was based. Need I say more?

ASTRA AND FLONDRIX, by Seamus Cullen (Pocket Books) "An erotic fairytale". Accurate enough; the quality is quite low, but if you're looking for eroticism it's there in plenty.

DOUBLE, DOUBLE, by John Brunner (Del Rey, \$1.75) A fairly entertaining horror story; the monster that can mimic humanity. Not Brunner's best, but good enough.

THE BEST OF STANLEY G. WEINBAUM (Del Rey, \$1.95) A representative collection of the first brilliant sf writer to come out of the pulps. "A Martian Odyssey" and "Valley of Dreams" are must reading; the other stories are varied in quality but usually entertaining.

THE ISLAND SNATCHERS, by George H. Smith (Daw #298, \$1.50) Second or third book in a series; surprisingly, it's not mentioned. Not a particularly good series, but still... Alternate world thing, as I recall.

Before we get into the "noted" items, a few of my more recent reading experiences:

HARPIST IN THE WIND, by Patricia McKillip (Atheneum, \$8.95) Final book of the Hed "trilogy", in which the rather complicated plot is wrapped up and all the loose ends accounted for. Only drawback is that this isn't any more a "trilogy" than "Lord of the Rings" was; like the Tolkien, it's one novel broken up into three books, and if you read them a year apart as I did, it's hard to keep the plot in mind. Read them in close order; RIDDLE-MASTER OF HED, HEIR OF SEA AND FIRE, and this volume, and I think they will turn into a fine novel. Recommended.

THE CATCH TRAP, by Marion Zimmer Bradley (Ballantine, \$10.95) A big book; just under 600 pages. This has been kicking around almost as long as Juanita's WEB did; the results are worth waiting for. The protagonist joins a family of circus aerialists; story covers both the details of a high-quality trapeze act and the emotional problems of the family members. (Like most of Marion's people, they're highly emotional.) If you object to homosexual love affairs treated sympathetically, stay away from it, but otherwise I can't think of an objection anyone could make. I enjoyed it tremendously (and I'm not all that partial to homosexual affairs, if it comes to that). Bug your friendly local librarian to get a copy if you don't want to put out the cash for one of your own.

THE SHINING POOL, by Dale & Danny Carlson (Atheneum, \$6.95) Philosophical science fiction for younger children. I tend to agree with the philosophy - a sense of individuality is important - but the book was somewhat boring anyway. For kids, maybe; not for adults, even fans.

DUNGEONS OF KUBA, by Graham Diamond (Playboy, \$1.95) Third in a series; first two were HAVEN and LADY OF HAVEN, neither of which I've read - which was somewhat of a handicap. A fairly standard adventure story; general attitude seems a lot like John Norman's, but the writing is better. You might try it.

THE HUGO WINNERS, Vol. 3 Book 2, ed. by Isaac Asimov (Fawcett, \$1.95) Covers 1973 thru 1975. 1973 was a good year; excellent Le Guin, Anderson, and Lafferty stories. After that, well.... Oh, they're all competent stories, but hardly the best of the year. Moderately recommended if you haven't read them before.

HEROIC FANTASY, ed. by Gerald Page and Hank Reinhardt (Daw #334, \$1.95) An assortment of original swords-and-sorcery fiction. Most s&s seems to be series characters looking for someone to buy more of their adventures, and this volume is no exception, but there are some good stories included. Norton's "Sand Sister" appears to be the first third of a novel, but well enough done. Ted Tubb's "Blood In The Mist" is interesting. Tanith Lee's "The Murderous Dove" is quite good - and one of the few able to stand on its own. H. Warner Munn's "The De Pertiche Ring" is a historical novelet out of the mould of ARGOSY or BLUEBOOK, for those nostalgically minded; it's not fantasy at all. The rest are adequate s&s.



SEVEN SPELLS TO SUNDAY, by Andre Norton and Phyllis Miller (Atheneum, \$6.95) A pleasant fantasy for younger readers. Monnie, the 9-year-old heroine, finds no pleasure in her foster home until she discovers a magic mailbox (there's a fan-nish concept for you). Very short book, suitable for reading to very young children or for slightly older ones to read for themselves. Very well done.

THE BLADE OF CONAN, ed. by L. Sprague de Camp (Ace, \$1.95) A collection of articles on Conan and allied subjects, reprinted mostly from AMRA, with a few from other fanzines, Mirage Press books, etc. Authors include de Camp, Glenn Lord, P. Schuyler Miller, Fritz Leiber, Jerry Pournelle, Poul Anderson, Leigh Brackett, Marion Bradley, Reginald Bretnor, Ben Solon and others. Recommended; on the whole the articles are much more interesting than the stories and characters they are about.

BEWARE OF THE MOUSE, by Leonard Wibberly (Borgo Press, \$3.95) Chronologically, the first story in the Grand Fenwick saga. This tells how Sir Roger Fenwick, grandson of the founder, defended his duchy against a French army, with the aid of a wily if unchivalrous Irish knight. Not fantasy, but an enjoyable historical novelet.

HONKY IN THE WOODPILE, by John Brunner (Constable, \$4.00) Third of the Max Curfew detective novels; this one apparently never appeared in this country or in pb. In this one, Max is opposing a dictatorship (American-supported, of course) on a West Indian island nation. Good reading.

ENTER SIR JOHN, by Clemence Dane & Helen Simpson (remaindered, \$1.49) Rather strange murder mystery - not exactly good, just strange - which was later made into one of Alfred Hitchcock's first movies. Detective is an actor. This is one of the Tom Stacey (British) reprint editions, and I rather enjoyed it.

SNOW SHADOW, by Andre Norton (Fawcett, \$1.95) Norton's two latest gothic romances. THE OPAL-EYED FAN, by Norton (Fawcett, \$1.95) FAN is historical, with a touch of real fantasy; setting is the Florida Keys in the days of the wreckers. SNOW is mostly a detective novel; the required gothic love interest seems to have been thrown in only at the publisher's insistence. Both are well-written and I rather enjoyed them, though they're not exactly my type.

LADY BLUE, by "Zabrina Faire" (Warner, \$1.75) #2 in Warner's "Library of Regency Romance" (with a cover by Walter Popp; remember him from STARTLING STORIES?) A reasonably good romance, though not as funny as I really like (having started the Regency genre with Georgette Heyer, I assume that Regencies should always be funny.) I enjoyed it.

THOMAS BURNETT SWANN: A Brief Critical Biography and Annotated Bibliography, by Robert A. Collins (\$2.00 - The Swann Fund, College of Humanities, Florida Atlantic Univ., Boca Raton, FL 33431 - Make checks out to "FAU Foundation") Why can't any of these brief university pamphlets have brief titles? A biography, bibliography, and chronology of Swann's work, the chronology supplied by Bob Roehm. It is an excellent treatment; I don't entirely agree with the conclusions, but then I rarely do (and this time I mostly agree with them). I think that Collins knows more about Swann's style and motivations than most university pamphleteers do about their subjects (and he expresses himself much more clearly than the academic average). Recommended to any Swann fans in the audience.

BOOK OF THE HOPI, by Frank Waters (Ballantine, \$2.50) The philosophy and mythology of the tribe; authentic but a trifle tedious.

THE DRAGONS OF EDEN, by J. Carl Sagan (Ballantine, \$2.25) Subtitled "speculations on the evolution of human intelligence". I have no idea whether Sagan's speculations are correct or not, but they ought to be, and they are expressed with brilliance and a positively fannish sense of humor. ("Cherubim is plural; Genesis 3:24 specifies one flaming sword. Presumably flaming swords were in short supply.") The sort of book you read out of to anyone in range - and the sort you might learn something from while you're doing the reading. Highly recommended.



AN EXALTATION OF LARKS, by James Lipton (Penguin, \$3.95) A compilation of collective nouns (or, as the author prefers to phrase it, "venereal terms"). Many date back to the 1500s, while a few are modern - and it is sometimes hard to tell which is which. These get discussed in fanzines at regular intervals - George Scithers used to mention them frequently - but never in such quantity as Lipton displays. There are the common terms; school of fish, plague of locusts, covey of partridges, swarm of bees, litter of puppies. And the more esoteric; a dray of squirrels, a murmuration of starlings, a sounder of swine, a thrave of threshers, a smirk of couriers. And the modern; a trine of astrologers, a slew of exterminators, a fifth of Scots, a metamorphosis of ovoids. (As you can see, the book is primarily a twist of puns.) Recommended.

THE ILLUMINOIDS, by Neal Wilgus (Sun Books, \$6.50 - order from Neal Wilgus, Box 25771, Albuquerque, NM 87125) Ostensibly the historical background of the Shea/Wilson Illuminati books; not so much the facts of the conspiracy as the facts about people who have written about it; what they said, etc. There is no attempt that I can see to separate facts of the "conspiracy" from claims about the conspiracy. Not having read the books it's backgrounding (despite several fans telling me that they were very funny), I'm not sure how well it does its job, but if you're interested in more Illuminati material, here it is. Wilgus is a quite competent writer; having no basis for comparison I have no idea how good a researcher he is. Try it if you're interested; I wasn't, very.

FIREARMS CURIOSA, by Lewis Winant (secondhand) A lovely little photo-book of some of the strangest weaponry imaginable. Would you believe in a pistol concealed in an umbrella? In a pocket knife? A whip? They're all in here, along with cane guns, sundial guns, 16, 18, and 20-shot revolvers (favored in Hollywood westerns, as I recall), a combination plow and cannon, and other oddities. I thoroughly enjoyed it, though you may not.

BRING ON THE EMPTY HORSES, by David Niven (Putnam) A 1975 book that I just got around to reading. A lovely humorous account of Hollywood; recommended highly.

STRICTLY SPEAKING, by Edwin Newman (Warner, no price listed) I got it from Quality Paperback Club (which I recommend). An assortment of erudite and generally humorous attacks on the decay of our language in the hands of advertisers, sports announcers, politicians, journalists, social scientists, and other illiterates. Funny, instructive, and highly recommended.

BLUE JACKET, by Allen W. Eckert (Little, Brown, \$6.95) A good juvenile biography of the Shawnee chief (who was christened Marmaduke van Swearingen, a fact which might explain his relapse into savagery). Perhaps too simplistic for the average adult reader, but well done for the younger one.

COWS, PIGS, WARS and WITCHES: THE RIDDLES OF CULTURE, by Marvin Harris (Random House, \$7.95) I was doing fine on this until the author says (pages 61/62) that it's ridiculous to assume that wars are fought because man is naturally aggressive; they're fought over logical causes like mastery of trade routes, cheap labor, natural resources - nice nonaggressive things like that. Considering that the author wouldn't know an aggressive culture if it ate him, he does a quite adequate job of displaying an assortment of cultures. (His explanations are nearly all ridiculous; some of them require that the primitive peoples he's studying know as much about ecology as he does - which might not be all that difficult, come to think of it.) Definitely not recommended.

DOUBLEDAY SCIENCE FICTION CALENDAR, 1980 (Doubleday & Co, \$5.95) A dozen of the cover paintings from the SF Book Club made into a calendar. One of the problems is that most of the Book Club covers aren't very good, but there are a few choice items here; the Whelan from THE FUZZY PAPERS, the Corben from THE BEST OF L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP, the powers for 1978 WORLD'S BEST, and perhaps the Kresek for WINTER OF THE WORLD (if you like barbarian females). Calendar itself includes Christian, Jewish, US and Canadian holidays, which is a point in its favor., and it's nice and big - 12" x 12" closed.



Remainder copies of the "Popular Fiction" issue of ANTAEUS may be available at various locations for \$1.75; I got mine at Schwartz's Books in Milwaukee. Fiction included is divided into western, detective and science fiction; the sf section includes stories by Stanislaw Lem, Tom Godwin, Elizabeth Lynn, J. G. Ballard, Charlie Grant and William S. Wilson, plus articles by Fred Pohl, Ursula K. le Guin, Roger Zelazny and Lester del Rey (of which del Rey comes off far the best, in my opinion). Nothing outstanding, but interesting if you happen to run across a copy.

The following items I have not read; they're out if you're interested.

A USUAL LUNACY, by D. G. Compton (Borgo Press, \$3.95)

CAUTIONARY TALES, by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro (Doubleday, \$7.95) 13 stories, mostly reprinted from original-story anthologies. One seems to be new with this book.

THE MAN-EATERS OF CASCALON, by Gene Lancour (Doubleday, \$7.95) 4th in the Dirshan series.

WAR-GAMER'S WORLD, by Hugh Walker (Daw #314, \$1.50) The first three books in a  
ARMY OF DARKNESS, by Walker (Daw #323, \$1.50) swords-and-sorcery series  
MESSENGERS OF DARKNESS, by Walker (Daw #322, \$1.50) based on a board game.  
Translated from the German.

THE DUELING MACHINE, by Ben Bova (Ace, \$1.95)

THE SECRET SEA, by Thomas Monteleone (Popular Library, \$1.75) Alternate worlds.

THE FAR TRAVELER, by A. Bertram Chandler (Daw #327, \$1.50) Commodore Grimes.

EXILES AT THE WELL OF SOULS, by Jack Chalker (Del Rey, \$1.95)

BALANCE OF POWER, by Brian Stableford (Daw #322, \$1.75) Daedalus series, #5.

RENAISSANCE, by A. E. van Vogt (Pocket Books, \$1.95) One of his modern ones, with what he fondly believes is psychological insight into his characters.

THE TWO OF THEM, by Joanna Russ (Berkley, \$1.95)

MAEVE, by Jo Clayton (Daw #344, \$1.75) Part of the Diadem series.

A LIFE FOR KREGEN, by Alan Burt Akers (Daw #335) Dray Prescott #19.

THE SOURCE OF MAGIC, by Piers Anthony (De. Rey, \$1.95)

SWORD OF THE NURLINGAS, by Gerald Earl Bailey (Berkley, \$1.75) First book of a new series.

PENDULUM, by A. E. van Vogt (Daw #316, \$1.75) Another new one.

WAY-FARER, by Dennis Schmidt (Ace, \$1.95) I did try to read this one; didn't get far. An attempt to combine space opera with oriental philosophy.

THE VERY SLOW TIME MACHINE, by Ian Watson (Ace, \$1.95)

EXPLORERS OF GOR, by John Norman (Daw #328, \$2.25) The usual garbage.

I, WEAPON, by Charles W. Runyon (Popular Library, \$1.50)

Z-STING, by Ian Wallace (Daw #308, \$1.95)

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA COLOR COMICS Vol. II (Ace, \$2.25) Reprints from Marvel.

CONAN, Vol. 4 (Ace, \$1.95) The Galactica crew must have charged for reproduction rights; CONAN is a somewhat better comic for less money. ("Better", however, is not to be construed as meaning "good".)



Sometime later, and we don't have the issue out yet and I've read several more interesting books. So, a few more reviews, starting, however, with a tape recording.

AN HOUR WITH ISAAC ASIMOV (Hourglass Productions, 10292 Westminster Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92643 - \$5.48 postpaid - Calif. residents add sales tax) A cassette tape of Asimov being interviewed by Randall Garrett - though in this case, there isn't a lot for an interviewer to do. One just sticks a microphone in front of Ike, and an hour later one removes it, perhaps forcibly. Randy's major duty seems to be to laugh at Asimov jokes, but he does provide some pertinent questions. Much of the material included is in the Asimov autobiography, but there are numerous items which aren't listed there, and even a folksong. Technical quality of the tape is better than the one of Marion Bradley we reviewed last issue. Overall, a very entertaining cassette. (Incidentally, according to Bjo Trimble, the producers of the Hourglass tapes are in difficulties, due to it being at least partly a shoestring fan-type production. If you're interested in their offerings, buy now; don't put it off until they've gone out of business for lack of sales.

JANISSARIES, by Jerry Pournelle (Ace, \$6.95) One of their big illustrated paperbacks. Cover by Enrich, interiors by Bermejo - the latter has trouble drawing women, but otherwise seems quite competent. Plot is somewhat similar to Piper's LORD KALVAN; mercenaries hired by aliens, with much the same sort of problems and solutions as Piper's book. (But where Piper is probably the better dramatist, Pournelle produces much more realistic battle tactics - Piper probably read history the way I did, while Jerry read military manuals.) Anyway, it's a highly entertaining book; I sat down to read it one afternoon and went straight through until I was finished, which I just don't do any more. Recommended.

THE ROAD OF AZRAEL, by Robert E. Howard (Don Grant, Publisher, West Kingston, Rhode Island - \$20) Or \$35 if you want the limited, signed, edition. Signed by artist Roy Krenkel, one assumes; a bit late to get Howard's signature. This is a collection of Howard's near-Eastern and Crusader background stories; the title story, "The Track of Bohemund", "The Way of the Swords", "Hawks Over Egypt", and "Gates of Empire". Only two previous copyrights listed, but I assume "Hawks" is the original from which de Camp or someone fashioned "Hawks Over Shem". They're reasonably good swashbuckling yarns, not much different from Conan stories except for the names and some of the background (some of the background seems identical). Krenkel art is excellent, and the book as a whole is one of Grant's better jobs of bookmaking - which means it's better than anything else around. Recommended.

HOME, by Betsy Gould Hearne (Atheneum, \$7.95) Seems to be the second book in a series about a - teenage? - giant girl in early iron age times. (Why she is a giant is never apparent in this volume; she might as well be a normal human. Maybe the first volume explains it, but it seems an unnecessary complication in this one.) Story is a fairly simple Quest; adequate as a juvenile, but uninspiring.

THE RUINS OF ISIS, by Marion Zimmer Bradley (Starblaze \$4.95, Pocket Books \$1.95) The higher-priced edition gets you better paper and some very nice interior art. Marion has put a nice but subconsciously male-chauvinist archaeologist down on a matriarchial planet in which males are not even considered quite human. He has to pretend to be the assistant to his wife, who is subconsciously bitter about having sacrificed her degree to help put him through school, and of course the male-female tension - in several aspects - is the theme of the book. It's not so much resolved as accepted; husband and wife do love and respect one another, and the problem is one they'll have to live with. (Which won't please Marion's more militant fans, but seems eminently reasonable to me.) There is also a vanished civilization, a geologically unstable planet, and the inevitable childbirth, and it's an excellent novel.

JUPITER - THE STAR THAT FAILED, by Joel N. Shurkin (Westminster Press, \$7.95) A juvenile science book. It's not Asimov, but it reads clearly and would make a nice gift for that 12-year-old who is interested in science. (But if you have a second



edition, people, would you change the statement on page 17 that says degrees are divided into "minutes and hours" to "minutes and seconds"?)

ACT OF PROVIDENCE, by Josept Payne Brennan (Don Grant, \$10.00) Or \$20 for the limited, signed edition. This is somewhat the same thing Gene and I did; Brennan's occult detective Lucius Leffing attends the First World Fantasy Convention and solves a case involving a door into the nether depths, troglodytes, gangsters, and a monster. It's mild fun - probably more entertaining to convention attendees than it was to me. Nothing serious, but mildly enjoyable. Robert Arrington has some interesting illustrations, and I see I overlooked the fact that Don Grant is listed as co-author. It's very short - 118 pages of large print - and reminiscent of fan fiction given a high-quality setting.

AGAINST TIME'S ARROW; THE HIGH CRUSADE OF POUL ANDERSON, by Sandra Miesel (Borgo Press, \$2.45) How the hell do I review this? Sandra probably knows more about literary criticism than I do, and undoubtedly knows more about Poul Anderson than I do. (But giving a good review is out of character, right?) I'm not sure that the opposition of Law and Chaos is as prevalent in Poul's books as Sandra says, but I can't fault her on any specific argument. (I know what's good for me.) Seriously, the only flaw I can find is that Sandra has included a good many lesser works which help make her point, and ignored some of his better stories. But that's a matter of opinion, after all. Overall, I think this is one of the best of the Borgo series of critical volumes.

SLAVES OF SLEEP, by L. Ron Hubbard (Dell, \$1.75) I advise all newsstand browsers to read the fine print on this cover; namely the part that says "Featuring illustrations by Edd Cartier". If you don't want to buy the book for Hubbard (and it's an enjoyable, amusing, lightweight adventure story, if you haven't already read it), by all means buy it for the illustrations. They're reduced in size from the originals, but still well worth owning. The story is about a Milquetoasty type who in his dreams inhabits another world in which he's a swashbuckling pirate; he is cursed by being forced to remember all events in both worlds, and eventually manages to solve his problems in both of them. Recommended.

I AM A BARBARIAN, by Edgar Rice Burroughs (Ace, \$1.95) I believe this is one found after Burroughs' death. It's surprising. He essayed a historical novel in the "modern" style ("modern" referring to the 1930s when he wrote it) and succeeded very well - much better than Doc Smith did when he tried something similar in the 1950s. The style is the sharp, wisecracking tone of the 1930s detective pulps rather than the formal and slightly archaic style Burroughs usually dealt in. Story is a fairly typical novel of Rome; no better and - surprisingly - no worse than many best-sellers on the same subject. Interesting.

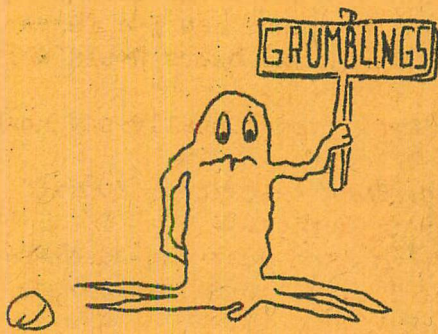
THE BUG WARS, by Robert L. Asprin (St. Martin's Press, \$8.95) Fascinating, in that I don't think Bob could have sold this 20 years ago, or even 10 years ago. Because there isn't a human character mentioned in the entire book. (The "monster" depicted on the dust jacket is actually the protagonist/hero.) It's an account of a war of extermination between a reptiloid species and an insectoid one, and, in an understated theme, how changes in technology force changes in an individual's (and group's) thought-patterns, whether the changes are wanted or not. A fascinating bit of writing, also, in that it attempts to "sell" a coldblooded (literally), unemotional military person to the largely overemotional, left-liberal science fiction readership. I hope it works, because I liked the book - but then, I'm prejudiced, since it was inspired by my filksong "Reminder". (Bob mentions that at least part of the song will be quoted in a forthcoming Dell edition; it isn't, in this one.) Perhaps I had fewer problems than most in empathising with Rahm (being noted for being somewhat cold and unemotional myself), but I consider Bob's portrayal to be quite successful. Recommended. (You've heard the song; now buy the book.)



# THINGS THAT GO BUMP! IN THE MAILBOX

MARY SCHAUB sends an ad; "We've just acquired 1-1/2 million used cobblestones... 20 cents each and less". But you have to go to Fall River, MA, to pick them up.// ALAN DODD sends clippings: "All over London, butchers' shops are sprouting the following in their windows - 'ANIMAL FARM.' You've read the book. You've seen the film. Now eat the cast'."//An amusing British attitude toward the astronauts. In an article on Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins 10 years after, the emphasis is on their moral, physical, and image decay - to the point where, since the writer can't find anything to sneer at in Collins' history since the moon-landing, he barely mentions him. (British journalism; if you can't say something bad, say nothing.)//Article on graffiti: most of it is either very elderly jokes or not very funny or both, but I did like "Save a tree - eat a beaver".//MAYDENE CROSBY sends an account of an awards banquet of the Greater Lafayette Volunteer Bureau. One of the volunteers being honored is Lazarus Long (Lazarus Long is alive and well in Lafayette?)//Other Longs - Sam and Mary, to be precise - send an account of a bottle-opener collector; he has 2000 different ones,//Then there is the Irish four-square stand against Japanese leprechauns; they (or at least statues of them) have been forbidden the country.// LAURINE WHITE sends an account of a group training dolphins to help hunt for the Loch Ness Monster (they're to carry cameras into the depths).//It's since been in a lot of papers, but JOHN BOSTON sent the first account of an LEAA report that the victims of gunpoint robberies are attacked in about 20% of the cases, knife robberies in 36percent, other weapons 58percent, and unarmed robberies, 71percent. 1% of gun robbers kill their victims, as opposed to 1/5 of a percent of other robbers. (Even so, that makes unarmed robbery about as deadly as gunpoint robbery - more deadly if there's more of it.)//LAURINE again; a firm titling itself Pilferage International has gone into the business of supplying replica "collectibles" from famous hotels (as the columnist mentions, "the police would call these same things stolen merchandise") Of course, these aren't really stolen, and the hotels have given permission for their trademarks to be reproduced. "Think about it: The idea is to give fake stolen merchandise to friends, so that other people will think that your friends had enough guts to actually steal the stuff." For a capsule description of what's wrong with America....//DODD has been sending me cheerful headlines about London being "The Rip-Off Capital Of Europe"; nothing like enhancing the eager anticipation of the traveler.//The LONGS send a photo-feature on the Disney film "The Black Hole"; looks like lovely special effects and fudgy science.//SANDRA MIESEL sends an account of a recently discovered type of "therapeutic bath" - fermenting coffee grounds.//From the Marion, Indiana newspaper "TeleView" section: "ABC has invested \$5 million in the disaster epic, S.O.S. Titanic, which will air in the fall. The flick is based on the tragic U-Boat sinking of the trans-Atlantic ocean liner on its maiden voyage in April of 1912." Another fantasy series, obviously...//The LONGS send an item about a writer who claims his brain was pickled by 3.2 beer, and is suing Coors. I say any writer who can't take more alcohol than that should be ashamed to make the matter public. (Right, Haldeman?)//ROGER WADDINGTON sends an article on British oddities being collected; my favorite was "the clock-stamping device made in the late 19th Century designed for strapping on the tail end of chickens to record the time and date of the emergence of each egg."//MAYDENE again - an Episcopal priest has solved the problem of whether God is male or female by saying that the scriptures prove God is both. He's relying on "So God created man in his own image...male and female he created them." Sounds logical; God is a hermaphrodite. Might be a story in that....//RICK BROOKS sends a page out of WRITER'S DIGEST with an article on Bob Asprin, claiming he does much of his writing in a restaurant (I wonder if that could be combined with the therapeutic coffee grounds?)//The LONGS send an account of the Japanese archaeologist who is studying pyramid building by building one on the western edge of Cairo. (Typically Japanese, it's to be a miniature pyramid.) Idea is to find out how many workers are needed to pull a block, what size rollers work best, do drumbeats or chanting work best to synchronize efforts, etc. As a sideline, he's discovering how the Egyptian peasant fleeces foreign devils.// Lots more items, but no more space this time. RSC





Readers please note that several of the letters in here are excerpts from more than one missive and may be commenting on more than one issue of Yandro. Dates of them range from January to July

Gary Anderson, 8386 Hollister, Ventura CA 93003

I bought myself a 12-string guitar and am trying to learn to play it. So far I have driven Kay into the study every night, along with her cat, caused the twins to go grumbling off to their room early, and elicited all sorts of comments from the older kids. The dog wanted back outside. Sigh. Filkophobia in its

most virulent form, I fear. Anyone who has heard me fears, too.

Robert E Briney, 4 Forest Avenue, Salem MA 01970

A landmark reference work in mystery fiction has just been published by the Mystery Library(U of Cal San Diego): THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CRIME FICTION 1749-1975 by Allen J. Hubin. In 700 pages of small print (actually typescript -- in addition to compiling the monster, Al also prepared the camera copy on his Selectric) it lists all known volumes of detective/crime/suspense/mystery fiction in English; arranged alphabetically by author, cross-indexed by title, with plentiful information on pseudonyms and series. First British and first U.S. editions are listed, with any reprints that involve a change of byline or title. Al Hubin has been working on this book for ten years; earlier versions were serialized in his magazine, The Armchair Detective, and received lots of additions and corrections from the readership. Now we have the first permanent edition, which might even be impressive enough to deserve its \$60 price-tag. (Pre-publication copies went for \$39.95.)

The book even lists five people named Coulson (two of them known to you) and one named DeWeese (actually two, since 'Jean' and Gene get separate entries.)

I noticed the Walter Popp cover on LADY BLUE, and I agree that he has improved with the years. He does quite a few Western pb covers (including at least one of Lee Hoffman's books, as I recall). But Western and gothics don't offer him the -- er, opportunities -- that he had on the old pulps. Where, nowadays, can he find a story featuring a woman in pink, purple, and green harlequin tights? (I'm too lazy to dig out the magazine and track down this particular cover, but I remember it vividly -- and probably inaccurately.)

[[I think it was that particular cover I was thinking of when I referred to the fact that he'd improved in the intervening years... RSC]]

Ned Brooks, 713 Paul Street, Newport News VA 23605

Well, is the harp seal in danger of extinction or not? Gene Wolfe says it is, but I read recently that the population of harp seal is quite adequate and increasing. I agree that there can be little real moral difference between clubbing a harp seal pup to make it into a coat and clubbing a calf to make it into dinner.

Rick Brooks, R R 1, Box 268, Fremont IN 46737

Speaking of wheels rusting (as you were to Dean Grennell), I had a flat last month. It turned out that the rim had rusted through.

As for Gene Wolfe and the scummiest thing human beings do to animals, we deliberately infect 9 banded armadillos with leprosy. Our only reason is that they take longer to die with leprosy than any other animal. I don't particularly like it, but if we get a cure for leprosy out of it, it'll be worth it.

Steuben County was apparently named "second-hand" after the Revolutionary War



general. We were largely settled from Steuben City, New York. My Great-Great-Grand father George Brooks walked from New York one summer with a batch of livestock.

That must have been fun. Imagine driving hogs when (a) there isn't a fence in one hundred miles or more, and (b) wolves, mountain lions, and bears would welcome a little lost piggy.

Has anybody had the heart to tell Sandra that us rural types usually say hogs? (You southerners probably say "hawgs".)

I was fascinated by Laurine White's question on how Buck felt about Juanita writing a series. Maybe she never saw the Coulson/DeWeese series.

Obviously a split between Buck the money-grubbing pro and Buck the idealistic fan. Of course, when I reach the money-grubbing stage, I'll be more circumspect about such things.

[[I think I'd rather drive hogs than cattle under those circumstances; I suspect a boar of that time was at least a match for a black bear or a coyote, if not for a cougar or timber wolf. The lack of fences would present somewhat of a problem, though; herding pigs even with fences isn't the easiest task in the world. RSC]]

Brian Earl Brown, 16711 Burt Rd. #207, Detroit MI 48219

Juanita, if you saw Steranko credited as helping with that DR STRANGE tv-movie, then I guess he helped, but I do follow the comic book and I know that Steranko has never worked on it. It's currently being drawn by Tom Sutton, a delightfully demented man; before him was Jim Stanlin and after him comes Gene Colan (a recently announced change). Steve Ditko was the original artist and established most of the visual imagery of the strip. No, he established all of the visual imagery: things like floating islands in the nether world, giant menacing jaws, and lightning-like bolts of mystic energy.

Now it's possible Steranko was a consultant on the movie, because while he hasn't drawn any comics in 10 years or so, he's forever promoting himself as a hot-shot comics expert. If you want to see some shameless self-promoting, read through an issue of his Media Scene some convention. Sheesh! But Steranko has never had any involvement with the DR STRANGE comic book.

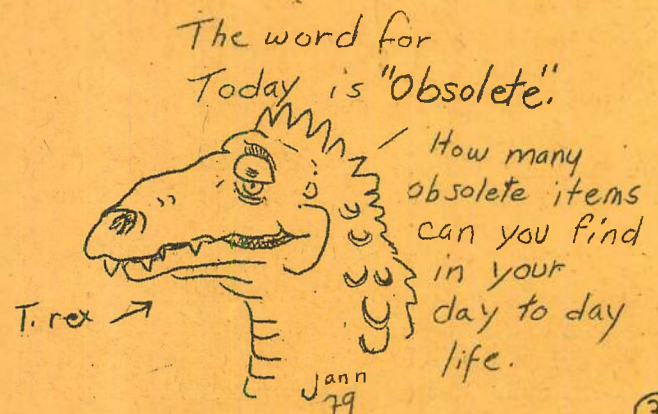
Buck, there is no such thing as a bargain '74 Vega. I just traded away my '73 Vega wagon because it was burning 2 qts of oil per tank of gas, ran lousy (fouled plugs) and was rusting like hell. 53,000 miles on it.

Jack Vance is contracted to finish his STAR KINGS series. I found C. Q. Yarbro's HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA a delightful historical romance/vampire novel. She did, though, flog the competent women/bumbling men a bit.

[[Well, we're only burning one quart of oil per tank of gas at 78,000 miles, car isn't rusting too bad, gas mileage is over 20 mpg for just driving to work, and it does very nicely to take the everyday load off the Pinto, so all in all it's about what I expected. RSC]]

John Boston, 225 Baltic Street, Brooklyn NY 11201

It's bursting out all over. I was just listening to the radio in the bathroom (of course I keep the radio in the bathroom -- where else?) and was treated to a song called "Psi Power." Refrain: "I can read your mind like a magazine, I know where you're at, I know what you mean." (The narrative owes more to DYING INSIDE





than to SLAN.)

I notice in "Golden Minutes" that you list without having read the last three Ian Watson novels. I assume that's because you disliked the first two, and I think I understand why, although I don't agree. But I suggest you try MIRACLE VISITORS. It's the most coherent of Watson's books and it's also extremely amusing; conceptually it's about halfway between Stanislaw Lem and the craziest and most grandiose of '40's van Vogt, and the combination of exalted speculation and spoofing of pulp sf plot devices is pretty funny. It's also certain to be the only sf novel in which the characters travel to the moon and back in a red Thunderbird.

As Abdul Alhazred would have put it, even Death has died. The second issue, from which I quoted in Y #246, was indeed the last. It did leave its mark, though; a friend of mine saw somebody wearing a T-shirt with its logo.

I can't resist pointing out that your concession that guns are "more efficient at killing than knives" is something of a retreat from your previous position (see Y #241, p. 20). The statistics on knowledge of gun laws don't necessarily mean that the more you know, the more you oppose gun control; more likely, they mean that the more you like guns, the more you oppose gun control, and the more you like guns, the more likely you are to have bought one and to have been forced to deal with whatever laws exist in your jurisdiction.

And as long as you define the question of the efficacy of gun control as whether "killers" will "quit killing" or "turn in their guns," of course you'll conclude that it won't make any difference. People who are determined to kill will find a way, and people who are determined to get guns will eventually succeed. The real question is whether, by making guns more difficult to obtain for those who are not determined, we can limit the damage done by ordinary people who lose their tempers or by second-rate impulsive street criminals who get scared.

[[The fact that guns are more efficient weapons doesn't mean that their users are more efficient killers. Anyone can use a knife; not anyone can hit an opponent with a pistol, even at point-blank range. (One of the frequent statements of the anti-gun crowd is that all these people who are buying guns don't know how to use them. Guns are somewhat more dangerous to innocent bystanders than knives, though less so than automobiles, matches, and aspirin bottles. RSC]]

Lester Boutilier, 2726 Castiglione St., New Orleans LA 70119

Commenting on Y #246, yes, there are a number of worthwhile things on tv. I catch a lot of films that way myself. And I may be doing that more often in the future since the price of admission at the major "reportory" cinema around here has gone up almost 30 percent overnight (1). There are a number of good films that hit the tube, and if you look through TV Guide carefully (as I do every week) you can find them. Often I just don't feel like watching tv at the time something good is scheduled, a problem which would be solved by a betamax-type machine, but I'm not ready for a betamax.

Tv varies from city to city. Here we have a PBS outlet but no cable tv. One of the commercial stations is owned by the locally powerful Jesuits, and one of their lay executives is on the city council, so the immediate prospects of cable tv coming here are in doubt. Commercial tv is afraid of cable, which would provide citizen viewers with all kinds of special interest programs and fantastic services (shopping by tv, banking by tv, etc.), which would take audience numbers away from CHARLIE'S ANGELS and THREE'S COMPANY.

There are quality series on network prime time, like LOU GRANT, BARNEY MILLER, and QUINCY. (A lot of people like MASH, too, but for some reason I could never get into that.) But censorship is still a problem. An episode of BARNEY MILLER earlier this season was obviously spliced after-the-fact for censorship reasons, the same line clearly edited out in two different scenes (in an episode about a 60's revolutionary surfacing in 1978; he defiled the oil companies and something else, the some-



thing else being cut out). That blatant example of censorship got me so angry that I swore off BARNEY MILLER (which is irrational, since all series suffer the same desecration at the hands of the tv censors, a subject that was covered well in a PBS documentary a while back on "what you're missing on tv"). But the power of tv is strong. Recently BARNEY MILLER did a special episode, a tribute to the late Jack Soo. And I watched it, and as the film clips from the 5 year history of the show ran by I got so nostalgic and wrapped up in it that I decided to watch the show regularly once more, and the heck with censorship.

To me, the decline in the overall quality of network prime time tv began 3/3 1/2 years ago. This was about the time that the infamous Fred Silverman rose to power in the industry. And commercial tv has been operating under the Silverman syndrome ever since. I can remember great tv in past decades -- good dramatic series like EAST SIDE, WEST SIDE and THE ELEVENTH HOUR, zany comedy like DOBIE GILLIS and GET SMART, great public affairs programming (like the black-culture/black history specials of 1968-69). Hopefully the Silverman syndrome won't last forever. If cable tv really begins to make a dent, commercial tv may have to up its quality. There'll always be an audience for GILLIGAN'S ISLAND and SEARCH FOR TOMORROW too. And that's all right. Variety is good. But tv shouldn't become nothing but GILLIGAN'S ISLAND and SEARCH FOR TOMORROWS.

I'm told by one Sovietologist that Soviet tv doesn't do much more to uplift the masses of that country than U.S. tv does to uplift American viewers. There's a definitely anti-intellectual pitch to Soviet media, aimed at the Soviet cab drivers and their wives. And this anti-intellectual appeal is used against the intellectual dissidents in the Soviet Union, Andre Sakharov and others. Tv per se is neither good nor bad. It has enormous potential for good. And it has enormous potential for bad. Ralph Nader was on THE DICK CAVETT SHOW this very night in fact, talking about the rewriting of the federal communications act of 1934, which will set the tone of tv in this country for the next 3 or 4 decades. He urged citizens to write their representatives in Congress for all the info on this pending legislation. There's a lot of good stuff on tv, but it could be much better.

Those disappearing family names due to marriage customs is a shame. Maybe someone could establish a Directory of Lost Surnames, and creative Smiths and Joneses could change their names to lost surnames from the past, thus "reviving" them, bringing them into use again. And why not? After so many years, these names would be in something like the public domain. And maybe they can come to be thought of as public treasures, worthy of preservation. The new African surnames of black-consciousness types is an already-established trend that is diversifying the range of U.S. surnames now. Abdul Nkrumah is a much more interesting name than George Washington Johnson, I think.

The New Orleans phonebook has more than one full page of Nguyens now, due to the heavy influx of Vietnamese from resettlement camps throughout the midwest. The Nguyens thus join the pages of Bourgeois, pages of Cuccias, pages of Schmidts, and others. And I look upon this as good. I don't know if there are any present-day Europeans named Agrippa, for instance, but if there aren't why can't some Leones become Agrippas? If such a trend could develop, it could be a lot of fun.

[[Frankly, I thought your "great tv of past decades" was some of the most idiotic drivel ever on the tube, but actually that's another point in tv's favor; it has enough variety to provide something for almost everyone.// The idea of a surname as a public treasure seems a bit much, but I can see your suggestion taking hold. We've been "name-watching" for some time now, because Kay Anderson collects odd given names, and the number of weird names bestowed in an apparently desperate search for individuality is amazing. (Not that all odd given names come under that heading, but a good many of them seem to.) I'm sure that "forgotten" surnames would be eagerly used. RSC ]] [[The ephemeral and steadily changing nature of both PBS and commercial TV is one more reason, for



TODAY, MORDOR,  
TOMORROW MIDDLE EARTH!



JOAN OF ORC

me, for compiling a videotape library of fiction and non-fiction video I ever want to see again. It fills the dearth on those occasions when I wish to watch TV and nothing interests me on the regular schedule; and on commercial TV the rule is, if you're especially fond of a particular film or series, videotaping it for your library the first time through is the only way to be certain you have a chance to see it again in its complete form -- editing (sometimes a euphemism for butchering) for replay and syndication being what it is. The favorite scenes "everyone" remembers so fondly may also be the ones that get lopped on replays to provide room to insert extra commercials. One's own videotapes are sans commercials and generally intact throughout, and they're yours, to play at your pleasure and leisure, not a network programmer's whim. JWC]]

Beverley Clark, 1950 Cooley Ave., #5306, Palo Alto CA 94303

I must agree with both you and Mary Long about force-feeding resulting in hatred of the force-fed material. As an ex-English major,

I can testify to the results of being forced to study the "classics" of English literature in the strange way that English teachers seem to feel that they ought to be studied; it was not until after I left college and English majoring that I developed an interest in Shakespeare, for instance. Dickens I still won't touch with a ten-foot pole, as a result of a chapter-by-chapter massacre of GREAT EXPECTATIONS in high school. I can't speak for any other disciplines, in which the essential purpose might be different, but in literature -- and in music, probably -- the essential purpose is entertainment; everything else is secondary, or ought to be. If the author wants to educate us or impart a great truth, he or she shouldn't be writing works of fiction but philosophical essays or articles on the appropriate subject. No teacher of mine ever told me that I was supposed to enjoy what I was reading; I suppose that for one thing it might have raised questions on what we were doing in class, not to mention why we were doing it.

Blue rum is an interesting thing to try...it's made that way with food coloring, of course, and by itself is not a bad color or particularly off-putting. Combined with cranberry juice, on the other hand, it results in a poisonous-looking purple liquid that lacks only a frothing head to be appropriate for the cellar lab of your local mad scientist. As I dislike cranberry juice, I cannot comment on the taste. However, blue rum is an unnatural blue food, and so is entirely irrelevant to the possible survival value of learning to avoid blue foods.

I will second Dean's comment on the LA excuse for a rapid transit system (with the qualification that I haven't lived in LA for seven years or so). What I remember is the dreadful situation a carless teenager finds herself in when she lives in the San Fernando valley and everything is reachable only by automobile. The RTD bus ran only once an hour to anywhere, so it could take up to 3 hours to go 20 miles, and the last stop in my end of the valley was at 7 pm in the evening. I thought that one of Mayor Bradley's goals when he was elected was to improve the RTD; from Dean's letter it seems that improved bus service is a casualty of Prop. 13.



Has anyone else ever heard of the theory that the Great Pyramid is actually a three-dimensional version of the entire Bible? I seem to recall it being mentioned on a tv show once, but I can't remember any more about it. Perhaps that is a good thing.

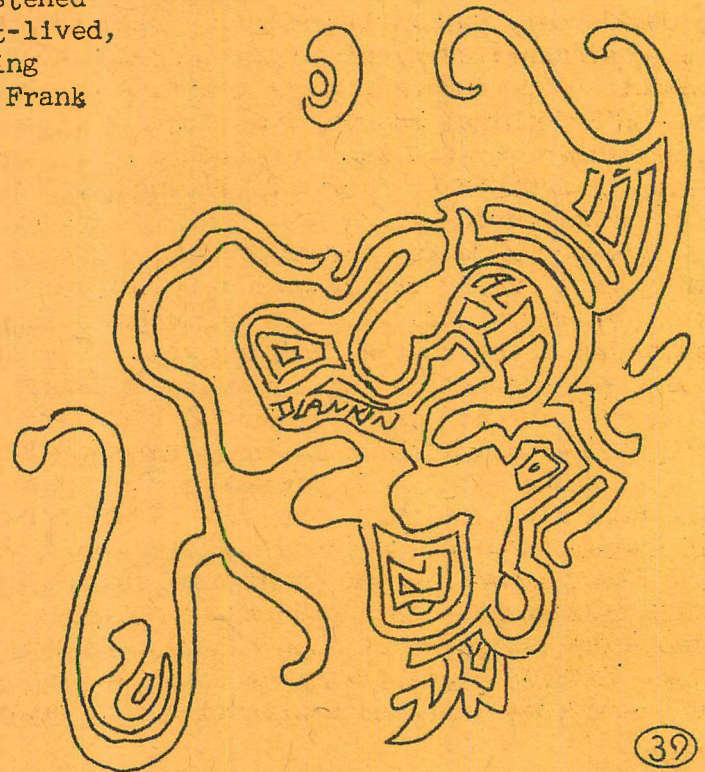
Mary Long's icebreaker about the bathtub taps reminds me of my childhood fantasy. I used to think that if I stretched out flat and stared at the taps so hard that everything around them went gray, I would be able to teleport myself onto my bed, because I figured that all one had to do to teleport was to concentrate hard enough. (I think this is associated somehow with my reading of Alan Nourse's ROCKET TO LIMBO when I was around 8 or 9.) It never worked, but occasionally, when I take a bath instead of a shower, I am sorely tempted to try again.

[[If it ever does work, let me know.// Speaking of blue rum, can anyone tell me the ingredients of the "blue ruin" occasionally referred to in Regency romances? (And was the drink blue, or was that the color of your face after you drank some?) // I can't really recall if my teachers ever told me I was expected to enjoy stories, or not. Didn't matter; by that time I did enjoy them. I always read the English book cover to cover the first week or two -- and reread the ones I liked at intervals thereafter. We never got Dickens, for some reason. We got "Julius Caesar", which I loved (all that blood and gore), and "Silas Marner", which I still regard as one of the abominations of English literature. RSC]] [[I had one excessively inept high school English teacher whose idea of teaching "Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner" was to have us underline all the alliterations. I have no idea why. Didn't endear the poem to me, needless to say. I tended to ignore her, since the rest of my teachers were types who obviously liked reading as much as I did and were therefore Right Thinkers. JWC]]

William M. Danner, R.D. No. 1, Kennerdell PA 16374

Why don't you explain sometime how you manage to read all those books, hold down a job, write books, and Yandro yourself, and still have time to sleep and eat? It ought to make interesting reading.

I agree that "Vic and Sade" was not soap opera. It's one of two such things I listened to in the 30's. The other was very short-lived, having started late in the decade and, being called "Frank and the Honorable Archie", Frank being a Japanese man-servant, came to a sudden end late in 1941. It was not at all soapy and, like "Vic and Sade," provided a lot of very good humor. Did you ever hear "One Man's Family" in its earliest days? For a year or so, before advertisers discovered the goldmine of captive audiences, it was a sustaining program and was a lot of fun. It was only after it acquired a sponsor that it became one of the most lugubrious of soap operas. Another good very early sustaining program was "Station KUKU", in which Raymond Knight, as Ambrose J. Weems, and a handful of others as nutty as he, used to





burlesque all the other programs on the air. It was at the beginning of this program that Ambrose declaimed, with great gusto, the quotation I have been using for so long at the head of The First Page.

I have found most of the people here in wildest western Pennsylvania to be quite friendly, out-going, and quick to help. Of course, there's the guy who, for a couple of years, tried to beat my mail-box to death and finally succeeded. Late at night I'd hear a car go by and a loud thump, and next day there'd be another big dent in the box. I don't know why. On the other hand, I have a next-door-neighbor who, just a year ago, had his house burn to the ground. He now has a new "double-wide" on which he did a lot of the work himself, with much still to do. A month or so ago, after plowing the snow from his driveway, he came up with his tractor and plowed mine. He would take nothing for the job, and another neighbor up the road has in the past occasionally done the same. Still another neighbor is a registered plumber and a few years ago, when I had to have a new water-heater, he came down and did a very neat job of installing it, furnishing a few short lengths of copper tubing, and would take only five dollars for the work. Most of these people are regular church-goers and I haven't attended any church service for over 45 years, but it seems to make no difference -- or is that why one guy had it in for my mailbox?

[[Well, I haven't written all that many books, and I don't sleep much. Or I didn't; one of the signs of creeping age is that I need a full 7 hours sleep most nights. RSC]] [[Sustaining must be the radio version of starving in a garret, producing precious pearls while the program gasps for life from week to week. One of my all-time favorites was an obscure program called "Quiet, Please," which I don't believe ever had a sponsor in more than a year. But it did some fascinating sf and fantasy as well as straight drama, all understated and outré and rather delicate compared to some of Arch Oboler's offerings during the same period. As far as humor went, my taste was always peculiar; the only abiding fondness I had for humor programs were Bob and Ray and Henry Morgan. (Bernie Green's music helped considerably, in the latter case, to earn my loyalty. But I usually enjoyed the oddball humor as well.) JWC]]

Don D'Amassa, 19 Angell Drive, East Providence RI 02914

No one gets flat tires the way we did when we lived in Oklahoma. I averaged two a month for eighteen months. It has something to do with the fact that Lawtonians like to throw nails and broken glass in the street. One night, so help me, was the ultimate. We were on our way to get ice cream when one tire went flat. I changed it, drove to the ice cream place, and bought some ice cream, figuring to stop at a garage on the way home. Fat chance. A second went flat in the parking lot. So I walked the first flat to a garage and had it fixed.

I took Sheila and Davy, then a newborn baby, home, then returned to the garage to get the second flat fixed. While he was fixing it, a third tire went flat in his parking lot. All three were nails.

The way I found to use the Gaier system of book ratings with at least some consistency is to have benchmark books. I listed twenty titles in ascending order, and now just slot newly read ones in. Not perfect, but the best I could devise.

[[Now I see why I can't use the Gaier rating system; it's for people who take their ratings seriously. RSC]]

Ed Cagle, Star Rt So Box 80, Locust Grove OK 74352

Blue food: Friend of mine once ran a working class eatery that served 4-500 meals each day to various callused-hand folks. To this basic menu (meat, potatoes, and a veggie) he would often add a touch of color to the gravy to make it appear richer than it was. This led him to add a dollop of color to the instant mashed potatoes as well, and this seemed to go over well. Then one day someone grabbed the green food



coloring while dosing the potatoes, too late in the day to make another gob of instant taters. With but a few amused comments, the variant disappeared with customary rapidity from all those platters. This led to further experimentation, resulting in a semi-tradition at the place. Then one day someone laced the spuds with blue coloring. This caused once of the most magnificent mounds of uneaten potatoes in local memory.

Kinda makes you wonder why they don't get rid of that damnable blue ink they grade beef carcasses with.

Never had a chance to build a Rolls pickup, but I have fond memories of a 1941 Buick that turned into a garden tractor that would both till and run 45 mph on the road. It didn't do either one particularly well.

Hadn't heard of blue milk for years. Remember white margarine, with the capsule of coloring inside the package that you had to break and knead into the stuff? I held the Nucoa-Kneader position in my grandfather's house until I broke one of the packages and squirted it on the wall. Didn't care for it nohow.

Been stuck here for over an hour trying to find a way to express my thoughts about the TV vs. no TV elements. I know several people who watch TV selectively, who moan and groan about the quality and its effect on kids, society, etcetera, and by and large they seem to be able to live with it. The few outspoken anti-TV people I know, who scream bloody murder and want it regulated and banned out of existence, all have personality quirks that bug the eyes of 99 percent of the people they meet. Such are the delights of fanaticism and an obsessive turn of mind.

It could be said that a kid who accidentally killed himself with a gun found in the neighbor's drawer lacked a certain something at home. But who do you think the courts will find liable if the neighbor let his kid roam at will in your house? Hoo hah.

Can't help thinking the human race is shitting in its own nest at a rate that makes worrying about the baby harp seals a waste of energy.

I still catch myself identifying people ethnically by their name. I realize that names are relatively meaningless in those terms at this stage, but I was taught that way. The reaction is automatic despite some highly contradictory contacts. Of course I'm not surprised to learn that Jimmy Bluebird is Cherokee, but his brother-in-law, also a full blood Cherokee, is named Nigel Patterson. Makes no difference if he pronounces it Niggle.

Toponymy, for gawd's sake. Thanks to Sam I now have a term to apply to the boy scout's ceaseless pursuit of applying strange and meaningless names to areas and places on scout property. Toponymically speaking, it creates chaos. Anyway...

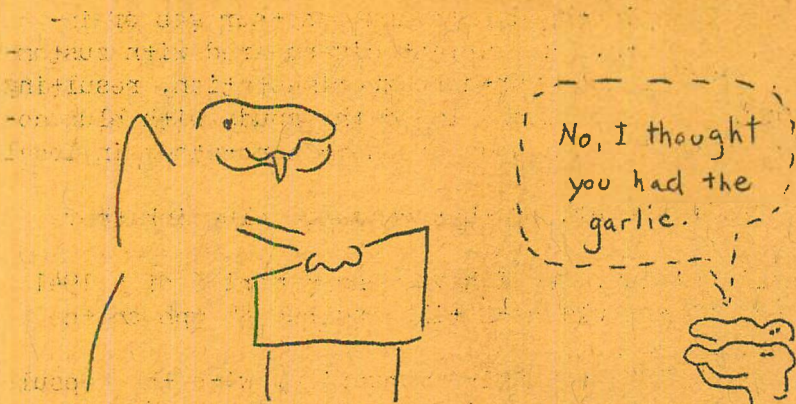
It mildly croggles to learn that there are other supermarket chains as strangely secretive as the one I deal with occasionally. In ordering 100 dozen eggs 3 days in advance I couldn't get a price, and I couldn't get the manager to say anything at all about the matter. Wouldn't even guarantee their delivery.

Changing names. Can't verify it, but I was told a George Himmler was refused a name change by a crusty old judge who took offense at Himmler requesting his name be changed to Adolph Hitler. Just a little joke, Yer Honor!

Got word recently that the BSA is changing its national program back to the basic outdoor stuff. The program directed at attracting the inner city and ghetto youth did not attract the numbers it was designed to attract. In fact it caused an abrupt drop in enrollment. So say the Powers. I say the enrollment will drop even more now. Kids today are too overfed, understimulated, and overprivileged to be interested in going out into the woods. And the killer is expecting them to enjoy the process of a little work to attain the goals.

[[You don't have to be that old to remember white margarine if you happened to live in (or have friends in) Wisconsin in the 60's. They only allowed colored margarine in that state after 1965 or '66. (Shortly after Gene's and my U.N.C.L.E. book which included a scene of smuggling margarine. It really happened -- the smuggling, not being captured by THRUSH while you





were doing it.) As I recall, my mother dumped both margarine and coloring into a bowl and kneaded it there. Much neater. RSC]] [[But not as much fun. JWC]]

Hank Davis, 321 Linden Walk #7, Lexington KY 40508

Sandra Miesel's Brackett parody was hilarious. I think that I would have been chortled into submission even without being familiar with the

protagonist. One of the chuckles was inadvertant, however -- the type that resulted in "And thus the strange battle was joined -- man against swing." The image springs to mind...

Stu Shiffman's cover for the pastiche was a delight, too. I'd suggested to Stu in the past that he should send some artwork to YAN. It's not surprising, of course, that Sandra was more persuasive than I...not for nothing did she appeared garbed as Haggard's Ayesha at one con.

All this about the blue creme soda reminds me of how that stuff gave me a semi-croggle when I saw it in a Bronx market a few years ago. The brand I saw was Nehi, which was odd in itself, since I had never seen the Nehi brand in NY until that time, and suddenly it was all over. Blue is my favorite color, and this was a neat shade of blue, sort of like Windex. (No competition, however, for my all time favorite blue, that of Testor's '39 model airplane glow fuel...wonder if they still make the stuff.) The blue beverage may have had a stronger impact on the common or garden New Yorker than on me since even red creme soda is seldom seen in that befuddled city. Instead, cream soda is caramel-colored (and doesn't taste as good to me as does the red, but that may just be conditioning!).

"The Man From Robot" was in Analog, I can't say exactly when, since my copies are in (\*sigh\*) storage. It appeared sometime between May 1969 and May 1970, I can definitely state, since I remember reading it in Vietnam.

I have to disagree with Denny Lien about alcoholics not wanting to convert non-believers. Or quasi-alcoholics, by which he seems to mean people who drink but can control it. I can't stand the taste of beer (not because it's alcoholic; can't abide coffee, grapefruit juice, or tomato juice, either; matter of taste), and have occasionally, particularly in the army, run into people who are offended if I won't join 'em in a beer. They won't take me sipping on a Pepsi as a substitute, either.

I think I remember hearing that Ace had to change the cover copy in their new edition of ARMAGEDDON 2149 because the people who own Buck Roggers, and Universal, the TV movie people, made threats. The cover copy was originally something like "the original Buck Rogers novel," and it was felt that the new Buck Rogers movie would be "damaged" by such a claim. I don't know why "seminal" is less actionable than "original," but most lawyers I have known have struck me as less than swift and maybe the lawyers didn't know what "seminal" meant... (I must hasten to cite the splendid Joe Hensley as an exception, of course.) Perhaps Ace will someday reprint "The Pigs of Blackford" as the seminal Buck Coulson novel.

Andre Norton is anti-technological and has said so. In an interview or an article I've read somewhere recently. And Bradbury isn't all that anti-technological, at least lately. At least, he was in favor of Project Apollo, which elevates him several notches above Aldiss, Vonnegut, or Ellison (or Joseph Heller, to name a mainstreamer). Not that his admirable stance has any bearing on the quality of his writing. One fan in NY once grotched to me about how Bradbury was now pro-technology and had "sold out". (This guy works for a radio station, too. The Rockies would crumble beneath the weight of such irony!)



I think that ETIDORPHA is a neat book for the illustrations. I came across it in the U. of Ky library back in 1968 and had to read it just to see what was going on in those spiffy drawings. Unfortunately, the new Pocket Books edition has cheaper paper and poor repro and tiny pages, so there's no real reason for buying it. Ray Palmer did a large format pb of the book a few years ago which might show the drawings off better (haven't seen it). My favorite idiotic bit in the book is the instructions for seeing your own brain.

Somebody in New York, I don't recall who, told me that Gerrold's ASCENTS OF WONDER was supposed to be A SENSE OF WONDER and something got scrambled in the translation.

Oddly enough, "The Undecided" is my favorite Eric Frank Russell story, too, and I missed it in the Del Rey BEST OF EFR volume. I was also miffed to see several of Murray Leinster's best stories, such as "Colonial Survey," "Doomsday Deferred," and "The Other Now," absent from the BEST OF LEINSTER volume, particularly since several mediocre stories are present. The book does, fortunately, manage to get "The Power," which is my favorite Leinster story.

Picking the best of a writer's output is, of course, a personal matter. Doubleday has just put out a BEST OF AVRAM DAVIDSON, and, since Davidson writes forewords to each story, he presumably is happy with the contents, but I was appalled to find that the book contained neither "Take Wooden Indians," nor "Or All the Seas With Oysters." Fortunately, it does have "The Golem," "Now Let Us Sleep," and "Help, I Am Dr. Morris Goldpepper!"

Back when the 1970's were still young and gay, and I was co-editing Maybe with Irvin Koch, we published several stories by Janet Fox (or, more accurately, Irvin did...I was trying to nudge the zine away from fan fiction), and I recall that you once reviewed an ish and commented that you hadn't read her story because you didn't want anything to spoil your impression of somebody with as neat a name as Janet Fox. Now I see that you have finally read a Janet Fox story, in the DAW YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES. I'm glad to see her being published in nice, professional type (and maybe Wollheim even paid her something...) since she impressed me as just about the only one of the people whose stories Irvin kept publishing that showed any talent.

Even people who picked up Edmondson's THE SHIP THAT SAILED THE TIME STREAM the first time around might want to pick up the new Ace edition. It appears to be an expanded version. I noticed it was thicker, and a check of the title page inside showed a copyright for "new material".

Rather amused to see that Lester del Rey's ATTACK FROM ATLANTIS is out again from Del Rey Books, since, when another pb company reissued it in the mid-sixties, Lester grotched in a review that the book shouldn't have been reprinted without considerable updating.

Do you get many locs on your book reviews? [[Yes, RSC]]

Roytac's letter about Velikovsky (well, only one paragraph, actually, was about Dr. V.) reminded me how much has changed, astronomically. When I was growing up in the 1950's, all the astronomy books I could get hold of agreed that the solar system was the result of a near-collision of the two stars; that Mars definitely had a relatively flat surface with, at most, low hills; that red giants were old stars, expanding as they burned hotter fuel than hydrogen; that comets had tails because of the pressure of sunlight. The last one, re comet tails, was in the books in spite of, I later found, numerous recorded cases of comets with tails which did not point away from the sun. Since those cases couldn't

HELP ME TURN OVER  
A NEW LEAF.



TURN THE  
PAGE.

FREJAC



be accounted for by the prevailing theory, they were ignored. Even books about space-flight tended to err. Most of the ones I read were quite dogmatic in asserting that a rocket to the moon not only would not but could not be launched from the surface of the earth. And almost as many were certain that a spacesuit could not be equipped with gloves because of the flexibility versus insulation problem. Oh, and Mercury rotates after all, Mars has no canals, and Uranus has rings.

This doesn't get me believing Velikovsky (good ol' conservation of momentum is still hanging in there), but it does make me more dubious about Carl Sagan knowing everything (or, particularly, Asimov, with his bloody infuriating arrogance. But Asimov, at least, doesn't always wear turtlenecks like Sagan, or write in books that ERB was an Englishman.).

Don D'Amassa to the contrary, I don't think that WHEN THE IDOLS WALKED had an earlier paperback. There were three Brak paperbacks that I saw in the late 1960's: BRAK THE BARBARIAN, from Avon, and BRAK THE BARBARIAN VS. THE SORCERESS and MARK OF THE DEMONS from Paperback Library.

[[You'd also better include such splendid lawyers as Summer Marie Miller, Larry Propp, and Bennett (Bem) Gordon, not to mention Jack Speer. And John Boston seems to read a lot of legal magazines, though I don't believe he's actually admitted to soliciting. (For newcomers: that was an old FAPA joke; it was questioned why there was no term for what lawyers did, akin to teaching, healing -- or doctoring, which is a term still heard out here -- engineering, etc. The consensus decided that since "soliciter" is a nice English term, "soliciting" would be the word used.) RSC]] [[There is also uncolored creme soda, which I suppose you could pass off at a party as vodka or Perrier water, thus fending away the persistent hangovers-love-company drinkers that nag at you unless you're drinking something they can see at a glance is safely as alcoholic as the potions they're swilling. JWC]]

Gary Deindorfer, 447 Bellevue Ave., #9-B, Trenton NJ 08618

Blue foods besides blueberries: hmm, plums are all I can think of. They may not be as blue as blueberries, but they're in that area of the color spectrum. George Carlin has a comment on one of his records about how hard it is to think of examples of blue food. True, it is.

Well, at least alcoholics don't fight Alcoholic Wars on the scale of, say, the Mohammedan conquests, the Christian conquests, the Crusades, etc. That is, alcoholics might get in fights with each other, but you don't find them swarming out of the bars in the thousands with swords, wearing chain mail, to conquer the bars on the other side of town, and to subject the alkie in those bars to their (the conquerers') drinking preferences.

I'd love to know what the great Bloch's better way to go is -- if he thinks up a better way to go, you can count on it to be damned ingenious...something Hitchcock could use in a movie. Trouble is, from what I read, Hitchcock is ailing and may not make another movie, though he's scheduled to. He didn't look like he was feeling too well at the recent fete they had for him that was televised.

I agree that much of the humor in CE3K was unintentional, but I liked the movie, partly because the schnookiness of Dreyfuss (often unintentional -- he's especially schnooky to the sf connoisseur such as the hardcore fan) is nice contrast to the other worldly quality of the last half hour and some of what goes before.

Speaking of books on Russia, Hedrick Smith's 600-page THE RUSSIANS on Ballantine is a fascinatingly observed cross section of the everyday life of Russians today. One of the most interesting books I've read lately.

[[Alcoholics may not fight wars, but I suspect there have been more people killed by drunk drivers than in all the religious wars in history, including the current Israeli-Arab conflict. (And while you can say they



didn't intend to kill anyone, the victims are just as dead. RSC]]

L. Sprague de Camp, 278 Hothorpe Lane, Villanova PA 19085

I have thought of another Krishna novel; but I am in the midst of CONAN AND THE SPIDER GOD and have 2/3 of the Howard biography yet to write, and some other projects in the works; so I may never get back to Krishna.

Do you know the whereabouts of the sometime fans Alvin Earl Perry and Dale Hart? I should very much like to trace them.

Joe Hensley, 2315 Blackmore, Madison IN 47250

I've delivered a new one to Doubleday, this one working as MINOR MURDERS. I imagine, if all goes okay, that it'll be out late this year or perhaps early next.

Condor regrouped, left New York, and moved to Westport, CT. They did publish RIVERTOWN RISK, but the rest got delayed. Apparently, from talking with them, THE POISON SUMMER will be out quite soon. And the other day they called and wanted permission to change the name of SONG OF CORPUS JURIS to MURDER BY ACCIDENT. They apparently have had distribution problems, as most new lines do, but I've heard from people in the east who've seen RR.

Ethel Lindsay is right. None of mine have been published in England. But recently Gollancz bought A KILLING IN GOLD and it should be out this year.

My sympathies on your dad, Buck. I lost mine in 1963 and still miss him. He came down here and was with us for a time shortly before he died. I was prosecutor then. One night I took him on the town. I'd mostly been a disappointment to him, but that night everyone was very nice. He saw and approved of my law office and all its books and finally grudgingly admitted that perhaps I'd turned out all right even if I hadn't gone to medical school as he'd wanted. My father believed in doctors, but not in lawyers. Ah, well.

Betty Kujawa, 2819 Caroline Street, South Bend IN 46614

Gotta get in my 2 cents about TV. Any machine that can bring into my bedroom the leads of QUINCY, BARNEY MILLER, and especially LOU GRANT can't be all bad.

Not to mention Alan Alda and Harry Morgan of MASH or Dr. Johnny Fever of WKRP.

As to the ladies, I too was smitten with Yvonne deCarlo. I seem to dig the sultry or the witty and never miss Jaye P. Morgan, Colleen Dewhurst, and Suzanne Pleshette.

One time on the TONIGHT show Burt Reynolds asked Suzanne what active sports she was into. She snapped back, "Honey, if I could have litter-bearers carry me from room to room, I would." Now there is a woman after my own heart.

Ethel Lindsay, 69 Barry Road, Carnoustie, Angus, DD7 7QQ United Kingdom

Yandro arrived in yesterday and I determined that this time I would answer quickly. We don't have a Groundhog Day but I think I will call Feb 21st Lindsay Day as that is when I put my nose out and sniffed the air.

I read Sandra's tale (almost typed tail...) first so that I could understand the cover. I thought both hilarious.

It sure will be nice if you get over for the Worldcon. I have booked six days in and intend to make that my holiday for this year. I am now having to watch the pennies as I only have my superannuation pension and will not be due the old age pension for another two years, when I am 60.

One thing that has amused me about the reference books, is that they nearly all have sub-title. Example: THE ART OF THE MYSTERY STORY...sub-title A COLLECTION OF CRITICAL ESSAYS. I wonder if there is something significant in that? I am intrigued too by the difference between the sf reader and the mystery reader. The latter are more serious, more interested in first editions, are more formal with strangers. The mystery readers as a whole have a bad image of the sf reader. It's all those beanies, I fear! It will be interesting to see how they change as the number of conventions held grows. The mystery author, too, very few are accustomed to meeting 'fans' in a



social context.

[[Funny, you don't look superannuated...// Not having seen that many mystery reference books, I hadn't noticed subtitles. Mystery readers are all secretly Victorians? RSC]]

Eric Lindsay, 6 Hillcrest Avenue, Faulconbridge N.S.W. 2776 Australia

Thanks for Y 245, which arrived yesterday and was devoured on the train to work. There was this large dog, you see, and I didn't realize that it was in fact a were-pig...

I'm sorry for mis-typing your name on the outside. Been making lots of typos lately, thanks to a new (that is to say, pre owned) proportional spacing Olivetti Editor typer that I acquired on my return from the US.

Loved the cover, and Sandra's story. ~~She has the character over talent.~~

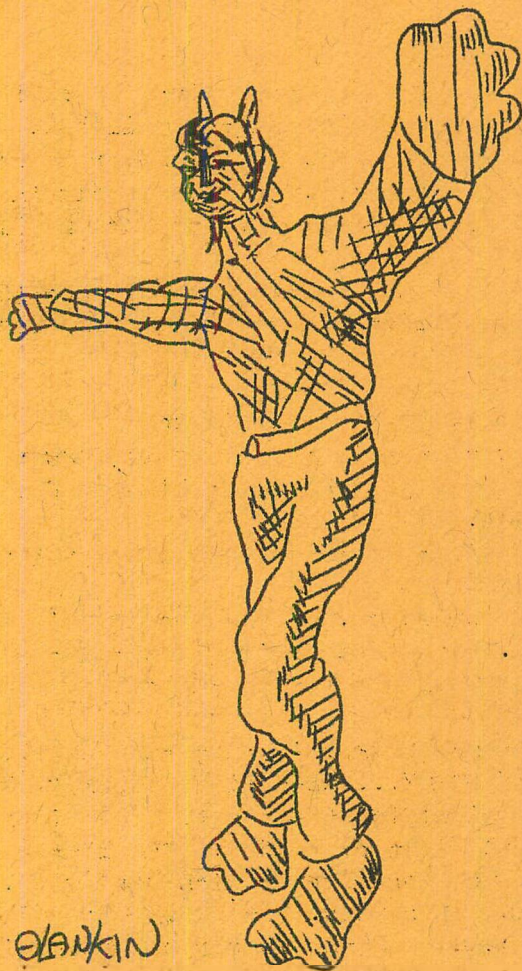
I have long believed, and indeed have often commented in locs, that the reason fans enjoy reading is that most of them learnt to read before getting to school; thus they were immune to some heavy handed teacher's efforts to get them to read -- they already knew it was fun, and didn't believe the crap being handed out about it being hard work and all that. I suspect the same with music, etc. I was supposed to learn music at primary school, where there was a class on recorder (the wooden variety, not the type with transistors and integrated circuits), and I ended up loathing flutes and all wind instruments. I was supposed to learn music theory in high school, and it was almost ten years after I left that I would even listen to it. Now, if I ever get some time, I would even be willing to try to learn guitar...although there are so many other things I'd like to do that I doubt I'll get the time.

I got a copy of THE POOR MAN'S JAMES BOND from Loompanics. Didn't impress me all that much. Mostly reprints of 19th century methods of making fireworks and explosive mixtures. I'm sure John or Sandra could tell you better, and probably safer, means. It was interesting in that it gives more details on how to extract ingredients from common substances. Not that this is needed these days, since there are a whole bunch of common chemicals that can be used to make explosives. When I did the explosives and demolition course at the technical college here I was amazed at what could be produced by someone willing to do a little work.

By the way, I agree with you about offices containing nice people, and boring conversation, but since I'm typing this in the office perhaps I'd better hold those comments until later.

Disregarding the funny bits in Denny Lien's letter (which doesn't leave much) I would like to see some sf/motorcycle/samurai movies. The combination would have appealed enormously to me as a 16 year old, and I'm sort of curious as to what I would think of them now, assuming (the unlikely assumption) that they were well made.

Springer Coulson sounds like a fine person, with the right sort of attitudes





(right does not mean "suited to modern life", for that is often not the case).

On Awards, I've read virtually nothing from those lists. Still trying to catch up from my last trip, if the truth be known.

There is not much that can be said on the topic of reviews; I regard Yandro reviews as buyers guides, and find them very handy, for our tastes in books appear similar.

I was interested in the Dean Grennell comment on a pastiche of the McGee stories "Paint My Coffin Fuschia" by Bob Leman. Do you happen to have any idea of the publisher?

On Ethel namesakes comments on books and your reply, I have long advocated fan-nish house design consisting of hollow exterior walls about 5 feet thick, lined with bookcases, for insulation. Would help keep the interior of the house tidy as well.

Charles Wells says UK quarts and pints are bigger than US ones, but the ounces are nearly the same. Now we know there are 16 US ounces in a pint, and that a US gallon is less than a UK gallon. What I want to see explained is the mathematics that can produce such a result from his conclusion that there are 10 ounces to a UK pint. Now if he had said 20 ounces to a pint...

I don't seem to have any other letters noted for comment, so I'll add my own two bits on the gun laws thing. I have a safe for my pistol now, and I would defy any child to get a hold of a pistol in my house unless that child happens to be competent in the use of cold chisel and sledge hammer, or else familiar with using explosives for cutting, or happens to carry an oxy torch. Even then the guns are unloaded, and the ammo elsewhere. If you really want to get the kid injured, it would be easier to point them at the kitchen and all its sharp objects, or at the laundry and its chemicals.

[[Modify the reading bit to include people who were read to at an early age. I don't recall that I could read before going to school, but I knew there were all sorts of fascinating stories in books. (I was in no hurry to read; I had parents to read to me, so I wasn't missing anything.) // Sounds like "Poor Man's James Bond" might well be useful to authors of primitive-civilization novels; our hero conquers the planet by inventing gunpowder.// No idea of the publisher of the Leman parody, Dean? (If I'd thought, at Midwestcon I could have asked Bob, but he probably wouldn't have known either.) RSC]] [[I didn't learn to read before I went to school, either. In our benighted era, the schools actively discouraged parents from doing any pre-school tutoring. It was supposed to warp the child's nutty-putty little mind and make her harder to instruct; on the theory the child would have to be "broken" of bad habits before "proper" instruction could begin. But I was also read to and knew books were full of good stuff. I had a good first grade teach-

IF THE FACTS PROVE INTRACTABLE  
CHANGE YOUR THEOLOGY!

GOD DOES NOT PLAY  
DICE WITH THE UNIVERSE,  
BUT CHTHULU MIGHT.





er, luckily. Even the kids who came into that school prepared to hate something "sissy" like reading ended up as demon readers and loving it. She was a grandmotherly sort who used a wealth of techniques which were considered innovative when I attended teachers' college twenty years later. Reading, and finding it fun, was the most natural thing in the world under a teacher like that. Too bad her kind is so rare. Bruce, like a lot of fan kids, was thoroughly read to before he could read and could hardly wait to figure out the secret gimmick so he could join the club. To some extent, he got read to after he'd learned to read, during the first grade -- stuff he enjoyed but which was too advanced for him to read quite yet. Soon as he'd mastered four syllables, he was on his own and started reading fine print on cereal boxes and filler squibs in the newspapers, just like all the rest of us. JWC]]

Mary Long, 1338 Crestview Drive, Springfield IL 62702

Say, that Mattoon Fiend sounds fun! At least he didn't do anything (but as it occurs to me, are we sure it's a he?). Will ask Bob Tucker the next time we see him. It sounds the sort of thing that fen invent for fnz, does it not? Also it reminds me of the likes of the panties-pincher who used to go round Camberly (no, that was the Camberley Housewives thing, I'll tell you about that in a moment) -- well, whatever -- pinching women's underwear from their washing-lines. They did catch him in the end, but the police said (quite seriously, I gather) that not many women had come forward to reclaim their undies. The Camberley Housewives was one of those storm-in-a-teapot things, largely, I think, blown up by one of the sensational dailies, to the effect that the bored housewives in Camberley (where my sister lived then, which was of course why it sticks in my mind, as we pulled her leg a bit about it) were enlivening the day by carrying on affairs with the posties, tradesmen, and so on. Led to a lot of jokes about late deliveries of the post, etc. Hmm. I wonder where the Mattoon Fiend got his anesthetic gas? Might be a dentist or a doctor, mayhap?

You were talking about the Terkel books providing an insight into Midwestern attitudes of the last couple of generations, which you thought was pretty good, as you opined that TV is homogenizing attitudes. Now you can write that brilliant article for Y.

Speaking of license plates, did you see about the chap who wanted his revoked because he'd got ones that said GAY, and since he gottem -- this was in one of the 'apolis' towns, but I forget which: Indianapolis, I think -- two blokes had kicked his car about it? Must have been a bit flimsy in the metal, I thought, but maybe they had big boots on. What a shame.

I found the glimpse into the Coulson family history fascinating, I think as much for the vignettes of life with the older Coulson than anything, especially the bit about the ladders. Those gave me vertigo. I suffer from it, a little, though not to excess. But when we were repainting the house last year, I could force myself up to almost the height necessary to reach gutter-level with the paintbrush, but -- try as I might -- I couldn't go any higher, to save my life! So Sam had to do the inverted 'v' shapes at each end of the house. And as for getting onto the roof (as he had to at one point, to get the aerial pushed down), well... Actually, slight vertigo does not affect one too much, unless one happens to be watching the likes of THE EIGER SANCTION, with people falling off mountains, etc. Or (the scene that really had me dizzy) sitting on the top of a rock outcropping some hundreds of feet high, and hardly as wide as our sitting-room, with the camera pulling away in (I suppose) a helicopter and turning round and round and backwards. Yeeks! I feel dizzy thinking about it now.

Cop as a term for both sexes: I always wondered if a story I heard from a policeman in the local steak house (to whom I got talking as we waited behind him for service) was right when he said that the word was an abbreviation of the English term "constable on patrol". It's a nice story, if it's so. I'd never heard it before, have you? (We originally got into conversation because I talked to Sam about the



man's gun, he overheard and turned round and said, 'Ah, English?'...

Roger W. is right. Flat irons are all over the place. I've even seen them as part of the older things in our local Famous-Barr. I've also seen them in the kitchen of the Lincoln house, here in Springfield, which made me feel almost part of history. They are known in Carolina as 'sad irons', but I don't know why. I once saw a play in which the heroine was ironing with one and doing it barehanded. I thought whoever coached her never had to iron with one. The handles got red-hot. We used to use a folded panholder to put round the handle. That was before we got the latest thing, a gas-iron. You never see those nowadays.

Your account of the tomb to be picked reminds me of that episode in ADAM ADAMANT where the hero is wrapped up in bandages and shoved into a coffin, but is discovered 'cos the heroine had photo'd it and noticed the boots poking out the end. That was a good series. Wish they would resurrect it and bring it over here; it starred Gerald Harper. I don't know if you know him (we went on to become the house wife's heartthrob as the title role-holder in 'Hadleigh'), but he has this marvelous voice, which someone described perfectly as being that of an educated crow. Anyhow, the story was, for AA, that -- hmm -- apparently in Victorian times, his lady love, one Louise, had got into cahoots with the villain of the tale and had enabled Adam to be trapped. (This all happened pre-credits, you know). He was frozen and left forever. Years go by, and then someone is breaking ground in London and they find this perfectly preserved man in Victorian dress. So they get him out and rush him to hospital, where he revives and wanders out, into modern-day London. Somewhat dazed, needless to say, he is taken under the wing of a person in jeans and a hat and spends the night at the flat of said person, who, to his horror, next morning, he realises is a woman. Reputation and all that. One Miss Jones (I forget her Christian name). Anyhow, due to his inheriting half of London, he is very wealthy, and lives in a flat atop a multistorey carpark whence he sallies out to do daring deeds, dressed in his old clothes, etc. Miss Jones, needless to say, has fallen hard for him. But he's not interested, still being in love with Louise (long gone, or so he thinks). He also has a butler, who is a sort of latter-day Jeeves. I never missed an episode but the once, and -- of course -- it turned out to be the one which I'd been predicting for a long time, when Louise turns up. Seemingly they'd been frozen and kept alive -- she and the villain -- to the present time, and she seeks out Adam, or vice versa. But you have to keep returning for treatment; evidently the villain was a bit of a mad professor. And she doesn't, in the end, make it in time, so begins to wither away into an old hag. But she says, I am still beautiful to Adam, who of course lies in his teeth and says yes, she is -- and so she dies happy.

I don't think he and Miss Jones ever did get together, but...they don't make 'em like that now. (Thank goodness, says Buck!)

"When I am dead my dearest, sing no sad songs for me" (Christina Rossetti, I think. I only discovered recently that she wrote the hymn 'In the Bleak Midwinter'). Most of the bits I know are from the Victorian poets, of whom I'm rather fond (those and the pre WWII ones are great favourites; a whole world seems to be in them, you know, that's gone -- somehow the work after 1945 never was the same...) Like you, we have several books of poetry, and I can usually find what I want in there. But one that I haven't, is this poem I've been trying to find to give to Emma in St. Louis. It's by Yeats and it mentions a unicorn, and though I've searched high and low, darned if I can find the wretch. Any ideas?

I quite like Chesterton too, which is a taste Sam shares. I think he likes his more Belloc-type things, but I like some of the more serious ones. Which was it wrote the bit about the donkey? I remember mentioning it in the office when I was working in Fleet, and my friend there -- another Georgie -- piped up with the closing lines, you know, the bit about 'Fools, for I still had my hour/one far something hour and sweet/when there was a shouting about my ears/and Palms before my feet' (or some such ...it gets hazy). And I joined in, much to everyone's amazement. Ah, Culture.

Our 'vanity' license plates are free in Illinois. They don't cost any extra. I understand they do cost a bundle in Indian, unless, of course, you're lucky and get



your initials or whatever more or less by accident. Our new plates are SSL 34. In England, there's a trade in plates -- you have to buy the vehicle with the plate you want, then arrange to have the registration numbers switched, from one to the other.

[[But you condensed my idea so well there isn't anything left for an article...//I vividly recall a scene in an otherwise unremarkable Bob Hope movie because it showed (the first time I'd seen it) parachute jumpers from a camera pointed out the airplane window. Hope, of course, "froze" and had to be kicked out by the sergeant, and I don't blame him in the least. I don't even like fast elevators.// I'm not much of a fan of Yeats; anyone else recognize the unicorn poem? RSC]] [[My acrophobia doesn't involve vertigo. I don't get dizzy at all; what I get is a mad desire to jump, which goes into a wild flailing to hang onto something and look away from the looming attraction "down there". Oddly enough, the sensation only occurs in structures rooted to the ground. I don't have it at all in airplanes. Only on high buildings, carnival rides, outside fire escapes, etc. JWC]]

Sam Long, address above

I can just imagine you out on your front lawn with your Gatling gun. I'll bet it'd raise some eyebrows (and other things) if you did have one. When I lived in England I used to paddle up and down the Thames in my canoe, and I'd off pass by the house of a chap who had a landing at the riverside, and flanking the flagpole on the landing were two small brass cannon. I liked that! I don't think he ever fired them tho. Pity.

How about those Jupiter photos? Aren't they magnificent? Really brings out the old sensawonda, at least it does to me.

Talking about remembering snatches of verse, I remember once I was at a sort of songfest and everyone was singing some song, I forget what it was, when the leader modulated in Darktown Strutters' Ball. Soon he and I were the only ones singing, 'cause I dredged it up from the depths of my memory and no one else knew it. No one else had even heard of it! Then again, when I was in high school, my English teacher gave a final exam consisting of 50 poetry quotations to identify by author and work; and, as I had been an avid reader of verse at the time and had picked up a great deal of verse, I got the highest grade in the class by far -- mostly because I recognized snatches of, say, Keats, as characteristic of Keats. Gold ol' Lars Porsen(n)a.

[[ "I'll be down to get you in a taxi, honey/ better be ready 'bout half past eight.// Now, baby, don't be late;// I want to get there when the band starts playin'..." That Darktown Strutters' Ball? I have a record

of it by Vincent Lopez and his Casa Lopez Orchestra (but of course it's racist so I never play it...) RSC]] [[I agree with May Anderson re the Jupiter photos and the whole outward bound movement of our species: What a wonderful time to have been born in, and be witness to -- with enough communications and overview ability that we can grasp at least some of the significance of what is happening out there, unlike



Time Marches on...



people during the previous big breakout of discovery in the 15th-16th Centuries, when few if any quite realized it was a breakthrough. JWC]]

Steve McDonald, c/o Alcan Jamaica Co., Kirkvine Works P.O. Manchester, Jamaica, West Indies

Happy new year to you too; hope your snow's good fun (ho). We just had our annual native revolt, about which ~~Michael Manley~~ Michael Manley keeps claiming that the whole mess was meant to overthrow the PNP government.

Conveniently forgetting that the

PNP, led by M. Manley, once staged a similar road-blocking demonstration back in 1968, when the PNP and supporters lay down its burden and body -- sort of a lie-down demo. We even had things happen up here in sleepy Mandeville; I gather a few people were in favor of blowing up a gas station, but never got around to it. Anyway, charges and countercharges are flying like custard pies at Ted White.

Oh yah: I notice they referred to SUPERMAN in Omni as SF. I suppose they can't tell demi-gods from brick walls, even if Vincent Camby can. (Funnily enough, but the original Superman, as created by Siegel and Schuster, was SF, with some exaggerations, although sticking pretty close to fact at that time. If I have it right, they also established super-senses for their Kryptonians, which, I guess, makes the X-ray vision clairvoyance, and the heat vision a pyropsychic ability, etc.) The movies is supposed to be rather mild and weary. The actor playing the part looks right, though, and the photos I've seen so far seem fair (though I did see a trace of matting line on a flying shot.) I'll probably see it, just as I'll probably see the BATTLESTAR GALACTICA ('They describe my role as a sort of cowboy boss in space' saith L. Greene) flick in the UK. They'll probably have it at Seacon. The one I wish they'd handled right is DR STRANGE, which is one of the few Marvel comics that need a thoughtful treatment to work at all (whereas SPIDERMAN and THE HULK can both be reduced to wham-bam without losing anything, nature of the superhero and all that aside.) The one I'm waiting for is CONAN -- I wish I'd kept the copy of Time Out with the interview with Arnold Schwarzenegger, in which he blithely announced, 'This is going to be a serious science fiction movie, just like STAR WARS was...' 'Use The Force, Conan!' What, Conan sticking it to Darth Vader? Thoth-Amon with a defective air conditioner in his horns?

Here I am again, with Yandro: so you're a pulp hero, by damn. It figures, it figures. (Actually, I just finished the rewrite of HARLEQUIN; you're a 'smallish, somewhat ascetic' tech. sub-commander in charge of geometrodynamic relocation units.) I somehow never thought of pigs, though, as being pulp villain material...

Like the SPACECRAFT book, though; several of the covers are off PERRY RHODAN books (CUTLASS, MORAY EEL), some from BEFORE THE GOLDEN AGE (Pt 1: SKYBASE; pt 2: HORNET), some off various w/known books: TRITON (the PIRAHNA), several Stableford 'Grainger' novels (the INTERSTELLAR QUEEN: the purple item is a slightly redone cover for HALCYON DRIFT; they left out the one for RHAPSODY IN BLACK; I assume the monster wheelie is for THE FENRIS DEVICE, RESTOREE (Miami Spaceport), SKYFALL (SKYMASTER), the original Orbit pt 2 of BEFORE THE GOLDEN AGE (K34 BEE), DECISION AT DOONA (ASTROLAB), A HOLE IN SPACE (OBJECT #1, BARNARD'S STAR. Mostly covered from Orbit





and Corgi books: Foss has Panther tied up, though Peter Jones sneaks in an excellent cover now and then (Mike Farren's trilogy for Mayflower, for example, which included a Jones cover having a maddened Robby the Robot about to demolish a superman). (Well all three covers were Jones covers, all symbolic, et. al.)

OK, man, now you got competition! Sydney Weinberg of Bantam just made me a respectable offer for THE JANUS SYNDROME (for a 22 year old no hope, it's good). On top of this, Victoria Schochet of Berkley wrote me to say I got passed by one editor and have to pass the next with FUTURESONGS (co-editors are a nuisance). They also have HARLEQUIN, so... Anyway, with that in mind, I've now packed in most of the short stories; I want to complete the novel for Kelly Freas before Season, and, if possible, a couple of other things (mayhap including something under a pseudonym, perhaps for Zebra -- one of those John Carter/Dray Prescott things, with a black hero and a female cover-author...) The last short piece I'll be doing for a while is a novella for Stan Schmidt that keeps getting interrupted, damn thing.

Anyhow, now will you believe the kid's a threat? I'm all over your territory now. (In terms of novels, I should soon pass Scott Card -- he's three up so far as I know, I'm one and a half). I doubt you'd want to chase me on the poetry, however, would you?

I just got the last Yandro, wagh! I appreciated the bit from Al Sirois -- until I was told Bantam wanted JANUS, I was terrified of the thought of entering the SFWA room at Season. Now I have three stories, a novel, and a whole shitload of poetry down, wahl... Forget it. I think I've turned professional for sure, anyway. I'm not doing any more than usual, but all my time seems to have slipped away. Ghod knows where, perhaps I'm sleeping too much? I'm now getting up in the morning. Wowie.

Yeh, the British pb style was getting pretty boring -- Foss was fabulous the first fifty times, but now he's damn boring. Fortunately the trend seems to be away from the spaceships and back to people -- several of the pbs I've been picking up have had people or aliens on the covers -- Poul Anderson's SHIELD and PLANET OF NO RETURN (Universal) and Larry Niven's WORLD OF PTAVVS (Orbit), plus two of the Flash Gordon adaptations. The British people-covers are usually interesting for the quality; Melvyn and Peter Jones are both pretty good. Analog's machine covers tended to be a bit too plastic -- Schomburg's especially. Fortunately, Schmidt seems to be bringing back humanism, though without really brilliant artists as yet. Stan's also trying to develop more interesting writers -- he's certainly sharper than Bova was, and seems to be taking time to develop a working relationship with his writers.

As for Yandro, Blimey. Of course I'm trying to devolve your sense of wonder, and no, I don't believe in canals on Mars (but when it comes to flying saucers under the Earth, well, that's a different matter entirely). My mother didn't appreciate the joke on the gooseberry tart; unfortunately. The editorial obituary on your father was just right; I daren't say more, as this is an area where I feel unstable (when my grandfather died some time back, I was hardly affected; I've never been able to understand that).

I see from Locus that the boom is starting to bust -- Ace just cut back their production, Dale went to hell, and several other places are sliding back.

I was under the impression it was Jim Starlin who got hold of the DR STRANGE book, along with people like Frank Brunner and Gene Colan. I always remember Steranko from the NICK FURY book (there's one I'd like to see done as a tv movie, or a full-length theater flick: America's best answer to James Bond.)

I am an Herbangelist High Priest. Serious? DEATH TO KOWTOWERS TO THE GREAT SPIDER!!!! REND ALL ROSCITES!!!! DUFF DUFFERS!!!!

[[Well, now I have a good reason for hoping HARLEQUIN gets published.//

Ted was fulfilling a science fiction tradition and leaving not with a bang but with a whimper. As a reader, I wish he was back; I haven't seen such a shoddy publication as Bernhard's versions of Amazing and Fantastic since the 1953 boom. (The magazine I was recalling at Mid-



westcon, Ted, was Space Science Fiction, 2 issues of which were published in 1956 with Lyle Kenyon Engel as Editorial Director. Companion mag was Tales of the Frightened. Actually, now that I get them out and look at them, they look better than the current Amazing and Fantastic -- though their fiction was much worse. (This Space is not to be confused with the very good Space Science Fiction, edited by Lester del Rey, or the pulp Space Stories.) // I don't sell poetry; I just let it be turned into filksongs and inspire novels. RSC]]

Sandra Miesel, 8744 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis IN 46240

Don't know if you were watching 60 MINUTES Sunday before last but they ran an exposé of vanity presses that was most painful to watch. But who in the legitimate industry did they get to comment? Scott Meredith of all people, piously denouncing those who prey on unwary amateurs.

Ayr-Way is allotting two slots to Destinies this issue, which indicates they expect to sell many copies. But would you believe Spider Robinson gushes all over THE LOST TRAVELLER, the motorcycle sf Western which you were describing to us. I really don't understand how he got this reputation for being a great reviewer. Has no discrimination.

The kids were home Monday and spent the day building and excavating tombs of toy mice, the Pharoah Mousestem V et al. (Naturally Chirp had to construct the pyramid of the Mouse Queen of Queens.) Quite elaborate things, too: multiple burial chambers, storerooms of jewels, guardian goddesses (Fisher-Price peg people), hieroglyphics. But I felt as if I were living in a necropolis.

But I can remembering constructing a toy version of Salammbo's garden. Nothing to top the preschool girl we saw on a California beach building not a sand castle but a Bronze Age hill fort. Coincidence, surely?

Let me be the first to tell you that both of you are considered moderately important sf writers according to a list made up by a British publisher. They have 550 names arranged in three categories of importance and some of the choices are droll. Christopher Priest in the most important category, along with Heinlein, Asimov, etc. The board of advisors is very left-academic, so I'm more surprised at how sound most of it is. The one curious omission is Vonda McIntyre. You must look at this thing sometime. The reason I got it is that they were inviting me to write critical overview essays on my favorites for a massive reference work that won't appear for two more years, to be published by St. Martin's Press in this country: TWENTIETH CENTURY SF WRITERS. Would you be terribly disappointed if I don't volunteer to write about you? I've got the credentials to handle various people, but the closeness of the friendship would be sort of discomfoting. All I'm really going to do is rework old articles such as the Gregg Press introductions.

Mike Glycer's newszine this month contains a letter from Jack Chalker's wife commenting on the nasty unfriendliness of Midwestern fans. Maybe she was only getting the backwash of being in his company? I've always thought we were a convivial lot. Issue also hints at the Louisville people's side of the NAC controversy.

After months of trying, Chilton has brought Roger Elwood to heel by withholding his royalties from MANY WORLDS OF POUL ANDERSON until he re-negotiates the contract with Patrick McGuire and me. (The term of the original contract had run out but the pb edition was still being issued.) Roger actually called them, but whether he'll keep his promise to put the agreement in writing is another question.

[[Assuming this project ever gets anywhere, I'll expect to find my moderately important literary contributions examined by Jessica Salmonson. (Linda Bushyager? Redd Boggs? Bill Bridget? You know, it might be fun...)]/I wouldn't know Jack Chalker's wife if I saw her, but I don't know if this is a point for or against Midwest fandom in her viewpoint.]]



Derek Nelson, 732 Eglinton Ave, E, Toronto, Ontario M4G 2K7 Canada

Gee, in Rhodesia I'm a liberal. My first night here I tried for a drink in the original Meikles, 'cross town, and eh place was crammed. Also there was a briefcase sitting there that nobody claimed, and my Ulster experience makes me leery of any such packages in a terrorist war. So I went downstairs to the Msasa bar (named after tree). Upstairs everyone was white, downstairs black. I got strange looks, but the beer was 27 cents instead of 36 up top.

A couple of blacks bought me beers and eventually I ended up totally sauced with one guy in the seedier part of town. Apparently Rhodesian whites never mix socially with blacks (except at the upper levels, like university and gov't), and vice-versa.

Since then, I've also got pissed with several Rhodesian whites. Some are "taking the gap" (leaving because of the war (it's the more liberal who are fleeing, interestingly)). Some are devoutly committed to a Rhodesian way of life that they think (hope) a black gov't resulting from the internal settlement won't upset.

The one thing blacks have made clear to me is that they resent none of your American social humiliation or racism, or even wealth, but they don't get equal pay for equal work. A good point.

One other thing is sanctions. I think they were good for Rhodesia. Everything in the hotel is made locally (barring tv parts and one or two electronic items). And it's good. As the war heats up, of course, sanctions will hurt, partly through diversion of funds from necessary imports.

If the Rhodesians had 1/100th of US equipment that went into Vietnam the terrorists would be out of action for five years. I think they're fighting the whole bush war with 14 Hueys they got somewhere and French Alouettes (a couple dozen?).

With all that said, I think Rhodesia is doomed. Except for a little help from South Africa (a country most told me they didn't care for), they're alone. The US and Britain want Nkomo in power, as does Russia. Mugabwe is doomed. The Rhodesian soldiers tell me Nkomo's boys slaughter them on sight out in the T.T.Ls (Total Trust Lands).

It's too bad. They don't seem to have the race hate here of the northern US or (Rhodesians tell me) that exists in South Africa. The country is prosperous, healthy, and beautiful. (This is rainy season -- 29 degrees C, one hour of rain in 5 days, although it can rain for a week at a time.)

Again, some week-old impressions of a country, (which is hardly a fair way to judge it, but I'm going to anyway). South Africa:

This is America down here. Joburg is New York, with less slums but equal violence and similar, if lesser, sophistication. South Africans are open, individualistic, volatile, violent, and racist, just like Americans (again assuming the ability to characterize a whole people). I wouldn't want to be a black trying to get a drink

in a few of the bars I've been to, for example. By the same token, I'm not about to go into black bars here. In Rhodesia it was easy. Here it's dangerous. Every night someone is mugged and/or murdered.

S.A. whites don't like blacks, don't trust them, and consider them primitives. I'm convinced that one-man, one-vote will precipitate a racial holocaust here. Those who pay

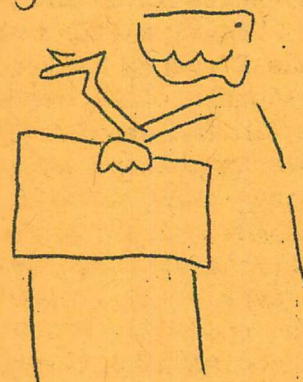




90 percent of the taxes are not going to go to give power to those who pay 1 percent. Of course, apartheid will probably produce the same result -- a racial war. But this isn't Rhodesia, where multi-racialism has a chance, but where the country is likely doomed for economic reasons.

who has read the assignment?

Really read the assignment?



Back home: I'm sitting here watching the Paper Tiger (formerly the Peanut King) wring his hands at China's hammering North Vietnam and at North Vietnam's hammering Cambodia. Not nice. Slap on the wrist. Naughty, naughty. The Communists, of course, laugh at such nonsense. They believe in guns.

Not that I care when Communist regimes attack other Communist regimes. A president with a few guts and brains would say "this comes of selling out our allies in Indochina; but since we did then let's not get hypocritical about war. It is the nature of Communist regimes to launch wars of conquest. Let the worst man win."

Judging by American tv, that won't happen. The media continue to be sympathetic to North Vietnam. Of course, the refugees are described as fleeing Chinese aggression. When the NVA rolled over the South Vietnamese border three times in a decade the refugees were supposed to be fleeing American bombing. (Like the boat people.)

And why is it China's invasion is called an invasion, but North Vietnam's never was? And even now, when North Vietnam is accused of conquering Cambodia, why does no one say boo-all about Hanoi's conquest of Laos? The reason is obvious. Laos wasn't Red -- so you can conquer and carry out genocide against the people (esp. the Meos) and no one cares. Attack another Commie regime, though...

Since the US listened to Fulbright and ceased to be world policeman the result has been the collapse of world order, unless you want to call Russia's incredible expansion since then "order".

For year after year I was told by teachers, students, media, and acquaintances (my friends ignored my obsessions) that if only America departed there would be peace in Indochina.

Where are you now, Jane Fonda, Michael Maclear, etc.?

Enough.

I have two comments about harp seals, since Canada is the main target of the protestors. First, the evidence I've seen is that the herds are healthier, bigger, and less threatened by extinction today than at any time in the century. Convince me otherwise (as with whales, for example), and I'll agree to ban or restrict the hunt. I've seen no such evidence. Otherwise, like any other animal, the main function of seals is to improve human life (and seal coats are no less worthy of wearing than any other animal skin). Secondly, I'm totally cynical about the protestors like Brian Davies, who're making a bundle off the "poor helpless pups" propaganda. Leg traps for beaver or fox are far more cruel than the head-bashing that knocks off the seal pup. But there ain't the bucks in protesting it.

Anyway, I just wanted to finish my comments on Africa, now that I've recovered from the shock of landing in temperatures 125 degrees lower than where I left. (Not quite true, but the Tuesday before I flew out Capetown was 103 degrees and the week after I was back Toronto was 20 below zero F. The day I landed in Toronto, though, it was 36 degree F., thank God, since I sold my winter overcoat to the head porter at the Monomatapa in Salisbury. It was too heavy to cart around.)

On balance, I didn't like Joburg or Durban. My South Africa starts at Port Elizabeth, but I think is restricted to the Capetown area. Rephrase. Durban is okay; it's just the veldt and the American aspect I didn't much care for. Capetown



is African -- unique. Joburg is New York. Durban Miami.

Went to Rorke's Drift. The battle site is a good mile from the ford, and the Zulus hill to the mission rear is damned close. This is the 100th anniversary of RD and Ish, but due to gas situation couldn't quite make Ish. Upset me no end.

The Zulus and the whites keep talking about no recriminations in the papers, but the Zulu articles I read essentially spoke in terms of revenge and black power.

I finally figured out the segregation thing. Much is still on the books, but no one enforces it any more, depending where one is and what you're talking about. In Joburg buses remain segregated, in Capetown and Durban they aren't. In Port Elizabeth the upper deck is for non-whites, the lower for whites, but in fact anyone can sit where they want. The only aspects of life that remain totally segregated are toilet facilities (which is a white hang-up from the days when blacks didn't know what a toilet was), living areas (which is the only area whites will insist on -- for security reasons), and state-supported education (which no color seems to want integrated, as opposed to privately-owned schools). (Also all but new booze stores, but that's because of their physical construction with two entrances, etc. Neighborhood pubs are segregated; expensive ones aren't. Some beaches are integrated now, some aren't. No benches are segregated. Many "average" hotels (where I stayed) had international (non-racial) status, although others remain segregated; I don't know the percentages.

Basically I'd say the Afrikaaners are serious about ending racial discrimination except in housing and schools. They are also serious about giving political input to Asians and Coloreds. But they are still trying to find a way to exclude the urban black from any share of power, and they haven't yet agreed to the obvious necessity to make the Homelands into single geographic units at independence.

"Political input" of course doesn't mean control. That would still reside with the Afrikaaners (not the whites, mind you, since the English have no more say about government decisions than the blacks).

((Addition: Joburg rail station remains totally segregated. Capetown's is desegregated. Both are huge.))

In other words, the place is in a state of flux, excepting one thing every white is agreed upon (I can't speak for non-whites, except one Asian who told me the same): that they won't accept one-man one-vote where it means they'll be ruled by blacks.

Public opinion polls show whites will overwhelmingly agree to equal pay for equal work, but the one thing about South Africa I noticed is that no one seems to work very hard, regardless of their color. The only exception I ran into was a pizza parlor in Capetown run by an English-born bird who made her staff -- white waitresses, blacks in back) hustle. She told me that the day equal pay for equal work becomes law she'll hire nothing but white students. In theory eating establishments are segregated; in practice they aren't.

Three general comments on race as I observed it or heard it: Asians in Natal are 60 percent Dravidian Hindu from Madras in origins, and very black, and 40 percent light-skinned Muslims from Pakistan. If the Dravidian I had a long talk with is any example they don't like each other very much. Coloreds don't really appear until one hits Cape Colony. In Capetown there's Coloreds who look like American blacks (in fact, there are Afrikaaners who look like American blacks -- the story is 7 percent of the Afrikaans blood flow is non-white in origin, as compared to 33 percent of the American black's being white); a larger number, however, are Muslim Malays who stick largely to themselves. Most fishermen are Coloreds.

But in the town of Motagu Island I saw the ugliest race of people I've ever seen in my life. Small, almost saffron-black skinned; they're hard to describe. They chattered continually, and actually struck one as baboon-like in looks. I gather they're close to pure Hottentot and are considered Coloreds. If true, one can understand how the line about blacks being ape-like or baboons arose. Nobody would apply a comment like that to a Zulu.

And the Zulu, yes. If the whites ever lose power, it's the Zulu who will replace them. They have pride, dignity, and looks like none of the other blacks I ran across



in South Africa. Of all the colors of Africa, it was the Zulu, and the second to fourth generation white Rhodesians, who impressed me most.

I met one guy with a gimp leg, an artist, who made me some carvings in stinkwood with a pen knife as I sat there. He was good. He wouldn't talk social concerns or politics, though. (And in Soweto there's an incredible little place for witchdoctors that includes some suburb art on kراسي walls. Again a Zulu. Also sculptures.)

Slight interruption. I just saw the Africans series on PBS about Soweto. Many facts wrong -- like speaking of segregated facilities that aren't (airports, even), plus a number of interpretations I disagree with, but are probably a legit black viewpoint. My basic objection is that never once did they mention Soweto's worst problem: that white medicine and white sanitation ended the old death rate and so has produced a population explosion that's straining the place at the seams. I can think of a lot of people in Toronto, including myself, who'd like a Soweto-style bungalow with its own plot of land. The one thing the program didn't criticize was the prevalence of outdoor plumbing in the place, preferring instead to concentrate on shortage of electricity, which won't exist by 1980. As far as the material side goes, the program said "they know they're better off, but it's only whetted their appetite for more." As in all history, revolutions only occur when you take the screws off and improve material benefits!

Anyone who criticizes South Africa for what it's done to non-white pride and dignity, OK, that's fair, as is black rage and desire for revenge, power, or whatever. But they can't be stomped on from a materialistic viewpoint, since it's white taxes that built Soweto to replace the disease-ridden shantytowns that were there before.

To another topic. Juanita: in my columns I make a deliberate point of never using "he" to describe both male and female, tending to use words like "person" or "you" or whatever I can twist into shape instead. If necessary I upset editors by using "he or she" as a phrase. While it works, it's clumsy and I wish the language wasn't so full of double meanings.

Dr. Who Appreciations Society? My God. Sign me up. It takes a lot for me to miss a Dr. Who episode when it appears on our local educational television. That it appears there says a lot for educational tv (it's run by the province). What says even more is that this year Judy Merrill is doing the commentary (which, I guess, is the justification for the educational bit). I turn it off as soon as she starts. Aside from disagreeing with everything she's ever said, I can't stand the funny way she reads the teleprompter, like a frog staring sideways.

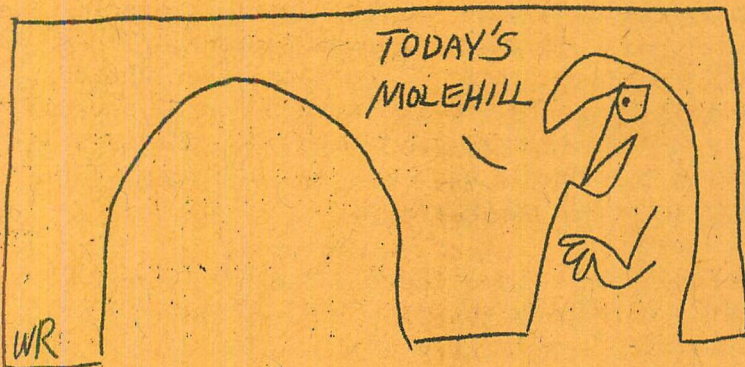
Incidentally, I carried DARK PRIESTESS (and a dozen other books, including Vol. 3 in RIVERWORLD, THE TRAIL OF THE FOX, etc.) over both Rhodesia and South Africa. Nobody cared, not even Customs. (On the other hand, South African Immigration didn't want to let me in at all, or for that matter out. They were upset at my profession (journalist) and even more at my purpose of visit (mainly holiday). Fortunately I cleared it with their embassy here before I went overseas, so someone had my name on file somewhere. I did an article on bilingualism when I was there. Also some travel stuff.

Oh, one other point about South Africa. There's a statistic kicked around about 13 or 17 percent of the population owning 87 or 83 percent of the land, and how that's unfair, and how blacks only want their "fair share".

That line is used often in South African newspapers by black writers, though none ever defines fair share. A much more useful statistic is that whites have 55 percent of the arable land and blacks 45 percent. Now that can be argued, for it brings one down to the basic question of whether ownership or use is or should be the major factor. And whether use should be Western cash, crop, scientific, exploitive, or African subsistence, under-utilized.

Speaking of TV Ontario, our educational network, it's been running the 7-part(?) series called THE VOYAGE OF CHARLES DARWIN. (I think it's a Time-Life and Australian Broadcasting collaboration, but I only scan the credits.) It is by far the most entertaining thing I've seen on television that I can remember. Even better than Dr. Who.





[[I thought Y readers might appreciate some eyewitness on Africa. I did. RSC]]

John Robinson, Box 33, Schenectady NY 12301

I've been out of fanzines for over a year and am just getting back in. I've been busy with The SF Line and my TV show "Fiawol", or It Seemed The Fanish Thing To Do". I'll be dropping the TV part in about a month and am getting my mimeo fixed so as to return to

fanpublishing.

The SF Line has completed its first year with an average (currently) of about 300 calls per week. I put on 3-4 1/2 minute tapes, two per week, and wait for the response. Since there's no obligation on the part of callers it works out to about a letter per week in response. That's what happens when all the audience is required to do is call. Most responses have been in reply to my contests: Can You Top This Apccalypse, in which contestants sent in stories of up to 500 words in which they destroyed real estate or visible monuments and S.O.W.A.T. (The Society For Observation Of Weird Aerial Things) in which contestants send in accounts of strange encounters of the whatever number kind.

Most of what goes out over the SF Line or on "Fiawol" is news, views, and reviews from the worlds of science fiction, fantasy, and popular culture, plus notes and notices on Special Interest Hobby Groups (wargamers, comic collectors, and the Society for Creative Anachronism, etc.) "Fiawol" adds visual information -- I do a lot of xeroxing and add some line drawings. Oh yes, the reason Fanish only has one 'N' is that the character generator, or Titler Machine, will only print 38 characters per line and it takes a line to print the entire sub-title. I've done 19 tapes so far. Each tape consists of five 5-minute segments. The tape is run in its entirety outside Schenectady (on the Albany, Rensselaer and Delmar Cable Systems). In Schenectady I appear three time per day on weekdays so as to reach the largest possible audience. I have no idea as to how many people see me on TV, but sometimes people I work with, or wargamers, or someone on the street, will tell me that they've seen me. I've received a few letters, damned few letters, as well.

I'm hoping that The SF Line will significantly build an attendance at the four conventions in Albany this year (2 SF cons, 1 wargamers, 1 comic book convention). Most of the letters I receive tell me that I've made someone realize that they, and their friend, are not alone in their interests, that there's someone else interested in whatever they are interested in within a thousand miles.

I'm waiting to hear that there's another telephcnezine somewhere in North America. I suspect it will turn up in one of the larger cities -- but not New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles, because of the potential for kooks tying up the lines so new fans can't get in -- such as Baltimore, Toronto, Detroit, San Francisco, etc. It may come from a college club, but I suspect it will probably be an up-and-coming bookstore that believes that the telephone is superior to newspaper advertising. Any such bookstore could recruit fans and readers to do reviews of up to 3 minutes and then add a one-minute plug for their store in the form of announcements of new arrivals and sales. As long as the sales pitches are shorter than the fan/reader reviews the method should work in any city over 500,000, particularly over a million.

And why aren't fans flocking to Public Access TV? The channels are open in many areas (6 cable systems in Toronto). The Supreme Court recently decided that cable owners aren't required to provide Public Access, so the survival of Public Access depends on the Public coming in and using whatever channels exist or they'll be taken over by the all-night movie from Atlanta or, worse, yet, re-re-re-runs of THE GONG



SHOW]

Fans who don't have large established organizations should consider Public Access for recruitment. It beats spreading flyers in the community at large. And fledgling artists will find outlets where Public Access has The Wheel to display their work for as much as an hour per day, divided up in several second bursts. I have a card on now that shows an alien zapping out at the camera. Caption: "Eat Photons, Terran Scum! Fiawol. Weekdays on Channel 16." It's on the screen for 12 seconds at a time. That works out to an hour daily on Saturdays and Sundays. Who sees it? I don't know, but I figure it must come as a sudden surprise. Any aspiring Video Artists out there with a talent for line drawings on 3x5 cards?

[[So you're the culprit who is responsible for all these SRO conventions lately! Personally, I don't want to recruit any more fans (except very selectively). RSC]]

Joe Sanders, Lakeland Community College, Mentor OH 44060

Teaching poetry in the public schools: I've been visiting three third-grade classes one afternoon each week this year, spending about half an hour with each class. Fascinating. One thing that surprised me was how much of conventional word formulas the kids had absorbed; it takes time to loosen up their language. But they can do remarkable, lively work. You can't expect technical mastery from kids of that age, and if you push for that you might turn them off -- but they do some difficult things (such as haiku) extremely well.

The best books I've seen on this subject are by Kenneth Koch, (the poet, whose teaching poetry in elementary classes resulted in the books WISHES, LIES, AND DREAMS, and ROSE, WHERE DID YOU GET THAT RED? Koch likes tough projects; his latest book dealt with teaching poetry in a nursing home; I NEVER TOLD ANY BODY.

Mary Schaub, Box 218 c/o C.S. Schaub, Apex NC 27502

I want to be the very first to give you the proper pin-yin version for the name of Tibet in the new orthography (another thing I'm sure you've been pining for). You may have seen some of the news items on how the mainland Chinese are trying to get foreigners to follow one system of spelling for transliterating from Chinese to whatever, and "Pinyin" is the new system. We shall one day presumably be saying "Beijing" instead of Peking, and, ta-ta! Tibet becomes "Xizang." The X is pronounced "sh", by the way. Canton (which ought to be left that simple) becomes "Guangzhou," with the "zh" being pronounced as a "j". Poor Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping (who has enough troubles, one would think, having to cope with a Texas rodeo and barbecue) finds himself now "Den Xiaping." Map-makers, as you would expect, are groaning, and the State Dept (predictably) is waffling, using Pinyin for some things and not for others. Now is the time for us to seek a treaty defining borders; it would provide work for the next several generations of diplomats!

[[I say if people go around saying "Xizang," sooner or later we'll get a lightning bolt and this husky Chinese in yellow tights with a big red "X" on the chest and a red cape will appear. (Actually, I suppose I could stand him, but when they get around to the dog -- can you imagine a super Pekinese?) RSC]] [[Inevitable problem, I suppose, when you work from a character language to alphabetics. I wish the mainland Chinese well. Feminists could warn them changing old habits, even for valid reasons,

HARRY WARNER JR JUST  
DRANK MIKE GLUCKSOHN  
UNDER THE TABLE ON  
THE 18th ROUND. PASS  
IT ON!





is not a quick or easy task. Maybe it's an impossible one. JWC]]

Susan Schwartz, D 206 University Park, Uptown Road, Ithaca NY 14850

I've always said I like revisions, but I guess I don't like 'em that much...not after rewriting one article three times and then sending it out -- to be told to re-write it again. They accepted it, a dreadfully specialized monstrosity on the Augustinian nature of Geoffrey of Monmouth which, if I'm lucky, maybe two thousand people will ever read (it made it into a very good journal, so two thousand's a lot!), so that's over until I read galleys. It's the sort of creepy things where they literally go over your footnotes to make sure that the Latin is typed straight. Why I'm leaving academia, reason number eighty. I loved your story about the McCarthy-era academics. I wish I had one as good. My experience is limited to eyeballing senior types who are congratulating themselves in my presence about trying to look for "qualified women and minorities" and saying sweetly "offer them jobs." Sputter, sputter about qualifications. Nuts! They're after spiritual sons...part of their god-complex.

I'll give you an example. I'm ego-involved in it, so, if I show any bad manners, blame it on the fact that the MS under discussion was my own precious child EXILES. (I get very protective about MSS and my cat. Possibly also my wardrobe. The rest I don't care much about.) I was having dinner with a friend in the French department. Now, everything academics are, French academics are more of: cubed, squared, and raised to the n-th. Their prose is more obscure, their interests more arcane, and if all professors are fussy, they're nuts. The problem being, I think, that so many resent their birth in the USA; a kinder fate, perhaps, might have made them boulevardiers or existentialists. This woman, however, I like. I like her kids, too -- smart ones who can talk about ballet and STAR WARS between bites of strawberries. So I was telling her about my plot complications.

All of a sudden she let out a hoot. "You're not," she said, "going to work out a love story between A & B?" (Two of my characters who truly hate one another's guts at the beginning of the story.) Now, of course, I planned to -- and did -- just that, but I like to think that the way I did it... OK, OK, you've heard it before. I blinked at this woman and started explaining. She said I was a romantic. I am, of course. But when she said it, why did it sound so...primitive? It is not analogous to messing up the rug.

I gave the matter some thought. The difference between academics reading (and writing) and SF reading and writing is that if academics catch you at a good old trick, they feel superior, and if fans do, we feel great. Most academics are absolutely certain (those who don't read sf) that only the existence of it and TV keep students from reading Samuel Johnson and John Milton. They're wrong.

There has been a "no nuke" table at the student union and I've been reading all their information and screaming "that isn't an argument." I know just enough of syllogisms to detect a rotten one and penetrate rotten ones deliberately. Today a young man told me that radiation gave you cancer and cancer killed you. Tooth X-rays, I asked innocently. He huffed and told me that people could just not get ego-involved with their teeth and instead get false ones. I countered with some mendacious nonsense about dying from secondary infections from abscesses, just to be difficult. How I wish I could be "agin' sin", but I'm not. Buck's arguments all make terrific sense to me: there used to be strip mines down near where I was born. People here are very big on solar energy, too. Of course, there's little sun in Ithaca. My apartment complex, with its flat black roofs, would be good for solar heat, but it wouldn't pay for itself in time. Unlike my students (whose parents earn an average of \$40,000 per year: not all, but enough do), I think my landlord has a right to a just profit...on the days I don't have to pay rent. On the days I do...

Our sociology department has been advising students to evacuate. I think it's irresponsible. I've been listening to radio debates; maybe we need a John Galt, though not fifty pages of him. While I'm no Randist, Ithaca reminds me of Starnesville. Around here, they don't know whether they're anarchist socialists or something



vague, or whether they're rabid John Wayners.

As David Gerrold once remarked in an otherwise unremarkable preface to a book I didn't much like (Kathleen Sky's VULCAN, and my apologies if she's a friend), the problem with housecleaning is that you have to do it all over again six months from now. I'm facing that. For myself, I don't really care. My closest friends realize that given a choice between dinner on the table and the typewriter, we eat on trays on the floor. And as for the rest, mostly I don't invite 'em, and if I do, it's so I have to clean up.

[[Susan had some funnier stories about academics, but considering that Yandro shows up in strange places I decided not to publish them.// I note in Parade that Dr. Spock is saying he's against both nuclear energy and coal and in favor of wind and sun power. Said he built a solar house in the Ozarks and it worked very well. He doesn't bother to explain how this is going to help the people in apartment buildings in New York, of course, mainly because he can't. In the near future, cities are either going to rely on nuclear power or they are going to have a lot of brownouts. (Or both...) And I liked Dick Gregory saying he won't eat solid food until all nuclear plants are abolished -- if he has an electric stove, he won't eat solid foods afterward, either. All the spokesmen for solar power seem to have country estates somewhere.RSC]]

Al Sirois, 550 Dixwell Ave., New Haven CT 06511

Seeing as how it's just after Boskone again, I guess it's time for my yearly loc to Yandro. By the way, you really should date your locs...the one of mine in #246 could be taken to refer to this past Boskone, #16, instead of #15 in 1978. Any other Boskone attendees in the audience might wonder why they didn't hear anything about a SFWA meeting or an ASFA meeting at Boskone #16. For good reason, too; there were none! Don't ask me why there wasn't a SFWA meeting. And as far as ASFA (and to answer your question in the loccol), well, nah nah hey hey kiss it goodbye! The following exchange between Freff and myself at Boskone 16 sums up ASFA:

Freff: (approaching me near the elevators in the lobb): I see you have it prominently displayed.

Me: Huh?

Freff: Your SFWA button. (Said button holds my knapsack together.)

Me: (Figuring out what he means): Oh, yeah. Now all we need is an ASFA button.

Freff: Now all we need...

Me & Freff: is an ASFA!

So much for that. I still think it would be a good idea, because it seems to me that sf artists (and commercial artists in general) often get the short end of the stick. Usually, unless they sign their work prominently, they don't even get a credit for the art unless there's a small line of type inside the book under the list of available titles or some such. Winning a Hugo for sf art doesn't seem to do nearly as much, monetarily, for an artist as a Hugo does for a writer. I mean, it may be romantic to non-artists to think of real artists starving in a garret, but fuck that shit, as it were. Besides, I only ever knew one artist who lived in a garret, and he was a rich Yale student with all kinds of neat stuff up there. So much for stereotypes.

From my dealings with local artists' groups (non-sf) I can tell you that artists as a group have their collective financial head up their collective posterior. Attitude copping is common. I guess that goes with the territory. Annoying, though. But I still like to write and draw, so I guess I'll keep on.

Actually, you know, I think that if Rick Sternbach had stayed here on the East Coast and kept up with his (with the help of Asenath) efforts to get ASFA rolling, it would still be with us today. But he went to California, and ASFA fell apart. It says a lot for Rick, and not much for the rest of us.

I have to admit that I've been following the discussion of gun control in Yandro



for what, years now? with something of disinterest. But as I grow older and deal with the facts of marriage and family and urban life, I'm beginning to have more definite opinions on the matter. It seems to me that regulation of gun ownership (whatever that might mean...or entail) won't work. Let's face it, all that will happen is that I won't get a gun, but a criminal will. After all, guns have been hand-made before...and seems to me I've seen things called zip-guns, too. If some chump really wants a gun, he'll get one, whether my law says he can have one or not. A criminal is a criminal, right? They live in a different reality from us "conformists". (I refer you to a very interesting article in the March '79 issue of Human Nature magazine: "World of the Career Criminal" by Frank Schmalleggr.)

What really got me to thinking about guns was something else, though. Linda and the kids and I went to a Halloween party given by the local sf club, and when we got back home, we found that our apartment (on the first floor of an older house) had been broken into. The burglars got away with two portable TVs, which isn't really so bad. I mean, if they'd taken my stereo I would have been livid; I'm fairly sure they were actually in the house when we got there, but as they heard us come in they split. If we'd been away overnight, I'm sure that my stereo (as well as whatever else struck their rotten little fancies) would have been gone.

As it happened, they missed the third TV, which, not being in such great shape, was sitting in my bedroom closet, and we got a small color job for Xmas, so the robbery as a robbery didn't do us any harm, financially. But it sure pissed me off.

Funny, tho, rather than a gun, I'd prefer a good solid club. And I sleep next to a baseball bat, now. (Well, actually, I sleep next to Linda, and the bat's on the floor by the bed, but you know what I mean.)

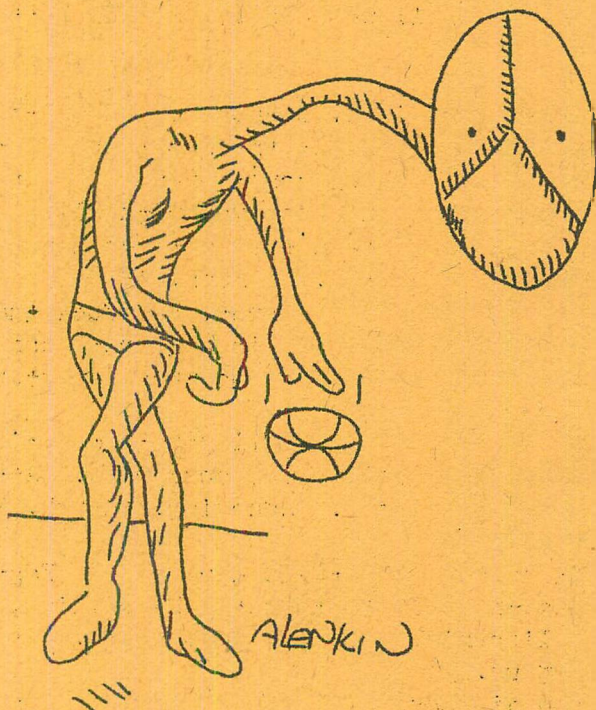
Linda's talking about buying a Winchester rifle, but that's not in any real way related to us wanting to arm ourselves...she happens to enjoy shooting a rifle, and has a great respect for a well-made piece of workmanship. (Not that I haven't seen and handled some lovely guns.)

Truthfully, I don't want a gun around the house. I have a nasty temper, for one thing...if I heard a noise outside, I might be tempted to "shoot first and ask questions later." Not that I believe I would do that I would do that...but I might, depending on other conditions.

Most people who own guns probably shouldn't. Aside from crooks. Like that SCA father Rick Rostrum mentioned in his loc in YAN 246. I don't agree that the father is "stupid" en toto, years of experience or not, dead kid or not. Let's face it, no one is perfect (buzz phrase! buzz phrase!). Accidents happen. And everyone has stupid moments, Whether or not these moments lead to tragedy (as that loaded gun in the drawer did) depends on one's having covered available bases. External stress has a great deal to do with such "accidents". We forget things, make hasty decisions...and end up with a dead child. I'm not condoning or making excuses for the poor bastard who lost his kid, but I wouldn't call him "stupid" per se.

A case could certainly be made for it, though.

So I'd rather not have a gun around here. I really don't think I'm capable of having one. Not under my pillow, anyway. Or even in the drawer. A big pad-





locked metal box would be better. Two padlocks, in fact.

The kids don't even have toy guns, unless one is given to them by someone outside the family. I think there's more to a kid's education than "learning" that killing Japs and Indians is fun.

Oh well. Must be the lousy weather and the fact that I spent all morning proofreading a manuscript. I'm feeling mean.

Dave Wixon notes in YAN 245's loccol that I appeared as a bit character in a recent issue of FLASH comics. Not really true. My signature appeared in a hotel register at one point in the story. I wrote it in there, though...I freelance for National Comiss, doing backgrounds. Mostly for the Justice League of America, these days, but I worked on FLASH for a while. Every so often I put funny names on signs, or something like that. I used to work like hell, trying to fit the names of various fans and sfnal things in here and there, but I don't do it so much anymore because the deadlines are murderous and I usually just zip through the stuff as fast as I can. God it's boring. About the most uncreative job visual art, not counting stuff like type speccing or paste-up. Not that I call comic art

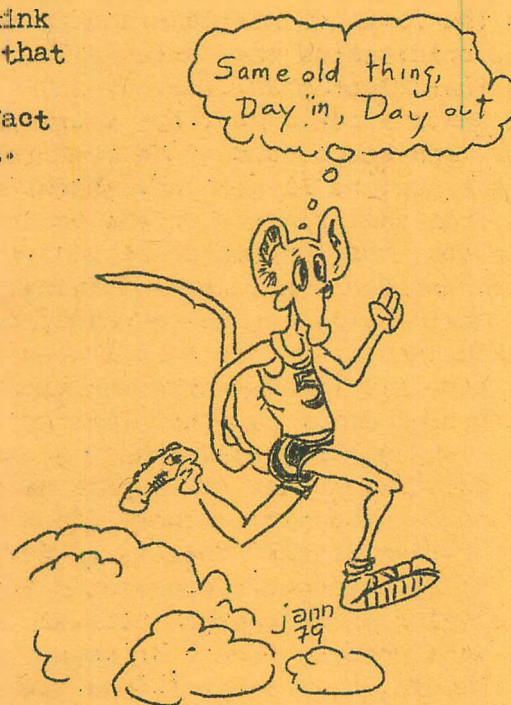
"art". Most of it (as well as the stories) bites the big one. I love comics, but I hate most stuff on the newsstands. The format is wonderful for storytelling, but damn few comic artists know how to use it well. (I, on the other hand...\*hak,kaff\*)

Speaking of comics,(and Boskone), while I was at the con I spent a good amount of time talking to various editors and publishers and art directors. "Yes sir! Present your ass to be kissed, sir!" The upshot of that is, I have gotten Galileo interested in using one of my comic strip series in their newsletter. Currently the newsletter, The Science Fiction Times, comes out every so often as a one-page 11x14" offset thing; but what Galileo wants to do is increase the thing's page-count and have it come out monthly. If this works, my strip will have a home. I've never done a continuing strip before (for money, anyway...or even publication!), so this would be an awfully nice break for me. I could really exercise my spleen then! (Comics are great for getting back at people...you draw them unflatteringly and make them say stupid things. I love it.) Illustration pays well but isn't nearly as satisfying...and for me, a lot harder. Then I'm going to Analog in March sometime, having met Stan Schmidt at the con, and learned (to my delight) that he is a very approachable and articulate person with a good sense of humor and little pretense. Stan looked over my artwork, spoke his piece about it, and told me to bring some astronomical stuff in to show his art director. So we'll see. Shit, I can draw spaceships as well as anyone. Boring stuff, but what the hell. (I'd rather draw people, because I need the practice and they're more interesting than spaceships, but I ain't good enough yet to do that kind of work. Cartooning is one thing, real illustration quite another.)

And, Linda and I have a partial novel with our agents (real live agents! Took us to breakfast and everythin'! Gol-lee!), which Ace has nibbled at. Slow progress, but progress nonetheless. No money, though.

I was sorry to hear of your father's death, although from your writing now and then in Yandro, I knew that he was in poor shape. I thought that your portrait of him was honest and revealing. You obviously had a lot of respect for the man, as well as a deep understanding of him. Juanita's drawing of him looks to be taken from a photo done when he was in his forties. Yes? It was a lovely drawing, Juanita.

Buck, how come you have me down in your best Fanwriter list? I don't even loc





much these days. I assume you meant to include my name in the fanartist category, yes? But I haven't even had much fanart published this past year or so, Man, I can remember spending days on a drawing for some fanzine or other. Of course, I was a neo and on unemployment...

Oh yeah, and how about the Chinese invasion of North Vietnam, huh? I hope there is a next issue of Yandrol. The topic of China vs. Vietnam, leading to World War Three was a hot conversational tidbit at Boskone, seeing as how the invasion happened the second night of the con. (First night, actually.) Think of it -- actually talking about science fiction at a con. But it wasn't really sf, so there was a sort of strained quality to the cynicism and jokes. Struck me as absurd as hell, but I was as uncomfortable with the idea as anyone else was.

[[Most firearms accidents happen because somebody was never taught how to handle a gun. There is one first principle: never point a gun at anyone unless you're ready to shoot him. Kid doesn't have to be very old to learn that; I knew it at age 5, as did Bruce. So, if an "unloaded" gun goes off -- sure, I put a bullet in my bedroom wall as a teen-ager -- it still isn't likely to hurt anyone. (There were 4 kids in the room when my accident happened, but we all knew the basic rule.) However, the parent has to drill the rule into the kid; he can't tell him once and forget it. I'll happily go for a shooting license on the order of a driver's license (and the same principle: anyone -- except criminals, insane, mental defectives, etc. -- gets it if he/she can pass the tests.RSC]]  
[[Springer Coulson was probably in his late 40's when that photo -- from which I copied the portrait -- was taken, yes. But he was one of these people who didn't age much at all. His hair was always thin and light and greying didn't affect the appearance, and the face didn't change radically at all until the last few years of his life. The portrait could essentially have been him at 48 or 78. Proof of the rewards of hard work, I would say. JWC]]

Tony Strelkov, Casilla de Correo, 5220 Jesus Maria, Cordoba, Argentina

As, for a long time now, mother only says, "Gosh, I really must spend some weeks just writing the letters I owe," I decided something really had to be done. So I said, "Mom, give me some of your fanzines and I'll answer if I can."

Well, to cut a long story short, I was quite interested by what I found and decided to start writing letters, a task which I had never gone in for before -- and came across my first stumbling-block: as all my schooling was done in Spanish, despite much reading in English, I just couldn't get a word right. Next, after having spent a long time correcting with a dictionary, I tried to type out my letter, and there my troubles really began, for it took about three days to type out just two pages to Pauline of Wild Fennel. It was my very first LOC! So now I've spent a few nights typing out from English books for practice and now can type at a decent pace without looking to see what my fingers are doing; but oh, the spelling and typing errors...

I was quite delighted by some of the "Ramblings" I came across in your fanzine. The cloning of a tree, as a scientific fact, seems to me something much more fascinating than any possible "human cloning"; and yet here in Argentina the human cloning, and its moral aspects, made headlines, while I don't think the redwood business was mentioned. Anyway, if we dedicate ourselves to cloning humans we'll be forced to clone animals and plants to compensate for overpopulation and lack of natural resources, so it comes out important no matter how you look at it.

Recaps appear to be risky all over the world, for here they bust invariably, too. I'm pleased to hear of someone complaining over \$40 for a tire; the price for tires here, and for everything, for that matter, appears to be somewhat higher, except hired labor -- that comes quite cheap, nowadays, as we've had the most amazing inflation in history, beginning in 1975, under a "popular" government, and are still



having little success in solving some of the most difficult problems left over.

It seems to me that the control of firearms' possession does somewhat diminish the chances of death by murder. But at the same time, it is very useful for honest citizens, when attacked, to pull out a weapon and spoil the fun for the would-be criminal. We were in a state here for some time that the only ones that seemed to possess weapons very "peacefully" were thieves and murderers, and as a result there was practically not a shop that wasn't robbed or a day that didn't pass without bloodshed. But of course, arming the common citizen would just lead to more bloodshed. Every time there is an argument that can't be settled, like the pro's and con's of gun control laws, I think it is most amusing, if one is more or less impartial, to look at both points of view, for both attitudes may appear completely reasonable when seen separately, and it's just impossible to say which is the more correct one. I often found myself saying, "I guess you are right," to one point of view, and then thinking that after all I had been wrong first and saying, "I guess you're right," to the second guy, until I decided not to take too seriously either view.

I was very happy to receive Y 245. It came, together with six other fanzines, when I went to the Post Office to mail the big stack of letters that I'd prepared during the last week of my vacation. I hope to manage to loc all of them before the week-end is over and I have to get back to classes.

You'll have to excuse my completely disorderly way of writing. I start reading a thing through and suddenly there is a piece that makes the answers start bubbling in my head until I have to sit at the typewriter and let my thoughts burst onto paper. So I just won't follow a comprehensible order in my letter.

Apparently, conversational subjects among non fans are typical the world over; accountants talk about their accounts, businessmen about their business (or their craftiness), housewives about their housekeeping (or they discuss the faults and virtues of their husbands), etc. It's different with fandom, where almost any theme is discussed, and different points of view are looked at. (Forgive all my philosophizing about fandom. Even though I'm hardly even a neofan, I really do feel as if I were a part of fandom; which is inevitable, being Mae's son and having heard of fans and fandom ever since I was born.)

Of course, here fans are not considered in any way as "odd people". The very idea of fandom is so alien that whenever I try to explain it, I find there just aren't the words in Spanish to do so. This country is a barren ground for science fiction.

I came out of a class and saw that STAR WARS was playing. "Let's go to the movies," I cried, all excited, and some of my classmates went with me. I practically had to wake them up when the movie was finished! But of course, it's a relatively simple movie and some people understood and enjoyed it.

You should have seen the flow of people leaving during SLAUGHTERHOUSE 5, as well as any other slightly difficult movie.

I think the main reason to get more worked up over the killing of a seal than a pig or a cow is that the cow is maintained, fed, and bred, as a species, for the exclusive service of humans (and the same applies to pigs and chickens), while the seals are an independent race that fill an ecological niche in the plabet. If the seals are constantly hunted down and slaughtered, will the race survive? But are cows threatened by extinction because we use them for food? No, their survival depends on their being useful to humans!

Groggy has for us a special significance here: as Mom was the person that started the "revivalist religion of the necto", so we just love seeing beautifully-printed Groggy.

Yes, I was forgetting that hunters in some cases make an effort to preserve their victims so as to be able to keep up the slaughter. Here things are quite disgustingly different, especially amongst uneducated country folk (of which we have a big supply). To give you an example: Some years ago, a flamingo (must have been somebody's pet) came to the lake of the estancia Father administrates. A passing





peon saw the bird and promptly shot it. "Why did you kill it, you fool?" my father asked. "Because it looked nice," the man answered.

Hunters have done such a good job of exterminating foxes and wildcats here that mice and hares are having a field day in the whole countryside, not to mention the way they exterminated *bandús*, *corzuelas*, and such. In USA, it may be that an animal that makes good sport for hunters might get a better chance of survival. But here, it just means that it doesn't only have to retreat as civilization advances, its main threat comes from the hunters who would ruthlessly exterminate the race.

[[You don't need to apologize at all for your English. It's better than that of many who spent all their lives in English-speaking countries and schools. As for dictionaries, they're indispensable, even in one's own language. I consider myself a very well-taught speller, but I have an entire shelf of various dictionaries and language texts close at hand while I'm working, and I consult the volumes frequently, if only just to be sure of a spelling. (It's a peculiarity of the human mind that at random intervals a word you've recognized for years will suddenly start to look strange and misspelled -- and even double-checking the spelling and finding, yes, it really is spelled correctly, won't always banish the odd sensation. "Orange" has been a particular offender for me that way for a long time. It just doesn't look legitimate. But every dictionary tells me it is, so...) JWC]]

Maggie Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Road, Mentor OH 44060

Don was interviewed by WERE radio (an all-news station) yesterday. Topic was (I gather) Superman. What will happen is that they'll chop up the interview into 30-second bits and spread it through the listening day. "Yes, Superman was originated by two Cleveland teenagers." "And to find out who they were, tune in a half hour from now!" Ah, fame. Don did an interview with another Cleveland radio man years ago -- and, we gather, he's still popping up as a guest on the guy's show. Immortality.

Just heard on TV: "Watch QUINCY tonight as unexplained debts terrify a city!" Must be about Cleveland. Or maybe I didn't hear it clearly...

TV has been taking vast quantities of our time, thanks to the Greedy Maw of the Videotaper. I keep ending up staying up till 2 or 3 a.m. when there's something on the kids or we as a family or whatever need to/want to see. In a few week period, for example, Valerie saw all of *ROOTS II*, *BACKSTAIRS AT THE WHITE HOUSE*, *THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MISS JANE PITTMAN*, and *GONE WITH THE WIND* -- not to mention her routine enjoyments. At her age, I was getting *OUR MISS BROOKS*, *Hopalong Cassidy*, and *Bowery Boys* movies and that sort of thing. Yeah, TV is a vast wasteland. (Not to knock *OUR MISS BROOKS*.)

Gene Wolfe says cable TV and video recorders will decimate network TV before the end of the '80's. Actually, it'll be decimated before the middle of the '80's. It'll be destroyed (or, more likely, metamorphosed) before the end of the '80's. We've been keeping track of the Sony/Disney/Universal lawsuit and find it reassuring. The judge is carefully keeping his decision (and the case) within the specific problem of copyright infringement of Disney and Universal copyrights -- and has repeatedly made it clear that he does not consider himself to have the right or duty to enforce in-home behavior of all Americans. That's rare among the judges whose cases we tend to



notice. (Hensley excepted, we're sure; it must be why we don't tend to notice his cases...) The case is beginning to look very unfavorable for Disney and Universal. When a Disney executive said that the people's right to watch had to be balanced with the creator's copyright, the judge asked, "Does that include the right to tell a viewer what time he must see it?" Yay, judge!

It's easy to see that the Coulsons don't live in the suburbs. Saying that cheap transportation makes it easier for tax-paying citizens to move to suburbs and quit contributing to city finances isn't exactly conveying how things work. We live in Mentor, but Don works in Cleveland -- so we pay Cleveland taxes and don't even have a say in how they're spent. In fact, one reason Mayor Kucinich was able to get Cleveland voters to pass an increase in Cleveland income taxes was that he pointed out to them that by far the biggest chunk of the money thus gained would be from out-of-city workers.

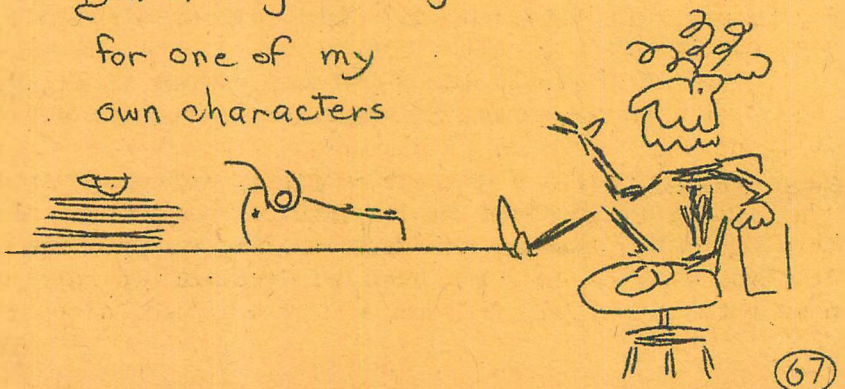
The earpiece of my glasses broke today -- after being cracked for some time. The assorted super-glues won't work because the break (because of months of distortion-in-wearing) isn't a matching one. The Union Eye Care Clinic happily told me it couldn't order a new earpiece because (of course) this model of glasses was discontinued ages ago (immediately after I bought it, I gather). Could I have the lenses re-mounted into new frames? Oh, no. The lenses were of such an odd shape that they couldn't possibly be set into new frames; I'll need a whole new pair of glasses. (I'm back to wondering why they couldn't use a similar earpiece from a similar pair of glasses; it seems to me we're speaking of a standard hinge and a not unusual shape of earpiece. I'll call again tomorrow.)

We have pretty good grade-school English teachers here. Most schools get into haiku around here (restrictive, but not rhyming) -- but treat it as fun. And it's not so long that the kids get bored. I'm totally dismayed by Valerie's grammar book. Not only does it specify that proper usage is "I feel badly" for a state of comfort but it also calls "a," "an," and "the" "determiners," not "articles." No doubt that helps them to copyright and patent and such their course of study. But I've seen to it that Valerie has a little more concept of which end is up. (The English teacher gets ticked off at the book, too -- and has tried to explain its lacks to the kids.) But this summer, Valerie and I are going to do some back-to-basics grammar work; I really don't feel she's had the training she needs.

Juanita's comments about blue milk bring to mind a question maybe best answered by readers in Wisconsin. But I'd really like an answer, if anyone knows it. Question is: What discount should skim milk get over 3.5 percent butterfat milk in the grocery stores? Not what the price difference is -- but what it should be. Is there some sort of formula? We're now paying 93 cents per half-gallon (wait a minute -- that's \$1.86 per fallon. That should make it easier, right?) for 3.5 percent butterfat milk. And we're paying the same damned price for skim milk. (I may be simplifying; we may be paying 97 cents for 3.5 percent milk. But, generally, the price is the same.) What percent butterfat is cream? Or half-and-half? My point is that no one in this area seems to know (or remember, if they're older) that the skim milk doesn't have the cream that they're paying an arm and a leg for, when bought separately. I'd MUCH prefer to buy my milk pasteurized only -- not homogenized -- but I can't find anyplace that sells it that way. This may come to an end soon; we live fairly near Amish country, and there may be an outlet for pasteurized milk somewhere near.

As to eating possum, I've never been able to get past the beginning of the recipe in

Of course I believe in the  
Bill of Rights -- just not  
for one of my  
own characters





WOMAN'S DAY ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COOKERY: "To prepare possum, clean but do not skin. Immerse in water just below the boiling point. When hair pulls out easily, remove from water." Forget it.

[Dunno why that part of the possum recipe bothers you; ever plucked a chicken? (I have, as a child. As an adult, I found out that skinning was much easier, and I never liked the skin anyway.) RSC]]

Laurine White, 5408 Leader Ave., Sacramento CA 95841

Quite a few fans have such problems with their parents that they want little to do with them. That seems the case with about half of the local fans. So I enjoy reading about fans' fathers who were remarkable people. Buck, if you didn't respect him so much, you wouldn't have devoted two pages in Yandro 246 to tell us about him. Thank you for sharing your memories of him with your readers. If you have received recent issues of Arthur Hlavaty's fanzine, Diagonal Relationship, his father died recently. From Arthur's description, his father was also a remarkable individual.

THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE has been published for quite a few months without my even knowing about it. After you included it on your list for best sf of 1978, I found a copy at the local comics store. This book was nowhere near as enjoyable as NEEDLE to me. My favorite parts of NEEDLE involved the boy and other people, like the doctor, reacting to discovering that an alien intelligence lived inside him. THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE didn't have much of that. One of my favorite books for 1978 is Joan Vinge's OUTCASTS OF HEAVEN BELT, which will probably get my nomination for Hugo.

The Ace illustrated editions, including THE MAGIC GOES AWAY, are annoying because no effort is made to match the cover painting with the interior illos. On the cover, which I hated, of PRO, the aliens resemble orangutans, while inside they look like otters. This could surely be prevented with just a little planning.

Berkley Medallion published three of Jack Vance's Demon Princes novels in the mid-sixties: STAR KING, KILLING MACHINE, PALACE OF LOVE. Yes, he is now finishing the series for DAW. I didn't usually read the magazine Fantastic and missed (?) the Brak stories when they appeared there. So I didn't read WHEN THE IDOLS WALKED when it first appeared. But I'm sure its recent pb publication is the first time it has been in book form. Paperback Library published two Brak books, MARK OF THE DEMONS and BRAK AND THE SORCERESS, which had a nice Frazetta cover. At the time, I was collecting Brak books, and would have remembered if WHEN THE IDOLS WALKED appeared in pb then.

With California's vast agricultural industry, a lot of pesticides are used in this state. The State employs pesticide experts who are supposed to check the safety of all the pesticides and enforce the regulations. But most of those pesticides experts formerly worked for the chemical companies and continue to watch out for their interests.

[[My parents' method of child-raising was to be very strict with me when I was small. When I got my first driver's license, Mom called me in, told me that if they hadn't taught me right from wrong by now they were never going to, and to not wake them up when I came in. (And the one time I caught hell for coming in late was when I fell over a chair and woke up the entire household.) Dad tolerated science fiction as one of my inexplicable interests; Mom began reading the magazines and had a letter published in Willy Ley's science column in Galaxy in the 1950's.. I didn't have parent problems when I was a teenager. (I had peer problems...)RSC]]

Roger Waddington, 4 Commercial Street, Norton, Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 9ES England

Seeing shelf after shelf again of paperbacks almost without end, and especially in this spring season, has been causing me to think again; I mean, I buy and buy until the shelves fill up, then have to sort through them and pick out those that I know I'll



I'll never read again, never mind the satisfaction of running my fingers along them, and sadly take them along to the nearest charity chop; and frankly, the price they are now doesn't make this any easier!

So there's one part of my mind determined that if I read any sf, it'll either be borrowed from the library or found on the remainder pile, and another part equally determined to pore over the latest catalogues and buy the newest by favourite authors; and there's me in the middle, vainly trying to separate them!

Which is how I came to find two permanent additions to my library in the remainders, one of them being an Ace book, WHY DID THEY NAME IT...? and which has been giving me some fascinating insights in Americana; as for instance the Burma Shave signs, and also that what you call Life Savers we call Polos, and were under the impression that we'd invented them. The other one being an English pb edition of THE ANCIENT ENGINEERS by L. Sprague de Camp, which I eagerly snapped up, but regretfully had to count it as a sign of the times. I mean, there are all the Daniken books on the best-seller shelves, all the books that prove some ancient astronauts came to put us on the road to civilisation, and the one book that proves we did it all by ourselves being consigned to the remainder pile. Who says you can't fool all the people all the time?

And I don't know whether books aren't selling over the water, whether you're all watching more television in preference to reading books, but there seems no shortage of American titles in British remainder piles; I'm very pleased to say! Well, when they're so much longer-lasting, and usually the original edition... There's been a batch of Ace titles scattered in a month or so ago, and just last week what seemed to be the whole stock list of Manor Books; I'd dearly like to know what's going on, what prompts this dumping.

Re the things that are fed unwillingly to us at school (besides school dinners, that is), I have a slightly contrary experience in that all I learnt in almost defiance of my teachers of the best poets of Robert Graves and the White Goddess, of James Joyce and FINNEGAN'S WAKE, all are now in that forgotten hinterland, and sitting on my shelves unread and unvisited; and without more time, I don't think I'll ever go back to them at all. And for what the teachers actually managed to cram into me; well, they're still there whenever I tune into radio quiz programmes and slightly more absent when I sit down and try to LoG, though the largest part is probably lodged deep in my subconscious and will need hypnosis to drag it out. Unless I suddenly decide that my teachers were right after all! As far as music appreciation goes, I have this horrible feeling that they may be...

[[Well, British pb's are showing up in remainder piles and secondhand book stores around here; maybe the publishers are swapping. RSC]]

Gaird Wallig, 7517 Sunkist Dr., Oakland CA 94605

Hello again, at last...feel like I haven't talked at anyone for at least a hundred years. And my apology for being so long in getting back to you. Have been of course clacking away on the magic machine, the house falls down around my ears, the dishes sit forever unwashed, etc. etc.

Does it sound like I'm hooked? Unfortunately, Have been walking back through my roots lately -- researching the folklore of Norway all to do with a story of the not so gentle land of Faërie that seems to be carrying me further and further from the original legend upon which it was (is) based.

Read Theodore Sturgeon's THE DREAMING JEWELS about a month or so ago -- color it longer, probably -- then by happenstance went to the Fantasy convention down San Jose way shortly thereafter. At which he was scheduled to hold a workshop one of the days. Well, no workshop, but only a talk. Enjoyed that, and watching him change (from a feller who seemed to be someone's little grampa who got into the lecture room by accident into a man nothing at all like a typically bewildered grampa). 'Twas great, and so seemed he. Was meaning to take issue with him, when I walked in there, on the last part of THE DREAMING JEWELS, from the point where the kid enters into direct communi-



DON'T EXPECT  
ANYTHING FUNNY  
IN THIS CARTOON.



cation with the 'jewels' -- didn't much like it, you see -- but forgot all about it, as he opened his mouth.

Jeffrey Wallmann, 391 Broken Oak Loop  
Eugene OR 97405

Happy Valentine's Day! Although as is evident by this card, I'm a wee bit behind times around here. December and January were the worst since 1919 (according to my plumber), and granted the winter hasn't been like yours, I bet you haven't had to deal with 108 units' worth of burst pipes, bum electricity, iced-in driveways, etc etc, or over 250 tenants who figure the manager is God and has some say over the elements. It's calmed down a bit now, but for a while there I was wondering what in hell I'd gotten myself into, agreeing to

be manager.

Upset the writing schedule, to say the least. Am finishing a perfectly foul turkey in the Oh God Her Tortured Mind Screamed hysterical romance genre. It was bad enough having to write all that idiotic emoting way back in my porno days, but to sustain it for 75,000 words without even the dubious relief of some easily written hardass sex, is about to finish me with it. Ah well, this too shall pass...

[[It's nice reading about blizzards when the temperature is 90 degrees, though. Wouldn't some snow be nice now? (Well, not if one is managing an apartment building, I suppose.) RSC]]

Gene Wolfe, Box 69, Barrington IL 60010

I am amazed that you, as a sportsman, approve of market hunting. Would you like to see the meat packers round up the deer -- and the rest of the wild game animals -- machine gun them, and make hamburger? And Juanita, isn't there some difference between killing a domestic animal for food and killing a wild one to supply luxury fur? Isn't there some middle ground between abandoning "the taking of all life" and killing anything and anybody whenever we feel like it or want to make a bloodstained dollar?

[[Major question seems to be, is the hunting threatening extermination of the seals? (Not is it reducing their numbers; expanding human population will do that, via pollution and numerous other ways. But I don't want another extermination like the passenger pigeon.) Greenpeace and other organizations say it is; Canadian government says it isn't. Quite frankly, I wouldn't believe either one on a stack of Bibles. I would probably believe the National Wildlife Association; don't recall them commenting. I don't object too much to a middle ground in killing, but I do object to it being drawn between animals which look cute and cuddly and animals which don't. RSC]] [[My attitudes are emotional, but in a somewhat different tone than those of both Greenpeace and the other bloc that lumps all domestic animals into an "expendable" category. As I stated previously, I love animals. An excessive term; let me say I am very fond of animals while keeping a healthy and wary respect for fangs and claws and their natural survival instincts. And my childhood experiences watching domestic animals put to death in a slaughterhouse taught me that domestic and expendable or not, they can feel pain and suffer just as excruciatingly as any wild animal can. On that basis, I fail to see the moral difference between taking their lives. If the



save-the-seal groups had made less of the frivolity, as they put it, of the use made of the seals after the killing, perhaps it wouldn't have struck me so jarringly. It all seems like a form of double-think that isn't being acknowledged. From the point of view of the animals, which is the one I tend to take, dead is dead. That may not be the common definition of judgments of morality, but it's mine in this case. The animals are dead. To me the morality stress should be whether or not, as Buck says, the seal is threatened with extinction and whether or not the death was quick and as painless as possible. Much of the other arguments on both sides of the issue seem too concerned with human posturing and too little concerned with the creatures in the middle, all animals we, as a species, harvest and use for our purposes. JWC]]

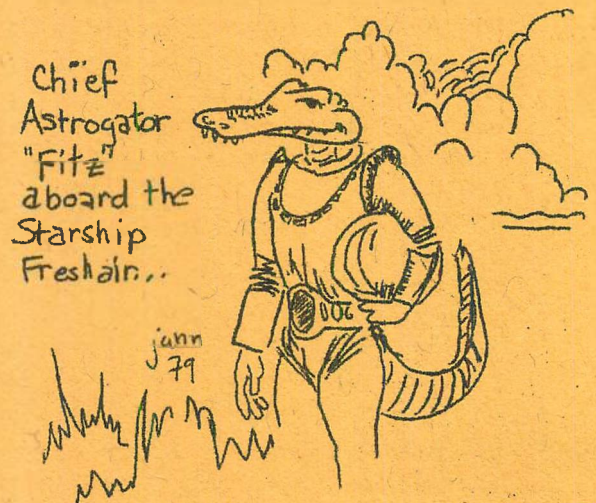
Kay Anderson, 8386 Hollister, Ventura CA 93003

Got back from the visit to Indiana with only minor glitches. Such as...I was sitting next to a little old lady who read her Bible all the way. Since I was reading Cosmo, we made quite a pair. She rose to the challenge and tried to convert me for three hours. Why me, ghod?

The captain looked like a bemused Buddy Ebsen. Every once in a while he would mingle with us by walking down one aisle, across the back of the plane, and up the other aisle. I presume he spent the rest of the time drinking Old Spice aftershave in the cockpit. No one could reek of the stuff that much by just splashing it on. The kid across the aisle said, "What's that smell?" the first time the captain ambled by.

When we got to LAX we had a slight delay while the attendant driving the boarding tunnel groped around for the door for at least five minutes. She knew it was there somewhere, and kept ramming the side of the plane with the muzzle of the tunnel. The stews were rolling their eyes and saying at least this kind of tunnel couldn't hurt the plane; the ones they used to use, for stepping down to the ground, used to dent the planes up. While we waited, one stew told about how in Philadelphia last week some man was about to miss his plane, and the guy at the desk inside told him to run and he could catch it. So he went tearing down the boarding tunnel, just as the plane door was shutting and the tunnel was being backed away from the plane. Sailed right out into thin air, hit the side of the plane, and fell about 20 feet to the runway. They were delayed quite a while while the pieces were picked up.

Back on the local scene, my peach tree is falling down under the weight of still more almost-ripe fruit. Right now, every time anyone leaves the house, you run the risk of the fruit orphanage leaving a sack full of apricots or plums on the porch. My friend Martharuth, who has some orchards, says the nectarines at the ranch aren't even going to be picked this year. It costs \$2 a box to get them picked and \$1 a box to be packed, and they're only selling for \$3 a box. They're going to let them fall and sell them to the pig farmers. Think of the poor starving people in NYC, not to mention everywhere else in the country where the fruit would be appreciated. But there's no way to get it there. It'd be a dandy time for someone to invent a matter transmitter. I noticed nectarines are selling for only 29 cents a pound in the stores here, and that's typical. All that kind of fruit -- peaches, apricots, nectarines, and plums, brought in incredible bumper crops this year. Nobody's getting rich and it's not worth the effort to harvest. Ma Nature is tangled in red tape, too.





# STRANGE FRUIT

LA CLEF BAROQUE #20 (9 rue Raymond Ducourneau, 33110 le Bouscat, France) Since I can't read French, price and schedule are a mystery. Very well printed; seems to be basically a humor fanzine. Probably quite enjoyable to anyone who can read French.

LUCIFERO #5 (Bruno Baccelli, Via Carriona 79/b, 54033 Carrara, Italy) Actually, I'm not even sure of the title of this; CRONAC VIVA is also on the cover, and I don't read Italian, either. Seems more serious; there is a symposium on the US sciencefiction ghetto with contributions by Uwe Luserke, Waldemar Kumming, and Robert Silverberg (Uwe mentions GATES OF THE UNIVERSE, accurately as far as I can make out), and something on a utopian revolution, among other things. Frustrating for non-Italian readers.

DR FAUSTENSTEIN #1, 2 (David Redd, "Kensington", 9 Queensway, Haverfordwest, Dyfed, Wales - "vaguely quarterly" - 50p) Anyone who can do a nostalgic article on the "Old Growler" series can't be all bad. (But he can come close....). Quite a bit about Fifties science fiction; Redd is more critical of it than I am, presumably because he puts more belief in "psychological subtleties" than I do. But he's a good writer and puts out an enjoyable personal-type fanzine. Rating...6

DON'T PANIC! #1 (Graham England, 1 Fleet Way, Didcot, Oxon., OX11 8BZ, Great Britain - 10p) "There will be a further issue of DON'T PANIC! in March" but it hasn't shown up here - possibly because I never remitted the 10p. An international newsletter; majority of material in this issue concerns conventions. Neatly - and professionally - printed. Rating.....5

GIANT WOMBO #1 (Leigh Edmonds & Valma Brown, P.O. Box 103, Brunswick, Victoria 3056, Australia - 50¢A - irregular?) But weren't the giant wombos the 500-pounders? You'll have to produce a thicker fanzine to live up to the title. Everything from how to run a convention to the glories of walkabouts. Mostly convention material; well thought out, but not precisely in my line of interest. Good repro.

DEBRIS #1, 2 (John Boston, 225 Baltic St., Brooklyn, NY 11201 - bimonthly? - for a stamped, self-addressed envelope or, preferably, a publishable item) A whole fanzine of the sort of material we use in "Things That Go Bump In The Mailbox" - funny comments about society. 4 pages in each issue, so far. Excellent printing. I enjoyed the issues immensely. Rating....8

FANTASY MONGERS 1, 2 (Weirdbook Press, Box 35, Amherst Branch, Buffalo, NY 14226 - 6 for \$6, US, or \$12 overseas - bimonthly) Articles and ads; rather like a small version of XENOPHILE that's restricted to fantasy. Though the ratio of articles to ads is a bit higher here. Articles are good, printing is excellent, books in the ads are overpriced (but that's not the editor's fault, of course). Issues are 32 and 40 pages, including covers. Rating.....6

XENOPHILE #41 (Xenophile, P.O. Box 9660, Kirkwood Branch, St. Louis, MO 63122 - irregular - \$2, or \$10 per year) Editorial, letters, and ads; no articles in this one. With it came the American Comic Book Co.'s "Pulp Price List", 20 tabloid-sized pages of pulp magazine prices. Prices aren't quite as bad as I expected, but then I expected them to be outrageous. Prices in XENO vary, of course; usually one can find something reasonable if one checks each issue closely. Printing is acceptable. Overall; quite valuable for book and magazine purchasers.

NIGHTSHADE #5 (Ken Amos, Nightshade Press, 7005 Bedford Lane, Louisville, KY 40222 - semi-annual - \$2) A high-quality serious fanzine about fantasy, with (so far) much emphasis on Thomas Burnett Swann (which is fine with me). I'd prefer to not have black ink on blue paper, but it's quite readable. Articles are good; art is generally outstanding. Rating....7



SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY BOOK REVIEW #1 (P.O. Box 2845, San Bernardino, CA 92406 - monthly - \$12 per year) Title covers it. 12 pages, small type, printed very well. Variety of reviewers (more are requested; if you want to be one, send a sample review to 1149 Lime Pl., Vista, CA 92083, along with an SASE if you want your review back.) If you want reviews....

FANTASY NEWSLETTER #14 (Paul C. Allen, 1015 West 36th. St., Loveland, CO 80537 - monthly - 12 for \$5) Offset, with some fair reproductions of book and magazine covers. Strictly fantasy news; no science fiction. Mostly on what new books and fanzines are going to or have appeared. Seems an excellent place to get news of fantasy publications.

While we're on not-quite-science-fiction, there are a number of magazines I want to mention briefly, as follows:

MASIFORM D #8 (Devra Langsam, 627 E. 8th. St., Brooklyn NY 11218 - irregular? - \$2.00) A "Star Trek" fanzine; filled with fiction and verse, probably more readable than the average of such things. Thick - 90 pages.

THE PRISONER NEWSLETTER #3 (David Edward Tausch, P.O. Box 1327, Midland, MI 48640 - \$1 each or \$15 for lifetime sub. No schedule listed. Readable; 10 pp.

GOLDMINE #34 (P.O. Box 187, Fraser, MI 48026 - \$15 for 12 issues) Actually, this is a professional magazine, it would seem. Devoted to record collecting - primarily rock records and 1960s pop music. With it, however, came GOLDMINE'S RECORD SWAPPER, an 80-page tabloid listing anything and everything in the record line (though mostly pop and rock). Seems like a bargain for record collectors.

CLAUDE HALL'S INTERNATIONAL RADIO REPORT V2#4 (Hmm; must be a newsstand or trade journal; no listing of price or address I can find.) About 75 percent of this is on current records - logically enough; the rest is articles on women in radio, Australians in radio, etc. Should be interesting for pop music fans (of whom I am not a member) if you can find it.

WEST COAST WRITER'S CONSPIRACY V2#2 (7011 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles CA 90028 - \$2.50 - quarterly) Another Claude Hall publication; you might use that address to inquire about RADIO REPORT if you're interested. Interviews with Robert Bloch and Alex Haley (carefully not mentioning the lawsuit), articles about publishers, grants, bookstores, a short story, alleged poetry, etc. All nicely done; it's probably the most attractive of the writer's magazines, though a market report (a strictly west coast market report?) might be a useful addition. Never having read writer's magazines, I have a mild contempt for people who do, but, what the hell. At least a Bloch interview is always interesting.

AFTA #3 (Bill-Dale Marcinko, 47 Crater Ave., Wharton, NJ 07885 - quarterly - \$2) I didn't answer the ad and I got the mag anyway; some days you can't win. Actually it seems a pretty fair fanzine for anyone devoted to popular culture - which I'm not. Book reviews are of pop rather than science fictional items, there are articles and/or columns on records, movies, comics, etc. I found it all incredibly boring, but you might not. Small print allows a lot of material in 68 pages; professional printing.

THE NORTON NEWSLETTER #1 (Michele Rosenberg, 85-45 130th. St., Kew Gardens, NY 11415 - 50¢ - no schedule listed) I find fanzines devoted to one author somewhat restricted, but at least Norton provides more material to work with than almost any other author. As a first issue, this is more promises than anything else, and the promise is there. Printing is good, artwork excellent, and if the reviews run mostly to new editions of old books, at least they're acceptably done (not brilliantly, but acceptably). This also seems to be the official bulletin of the Andre Norton fan club. Or clubs, possibly.

OF SUCH ARE LEGENDS MADE #1 (Joyce Scrivner (dammit, her new address is buried in a pile of papers; look in the CoA column for it - \$1.50) Proceeds go to TAFF. A volume of reprinted famous articles, articles about famous events in fandom, articles by/about famous fans. A pretty good anthology to show someone what fandom is/has been all about (or to find out for yourself). 54 pages, outstanding reproduction. Warner, Glicksohn, Bruce Arthurs, Denny Lien, Rotsler, Foglio, Freff, and other major writers and artists.



# AFTERMATH

robert coulson

Sung to the tune of "Little Old Sod Shanty"

I'm getting rather sleepy now, while driving from the con;  
My perceptions are not always of the best.  
And the trucks play tag around me, as I grimly roll along,  
Looking forward to some badly-needed rest.

The con was just a normal one; five thousand milling fans;  
The filksing faded out today at dawn.  
The checkout time was moved ahead, despite Committee plans;  
By ten a.m. we must be out and gone.

Elevators were not working well; I stumbled down the stairs,  
With suitcase, my guitar, and souvenirs.  
A mob scene at the checkout desk, those damned revolving doors,  
And wrestling with the car's reluctant gears.

But now I'm out and driving through a fiercely falling rain,  
And I'll be home, with luck, at close of day.  
But I dimly glimpse a road sign, and feel a flash of pain --  
For two hours I've been driving the wrong way!!

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