

YANDIROO



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JANARO

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DEC '82

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ately; move to take place in last part of December.

Final notes from RSC. I stencilled my editorial before
Jim Lavell's death; I agree with Juanita's comments.
Also before Chambrakon, which was fun as usual. Not
quite as much fun for me, since I had to haul along a
batch of recording equipment and make a tape for Off
Centaur. I'm waiting now for them to tell me it isn't
good enough.....

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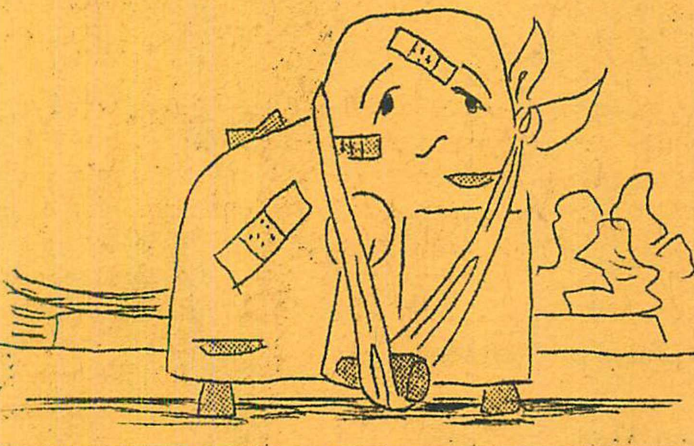
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G. GIANNATTASIO





Buck has covered, in "Rumblings," a lot of the reasons for the (too long) interval between last issue and this one. Some derailments and distractions fell in the category of pleasant being-dragged-away-from-tending-to-chores: being tapped to be a toastmaster or a much-looked-forward-to visit from good friends from far away. Other reasons were painful: hospital stays for my mother, the loss of a pet, the needs of a good friend; the most tragic such occasion was also the most recent, and explained on the opposite page. Old fans and tired will prob-

ably understand, and these days even young fans are likely to get tired, and understanding, a lot sooner than they did in the ancient eras of fandom.

Compared to tragedies involving people and beloved pets, the threatened demise of a mere machine is paltry. However, that's seeming more and more imminent with each issue of Yan. On my last trip to my faithful office supply store and mimeo repair shop, I received that saddest story a faned can hear: "Well, you know, this is getting to be a pretty old machine." Indeed, and it's not self-healing, either, it seems. The old grey Rex M-4 is not what it used to be, and neither am I. Feeding problems are becoming horrendous. I'm not as sturdy as I was, and publishing most of an issue via hand feeding and still losing several reams of paper because of double-feeding is a nuisance, to put it mildly. Unlike some ripoff artists, my mimeo repair people do not give me a song and dance -- and extract money -- by claiming they can rejuvenate the poor mimeo. In fact, they refuse to take money, insisting they haven't actually done anything, and certainly not improved the machine's operation. They have tinkered and oiled and adjusted again and again, at no charge, in an attempt to glue the poor thing together for yet another print run. Each time it's more of a struggle and the results are more pathetic.

I got into fan publishing in the first place because I'm a frustrated printer's devil. Malfunctioning equipment, however, steals the joy of printing. And somewhere amid those decades of fan publishing, I discovered that there were actually editors who would not only do all the work of printing what I wrote but would actually pay me for it as well. Decisions, decisions, and how to arrange for a 40-hour day. Time -- and energy -- will only stretch so far, and age creepeth upon me as well as upon the mimeo. It's possible that modern technology will eventually save the day, if we end up switching to some form of photo processing. That could mean a big saving in energy consumption, and maybe even in cost, considering the amounts of paper I'm losing currently. But if we do go that route, it will mean, in effect, giving up part of my youth, since I'm been using a mimeo since 1953.

In the same vein, I'm convinced word processors are the wave of the future for writers, particularly sf writers. But again the shift will cause a pang. I've been using a typewriter since I was eight and received a Royal portable for Christmas. By now certain work patterns are practically engraved on my synapses. It will be a major procedure for me to convert from an ordinary keyboard to a terminal and screen. One part of me knows that's the logical step -- finances permitting. But another part will fight the necessity, clinging fondly to my Olympia and all those familiar patterns I've accumulated in forty plus years of battling out amateur and professional wordage. Eventually, I'll have to go that route. The manufacturers are going to force me to, I suspect, like it or not. Then I shall see if an old dog can adapt to new tricks...

As I mentioned above, con going is a nice interruption, and after nearly thirty years of fanning, it's certainly exhilarating to be asked to go as a guest now and then. Again that calls for a shift in old habits. So far, that's been easy, but then the concoms have made it easy for me to play toastmaster by choosing wonderful GoHs

for me to introduce. When the audience is already primed by the work and likable personalities of such people as Clement or Cherryh, toastmastering is a breeze. I can do a brief song and dance and hand it right over to them as, really, the people who need no introduction. Emcees should always have it so easy.

Those chores, if such they were, happened at Marcon and Roc*Kon, but there were other cons to attend along the way. Midwestcon was nostalgia con, with fans I hadn't seen for years emerging from the woodwork for a reunion. InConJunction looked like a con with a potential for becoming an enjoyable addition to Midwestern fanning, and their choice of GoHs is fine. Spacecon is a mixed bag, in this year's memories; it's an ideal location, with a friendly hotel, and an embarrassment of riches in eateries, plus the Neil Armstrong Museum. However, it turned into a card players' con, and that's simply not my interest. I play cards, but I don't go to cons to do so, I fear. Rivercon, as always, was a joy. (If only we could borrow the variety of eateries from Wapakoneta's Spacecon and set them down on the plaza adjoining Galt House for the week-end of Rivercon...sigh.)

Manse Coulson was a way station for a couple of months or more before and after the Worldcon, which made things fun, but also caused guilt feelings when I counted the time spent in feeding and housing good people and swapping enjoyable conversation when I ought to have been working on pro and fan stuff. Well, vacation time may prevent us getting to next year's worldcon, so we were greedy to soak up all the fan socializing we could, this year.

Roc*Kon, too, was fun, and terrific filking. That's the major change from the old days of conning. Now filkers get rooms to filk in as well as chairs. And hucksters' rooms are organized, instead of operating out of the trunks of cars in the parking lots. And there are art shows, when there didn't used to be any, and...

I wouldn't want to be a mundane. At the Hyatt, while the fans were waiting to register at the hotel desk, one of the spiffy uniformed staffers led businessmen types out of the row by saying, "All you people who aren't with the sci-fi thing follow me to the other desk." I approve. If they want to join us, let 'em learn that the proper pronunciation is "sciffy," and if they're really our sorts, they'll graduate from that fast and find a whole new sub universe they never dreamed existed. JWC

James A. Lavell

May 22, 1929 - November 22, 1982

Jim Lavell was a mainstay of one of the earlier incarnations of Indiana S-F fandom. Though Jim had been inactive in fandom in recent years, long-time acquaintances remembered him well. Jim was the always congenial easy-going host of numerous club meetings and the dependable assistant on many fine fan-zines. Jim was never flamboyant, but he was the master of the delayed-action "zinger"; his quiet puns and sly jokes usually slipped past the noisier fans until they belatedly woke up and got the point. Because Jim wasn't the flashy type, some fans underestimated him. The wise ones, though, learned to respect him and cherish his friendship. Jim was fond of mysteries as well as of s-f; he was an art collector, a printer, a gifted photographer, a thorough going softie of an animal lover, interested in sports, the space program, auto racing, videotaping, etc., etc. He was the kind of person the term "gentle man" was coined to describe. His death from a heart attack was totally unexpected, and it is still very difficult to realize that he is gone. He will be deeply missed by those of us who were lucky enough to know him and count him as friend.



con was over. I was loading my huckster stuff into the Pinto, and crawled into the tailgate to shove a box up front. Then I turned around, caught one foot in the tailgate lock, and made a perfect one-point landing on the asphalt on my nose. No permanent damage, but it bled spectacularly for awhile, and is not a recommended finish to a con. It's nice to have friends, though. A week or so later Sandra Miesel called up to find out how my face was coming along. On being told that it was pretty well healed, she said, "Well, we've always said you were a hard-nosed bastard". Cheery. This was the year I had problems with springing leaks; later in April I burst a major blood vessel in my left arm. Again, no serious damage, but it hurt for awhile. We have the benefit of a compassionate doctor, too. Dudgeon diagnosed it, said "Sometimes they just pop" and advised me to be thankful it hadn't happened in my head. (Naturally, that was precisely what I was trying not to think of.) I really wonder if I should have laughed at either one of those comments; probably shows that I lack sensitivity. One of the problems of getting old, I guess (the weak blood vessel; I never did have any sensitivity). Bruce cheered me up about my age by telling me that someone at a wargame session after Marcon wanted to know if I was Bruce's brother. (Must be a nice man; lousy eyesight, but a nice man.)

In June I got appointed one of the two new book reviewers for AMAZING STORIES and we went to Midwestcon. My con reports are skimpy because mostly I talk to people and the conversation isn't all that brilliant and I don't record it (and if I did, nobody would be interested). This time I did subvert the American Watchmaker's Association. They were sharing the hotel with us, and one night I was crossing the pool area from one party to another and was stopped by three watchmakers. Usual questions about what sort of group we were, etc. Then one of them asked when our program began in the morning, since it was then about 4:00 AM and the parties were going strong. I explained that Midwestcon didn't have a program. Three pairs of eyes lit up and they hurried off to tell a friend about this marvelous invention of a con without a program and see if they couldn't... If you hear any rumors about a schism in the American Watchmakers, you know who to blame.

We stopped in at Inconjunction for one day only. Seemed to be an average sort of con, but we were very busy right then. We hadn't intended to participate, but Juanita got drafted onto a panel. (We'll have to participate more next year; I'm Toastmaster.) We arrived late at Spacecon, too; came over Sat. morning instead of Friday night. Shared a room with Bob and Betty Gaines. Mostly I went to see Eric Lindsay; I think Juanita went to take another tour of the museum. Not a good con for me; I must remember to not drink a tumbler full of tequila on an empty stomach. Tends to upset my digestion. (I don't drink that much and I didn't think that one has to eat before trying a stunt like that, even though I did know it.) Second time that's ever happened; first time was maybe 20 years ago at a Midwestcon, drinking Detroit blog. Nothing special about Rivercon except for an outstanding filksing.

Chicon started for us on Aug. 30 when Paula Smith stopped by on her way to the

And this is the issue I said we might get out in late July... Well, it's been a busy summer. Blame for lateness can be shared, this time. Juanita got the mss. for her third stf book in the series in late, and then got bogged down in revisions (where she still is). Meanwhile, I was working on writing of my own - and revisions - for the first time in some years. And we did a few other things besides work this summer.

Marcon was in April this year; Juanita was Toastmaster and I was Fan GoH. My most spectacular performance, however, came after the

con. The same day Paula left, Bruce, Lori, Van Siegling and Jim Engle arrived on their way to the con. (In two extremely overloaded cars; I thought I was an expert at packing, but Siegling has me beat.) We were confronted with a neat Catch-22 situation when we arrived at the Hyatt-Regency. Van had picked up our membership material with his, to save us standing in line. Trouble was, he and his party were setting up their huckster tables when we arrived - and nobody could get into the huckster room without a badge. There was a rent-a-cop on the door to make sure. So we stood around awhile, and then Dick Spelman, who was running the room, came over and told us that Van had our badges at his table. "Now tell us something we don't know, like how to get in the huckster room without a badge in order to collect our badges." Dick let us in, over the objections of the cop. In the end, my badge became copiously decorated; there was a comment or two about Mexican generals. We weren't huckstering, but Van had acquired some extra red ribbons given to hucksters and presented Juanita and I with one each. Then we each got a yellow ribbon for being on the program. Then I went to the Old Crocks party (officially the Convention Veterans party) and picked up campaign ribbons for having survived Chicons 2 and 3. (One mild shock came when Bruce casually mentioned that he might stop in at that party - and I realized he's been going to cons for 15 years and is qualified. I mean, when your son qualifies as an Old Crock....) Juanita was supposed to get a gold star for her badge. I thought that would only be for mothers whose sons had died in fandom, but it seems it was for SFWA membership. She never located the SFWA suite, though - not that she tried all that hard - and never got one. I made a spectacular exit from my one panel by falling off the platform - this is my year for clumsiness. People rushed up to inquire if I was all right. No, I wasn't; I was mad, embarrassed and generally outraged, though not hurt very much. Scraped hand and I limped for awhile. One cause of embarrassment was that I was supposed to meet an old friend, Bev Boles, right after the panel. I'm not all that concerned over my appearance, but meeting a gorgeous woman while one is limping, bleeding slightly, and generally dishevelled is enough to get thru even to me. My major verbal klutziness this time was opening my mouth at the wrong time and becoming a recording engineer for Off Centaur. A temporary recording engineer, I trust. (That will teach me to brag about my bargains in recording equipment.....maybe.)

We had various fan visits this summer; the DeWeeses, the Gaineses, Bruce and Lori, Dainis and Betsy Bisenieks, the Miesels, people already mentioned. Major visit was from Kay Anderson, who was here about 2-1/2 weeks. She and Juanita visited the Wapakoneta space museum, and we all went to a giant flea market in Shipshewana, the Angel Mounds in Evansville, and the Feast of the Hunter's Moon in Lafayette. Bruce and Lori came over for that, and since Juanita refused to ride 5 people in the Pinto, we rented a Buick sedan. Worked out well. The Feast was interesting, even if Moonwolf did mutter something about "a French and Indian Disneyland". It's just getting big, like everything else. After the Feast, we drove up to Wolf Park, near Battleground. Lori wanted to get in the pen with "her" wolf, but the director couldn't separate that one from the rest of the pack. (You can "adopt" a wolf at the Park; it's sort of like adopting a foreign orphan. You get photos and progress reports and personal contact if possible.) I got a membership this time, but did no adopting. Angel Mounds remains one of the most impressive Indian mound complexes we've seen. We also went with Bruce and Lori on a tour of the Indian mounds of southern Ohio one weekend. ...I think we have now seen all of the major and some of the minor midwestern mounds; Angel, Cahokia, Great Serpent Mound, Fort Ancient, Mound City, Seip, and Mounds State Park.. (Indiana), plus one mound in Tennessee. I find them fascinating.

The Muncie radio station gave us an hour's interview this spring. No problems, but one odd event. We were in this glass-walled room, and two women, one carrying a baby, came down the corridor outside. She held up the baby so it could see the funny people and then walked on and disappeared, leaving us wondering wha...? I was trying not to snicker into a live mike.... Juanita had a paid lecture at the Indiana-Purdue-Indianapolis campus (hereinafter referred to as IUPUI, or yewie-pewie). I had to work.

Around the first of November we swapped the Pinto for a 1978 Pontiac "Grand Safari" wagon. Two main problems with the Pinto. One, it wasn't large enough to take us, Bruce and Lori, assorted luggage and huckster stuff. Two, it required expensive re-

pairs at frequent intervals, and had begun making funny noises again, so I have this feeling that we got out from under just in time. The Pontiac seems to be a marvelous car so far; mileage is poor but then the mileage on the Pinto wasn't all that great, either.

I mentioned reviewing for AMAZING; it's nice getting paid for what I've been doing for fanzines for nothing. Getting well paid, too. So far I have had one column published and by the time you get this I will have written 3. There is approximately a 4-month lag between submitting the column and its publication. (Since I'm sharing the reviews with Frank Catalano and we're not supposed to review the same books, this requires some coordinating, but we seem to have managed okay so far...even if Frank did stick me with reviewing BATTLEFIELD EARTH in this next column.) I do not intend to have any overlap between my reviews for AMAZING and my reviews for YANDRO, but in this issue there is. I had reviews of Stallman's first two "Beast" books on stencil here when I got the final book and decided to review the entire story in AMAZING. It's a pretty good novel; all three volumes are recommended. Due to the lead time, I won't be reviewing all that many pb's in AMAZING; by the time the review comes out, the pb is off the stands. (By the time YANDRO comes out, the pb is also off the stands, but I keep hoping we'll get back on schedule.) A few pb publishers are sending galleys, which helps cut down the time.

Fans are the repository of all knowledge; do any of you know where I can obtain a copy of THE ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH POPULAR BALLADS, Vol. 2, edited by Francis James Child? I ordered the complete set from Dover and was told that Vol. 2 was out of print and had my money returned. I'm hoping that someone out there can find a copy, either in a bookstore (just because Dover is out doesn't mean there aren't copies in stores) or a used-book emporium.

This may be the last mimeographed YANDRO. Problem is time, particularly time for Juanita, who does most of the work. After this issue is out, we'll be investigating alternative printing methods. I expect most alternates will require an increase in price or a decrease in pages or both, but they should provide an improvement in publishing schedule. Setting up copy for printing or Xeroxing is nowhere near as time-consuming as cutting stencils, tracing illos, mimeographing, collating, etc. Juanita really likes to do the mimeographing, but YANDRO is becoming too much for her now that she's in demand as an author. We may, of course, go on as we have been doing; you'll find out next issue. (Yes, there will be a next issue, sometime. We wouldn't quit altogether without letting you know.)

We don't seem to have much luck with our dogs. In the last issue we introduced Tam Lin; this issue I must report that Tam was run over by a truck and killed on Sept. 22. In April we took in a stray mongrel, naming her Kari. She turned out to be a remarkably nice dog (as well as a remarkably ugly one) and we were quite happy to have her. Yesterday we got the news that she has heartworm. (It's curable; expensive but curable. So we're getting it done, but it won't be pleasant, either for her or for our budget.)

More enjoyable topics....a movie I recommend, from seeing the promos at Chicon and reading THE WORLD OF THE DARK CRYSTAL, is "The Dark Crystal", supposed to be released in December. It's made by the Muppets people, and has some real aliens in it. (Plot seems to be a fairly simple Quest, but plot isn't the main thing; background is.)

Hmmm...I stopped mentioning conventions before I got to Roc-Kon. Juanita was Toastmaster (I was chauffeur). Very nice con, allowing us to get acquainted with Suzette Haden Elgin (a very definite plus) and get better acquainted with C. J. Cherryh. I was impressed with Cherryh's ability to be charming while doing her GoH chores from a wheelchair. (Result of a Brown Recluse spider bite.) I couldn't do that (but then, very few people accuse me of being charming under any circumstances). We drove to the con, and on the way down stopped at Reelfoot Lake and took the boat tour. Juanita is getting information and background for a projected historical novel (and wouldn't the New Madrid earthquake make one hell of a disaster movie?) Anyway, the tour was interesting even without being research. On the way back from the con we drove thru the Osmarks, which hardly deserve the name mountains but are very pretty country.

RSC

DiFugally

#31

column by _____ Dave Locke

DEPT. OF IDLE RETROSPECTION AND APPALLING TWADDLE

Let's shift our focus for a moment and examine, with idiotic care, the science fictional concept of parallel worlds as it might apply to certain turning points in fan history. This is, I believe, what might be termed a forced topic.

All fans, or at least those who used to read science fiction, are familiar with the gimmick of parallel worlds, wherein one might encounter a world in which the South won the Civil War, or dinosaurs never died off, or where Nixon said: "I am not a crook, but I am ineffably shady."

Got the picture? Let's go to that focus on fan history. Think back along the timestream to when Tucker was about to encounter his first unashamed taste of Beam's Choice. Now, before that happens, jump him over to another timestream where a bottle of Glennfiddich is substituted for the Beam. What will happen two hundred years later in the here-and-now of that parallel universe? Will he be orchestrating the room-party fans in great choruses of "S M O K E Y I" ?

Or let's place ourselves in an alternate universe where Skylab set its entire footprint on all members of the N3F, and let's examine subsequent events. Upon noticing the absence of any special commotion, it developed that a newszine reporter queried one of the Directors of the N3F who was quoted as saying: "You couldn't move this outfit with an H-bomb," after which the newszine reporter was plied with risqué round-robins, purple fanzines, promises that a professional would look at his stf stories if he wrote any, and sly mention that if recruited he could anticipate a real slam-bang welcome into fandom. The reporter demurred, spent an overlong afternoon and evening at his favorite tavern, and was scooped by a newszine editor who mysteriously switched his duplicating process from mimeography to hectography. In faded print the lead story announced that not only was everyone in good condition after the incident, they also were trying to set up a bureau with the initial objective of reassembling Skylab from all the pieces. Further down the road, the story announced, the bureau would be responsible for transporting Skylab to Worldcons where it would be used as a neat conversation piece for the N3F Room. The newszine editor, in the back of this issue, published strange excerpts from a number of letters which seemed to be welcoming him to fandom. The mailing envelope had been rubber-stamped with various sf and fantasy drawings and cartoons. Stapled inside the zine was a row of odd little photographs of the editor. The reporter who was late with his story is rumored to have refused an assignment to investigate the sudden change in image of the competitive newszine. Sources quote him as saying: "I wouldn't touch that with a fork."

DEPT. OF GETTING A LEG UP

So far as I could determine, it was not covered by the loose body of knowledge known as popular culture.

I can't say that my ignorance on the subject promoted either a need to know or a burning desire. Specific knowledge on the subject in question would have served no apparent useful purpose, not to the world at large, not to my country, not to any congregation of people. Beyond that it wouldn't have seemed useful to anyone I knew or could think of, including myself. There are just some areas of data, many if not most of them having to do with certain idiosyncratic patterns of the human animal, which have no appreciable value. Popular culture covers a number of them and would have covered this subject, too, if the knowledge had existed when the question came to mind.

Data without value, for comparison purposes, would be like the statistics published by Dear Abby on the subject of women wearing or not wearing panties to bed. Another example in this field was produced by research on the numbers of people who chewed their toenails.

My question was in the same category. Any answer to it would serve no useful purpose beyond just being an answer, as there is no practical use for information on how many men sit down to pee when they're naked and in the bathroom and nature calls.

So I spent a few minutes here and there in a rather informal (i.e.: informal informal) survey. What that means is that I asked people, men-type people, if they sat down to pee when naked. It took a while to get into this survey after initially posing the question to myself while seated one day, as I wasted a lot of time trying to figure some way of working it into a conversation. As almost always, I finally determined that the direct approach was the best, not to mention easier. In this instance I could embrace the direct approach, because then my back could be turned to my lack of creativity.

While engaged in this informal survey, which included a great number of people but hardly ever anyone met in passing on the street, I tossed in a subsidiary question intended to reveal deviant peeing practices in general. As it happened, one turned up.

In researching the question of how many men will sit down to pee if they happen to be naked while they're in the bathroom, I found the results to be disturbing.

I was the only one.

Everyone else did it in the sink.

THE MAGIC GOES AWAY

On one recent, boozy holiday I ran out of mixer at a time when I would really have preferred not to. There was too much whiskey left to drink. Remembering to take off my robe and put on more suitable street attire, I made my way to the local 24-hour supermarket and wound up standing in one of the checkout lines with a great lot of people who appeared to have also encountered the need to make a similar piddly-arsed purchase.

As all the lines slowly shuffled forward, my eyes were attracted to the door as a rather well-built young woman came rushing in bearing a look of urgency overlaid upon hopeless bafflement. Her hair had the wind-tunnel look, her makeup was somewhat askew, and her clothes looked as though they hadn't quite had time to settle upon her body. Pausing to look around with great indecision, she chose to rush past everyone in my line and head straight for the cashier.

Breathlessly she leaned across the cash register and loudly inquired if the store sold fireplace logs. The cashier pointed a finger and the young woman rushed off. A few seconds later she appeared at the back of my line and rather agitatedly maintained her place as the line continued its slow shuffle forward.

It must be hell to ruin the magic of the moment for want of a fireplace log.

On second thought, maybe there wasn't any magic in the moment.

DEPT. OF ONE LEG AT A TIME

Frequently enough a whole month can float by without my doing it. Then again, it might happen two or three times a week.

We've all heard the expression: "he puts his pants on one leg at a time, just like everybody else." I've wondered about that. Haven't some of you?

The expression is one of a zillion that falls into what I refer to as the Most

The Americanization of Guy Fawkes

BY MARY LONG

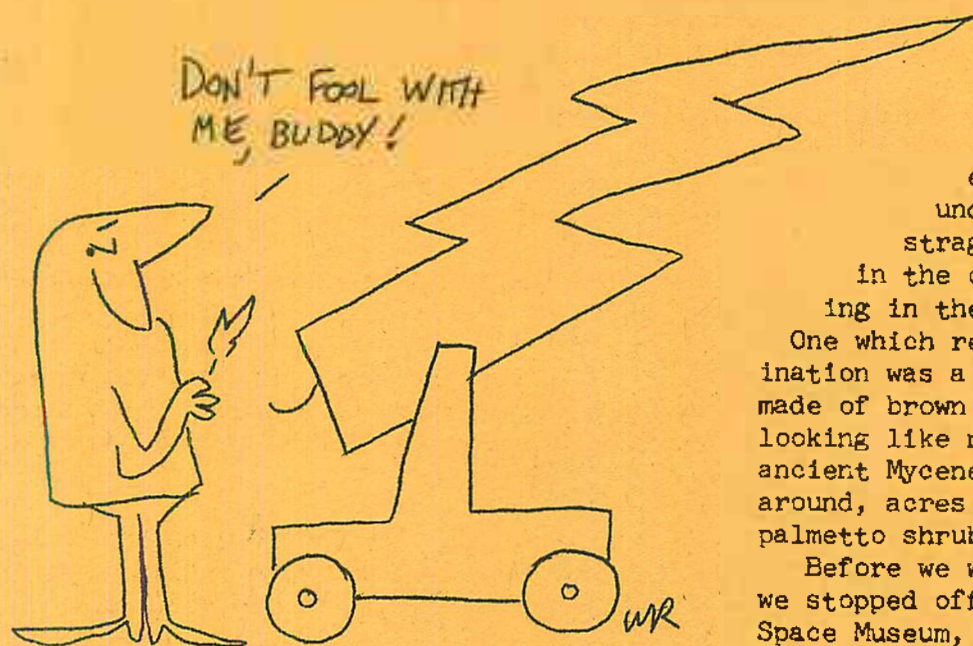
Like other exiles, I celebrate the holidays of the Old Country. Pancake Tuesday was last week, and it was kept with the traditional fare -- although I resisted the temptation to run round the block, flipping the pancake in the frying pan! However, I did mark Guy Fawkes Day 1975 in a rather more flamboyant manner. I launched a rocket. From Cape Canaveral.

The morning of November 5th 1975 was extremely hot, in the mid 80's, as we drove up the coast road to the Cape. The sea lies to the right hand, the river (and beyond it 'Mainland America') to the left. Heat beat in through the windows of the car, a string of pelicans flew along just above the surface of the bright blue sea. It was a beautiful day. And so on to the Cape, through the gates, and across it. The Cape (including Kennedy Space Centre) is huge, some 125 square miles, and criss-crossed with first-class roads. These lead away through the heavy brush and shrubs which cover the Cape, dotted with pines, but are often barred to the casual visitor. Although large areas are thus closed, visitors who come to see the Kennedy Space Centre (which includes displays of lunar modules and vehicles, various sorts of rockets, etc. film and slide shows, all free) may take a bus-tour of some of the notable sights on the Cape. We however, armed with appropriate passes, drove down one of the private roads and around the bend which seems always to be placed just so the casual passer-by cannot see exactly what lies beyond. We passed some deserted launchpads and block-houses from old missions, now abandoned. The Gemini project is one such. Just as I had not realised the sheer size of the place, so I had not thought that each project would require its own pad to suit its particular requirements, and that the majority

of them would not be reusable. These deserted and fenced-in areas seemed very evocative, almost Ballard-esque in their silence under the sun, grass straggling through cracks in the concrete, a door banging in the wind as we drove by.

One which really caught my imagination was a huge beehive shape, made of brown concrete sand-bags, looking like nothing so much as an ancient Mycenaean tomb. And all around, acres of brush and cactus, palmetto shrub and pine clumps.

Before we went to the launch, we stopped off at the small USAF Space Museum, which has a display of rockets, intercepting missiles,



and so forth, with a very small blockhouse. The latter, very unassuming in appearance, is of particular interest, because it was the one from which the first American astronauts were launched. Part of the old mission control is still there, and it is possible to lean over a guard rail and look into the room. Even to my untutored eye, the equipment in it looked heavy and old-fashioned. But what particularly struck me was how small the place was; the particular section of which I speak was no bigger than an average-sized bedroom. However, this impression could have been exacerbated by the familiar TV broadcasts of those enormous control-rooms, filled with rows of people, who nowadays over-see the launches.

The particular pad for which we then set off was a small one, right on the shore, from which meteorological rockets are launched every week. When we arrived, we went down to see the technicians assembling the rocket. It was of two pieces, about 40 lbs, and some 7 ft or so long when assembled. The bottom part was about 3" in diameter, and the top about 1 1/2". The whole was painted white, and rough to the touch -- probably some sort of heat-resistant material such as Teflon. It was launched from a tube on a stand, rather like a fretwork telescope -- in fact like nothing so much as a rocket in a milk-bottle! As launch-time approached, the whole area was sealed off and everyone ordered into the blockhouse, which was about 200 yards from the launchpad. Inside the blockhouse was a biggish room, the control room, which looked just like the sort of thing ones sees in multitudes of sf films! Banks of equipment, a raised dais on which stood three chairs in front of a big control panel, a count-down clock high up to the right, a water-cooler, and a horizontal slit window looking out to the pad, white against the deep blue sea and the china blue sky. The technicians stood talking in the "well" behind us. They of course had seen it all before countless times. We went up on the dais to receive instructions, and sat down.

Countdown, broadcast over the Cape, had commenced some time before, but only the later five-minute intervals were announced after the earlier half-hourly ones. The three-minute point was reached and announced, then the two minute, and finally:

"Sixty seconds."

The key to the controls was inserted and I turned it. A few lights appeared.

"Thirty seconds."

I pushed up the switch which armed the rocket with fuel.

"Fifteen seconds."

"Ten."

I pushed up the switch-guard which protected the firing switch from being accidentally knocked.

"Nine, eight, seven, six, five, four..."

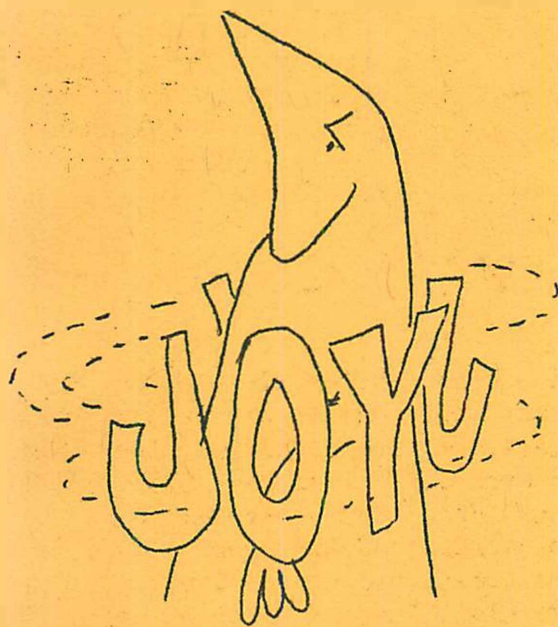
The sounds of the people behind me faded away, and there was only me, the switch, and the anonymous countdown voice, ticking off the seconds. I stared out the window; out of the corner of my eye, I could see the clock marking off the seconds as the voice spoke them.

"Three, two, one, ze - "

Without any need to think of it, I pushed the switch. A flaring cloud of smoke, a sound between a crump and a whoosh, and it had gone. It had gone in less time than it takes to say 'it had gone,' for it travelled up to 5000 ft in two seconds.

" - ro."

I sat there, my hand on the switch, staring out the window; my legs felt like jellies, my face felt tight. Seemingly I was grinning from ear to ear, hence the



tight feeling. A few seconds or so later, I rejoined the world, although still a bit dazed! They gave me a certificate, and I dimly remember shaking a hand and thanking people, then I was out in the sunshine, feeling shaky and euphoric.

I wonder how the man who launched the Apollo rockets felt?

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ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES

A girl there was and she went to sleep
(Even as you or I).
Her sleep was long and her sleep was deep
(For she did nothing half-way or cheap).
She never snored -- not a single peep
(Even as you or I).

The sinners wished they had not been born
(Even as you or I).
The good got bad and the bad, forlorn
When Gabe played solo upon his horn.
(The dead rose, laughing, and all that corn
(Even as you or I).

The girl awoke and she felt dismay
(Even as you or I),
For all the cosmos had gone away.
She said, "The Void is no place to stay."
She made a light and she called it "Day".
(Even as you or I).

by

MARIAN TURNER

strange fruit

This seems to have been the summer for special fanzines, most of which I seem to have acquired.

WARHOON 28 [Richard Bergeron, Box 5989, Old San Juan, PR 00905 - \$20.00] So this one was last year's...they're still available. This may be the only hardbound fanzine in existence, and is undoubtedly the only one containing 514 pages. This is a collection of the writings of Walter A. Willis, including his classic material; The Enchanted Duplicator, The Harp State-side, and Willis Discovers America. Much space is devoted to his column, "The Harp That Once Or Twice," which continued

through 5 fanzines. There are also con reports, an autobiography, and assorted articles, plus a bibliography by Bergeron and various photos and assorted art. While I'm notoriously uninterested in fan history, I've always liked Walt's writing (and besides, I have originals of much of this stuff that I can now sell for a fabulous profit...if I can find them). Paying anything over a quarter for a fanzine is a dubious proposition, but there is probably better and more entertaining writing in here than there is in the latest sf hardcover at a similar price.

THE COMPLETE QUANDRY: Vol. 1 [Joe D. Siclari, 4599 NW 5th Ave., Boca Raton FL 33431 - \$5.00] Somewhere over 110 pages of facsimile reprint of the Lee Hoffman fanzine regarded by fannish types as the epitome of fannishness. Instead of beginning his reprint with the first issues, Joe has started with the middle period, late 1951 and early 1952, as being of more interest. It has the legend of Room 770, and so on. I think that my problem with this is that I've read similar material too often. Nobody really tried to imitate Willis and Irish Fandom because it was a unique group and the material couldn't be duplicated on a sustained basis. But everyone tried to duplicate QUANDRY and several succeeded pretty well, and I read those later efforts first. So I find some of this still very funny and quite a bit of it including most of the Room 770 nonsense, not. There are enough good bits -- including most of what Lee herself wrote -- to be worth the money. (And besides, I got further evidence that fannishness hasn't evolved a bit in 30 years.)

ENERGUMEN 16 [Mike Glicksohn, 137 High Park Ave., Toronto, Ont. M6P 2S3, Canada - \$4.00] Mike pried the cash out of me at Chicon by telling me the proceeds go to the Susan Wood Scholarship Fund. (I sometimes feel benign at conventions. Sometimes.) It has a nice balance of authors; Dave Locke and Ted White, Gene Wolfe and Ro Lutz-Nagy. Plus other good people like Bob Shaw, and it's another hundred-page fanzine and I'm not going to list everyone in it; go buy your own copy. It's very amusing and worth having.

LAN'S LANTERN #11 [George Laskowski, Jr., 47 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills MI 48013 - \$2.50] For a change, a special that's serious; this is devoted to Clifford Simak. 90 pages of material by and about him, including tributes from Asimov, Bloch, Budrys, T.L. Sherred, Brunner, Stan Schmidt, and a dozen others. Excellently done.

OWLFIGHT #3 [Millea Kenin, 1025 55th St., Oakland CA 94608 - semi-annual - \$3.00] Stiff covers, book paper, marvelous front cover, interiors ranging from excellent down to the lower end of mediocrity. And fiction. Bruce Hallock has an interesting idea and an acceptable -- by professional standards -- story. The others, and the verse, range down from there. There's also an excellent autobiographical article by A.B. Chandler, and book reviews.

AMRA #70, 71 [George Scithers, Box 8243, Philadelphia PA 19101-8243 -- irregular -- \$2.00] The usual supply of excellent articles, plus one superior to the usual; Avram Davidson's "Adventures in Unhistory" of Prester John. Art as usual; mostly by Roy Krenkel with others of the same quality, including one cover by George Barr. I suppose now that George is editing AMAZING, the AMRA schedule will become less regular than ever, but it's nice to know that it still appears now and then.

CRYSTAL SHIP #5 [J.D. Owen, 4 Highfield Close, Newport Pagnell, Bucks. MK16 9AZ, England -- irregular -- no price listed] Nice variety of material; I was particularly taken by the list of names of new nations proposed by various secessionist groups. (The splintering of today's nations is progressing nicely; I wonder how long it will be before the next round of empires?) I wasn't so keen on the rock music material, but someone else might be. Digest size, professionally printed. Good art. A moderately thin fanzine.

LOKI #14 [Dave Hulan, 3313 S. Park Drive, Santa Ana CA 92707 -- irregular -- \$1] Dave Locke enthuses over THE PRINCESS BRIDE -- well, everyone has bad taste now and then. Material on L. Frank Baum, linguistic changes, the history of guidance systems, and childhood fantasies. A good assortment, all quite well written. Art and repro good.

GROGGY #14 thru 17 [Eric and Kathy Mayer, 1771 Ridge Road East, Rochester NY 14622 -- irregular? -- for comment] One of the few fanzines to use multi-colored ditto; quite possibly the only current one. Generally pleasant personalzine, with usually an assortment of comments to arouse my interest.

PVENUS PFLYTRAP #2b [Alexandra Van Swearingen, 385 Norton St., New Haven CT 06511-75 cents -- irregular] This one has been lying around here for some time -- which is the problem when we haven't produced a YANDRO for some time. Still, if copies aren't available I assume another issue will come along eventually. This is a sort of family fanzine; a different member of the family has edited each issue. (Come to think of it, another issue may not appear; I don't know how large the family is.) Mostly reviews, but there is a parody of Clark Ashton Smith (I wouldn't have thought it possible if I hadn't seen it) and an article or two. I enjoyed it, though the review may be a bit dated by now.

ANVIL #18 thru 22 [Birmingham SF Club, Box 57031, Birmingham AL 35259-7031 - bimonthly - 6 for \$3] Reviewing a regularly-published fanzine is even more embarrassing when one hasn't had an issue for some time. Lots of con reports in here, but they make up for it with an interesting letter column. A fair number of reviews, club notes, and the occasional article. Good artwork, good repro.

NYCTALOPS 17 [Harry O. Morris, Jr., 502 Elm St. SE Albuquerque NM 87102 -- \$3.00] Serious weird-horror fanzine. Slick paper, excellent art, mostly (but not entirely) serious articles and letters, poetry that I find pretentious (as I do most modern poetry) and a couple of prose-poems that are very good if one likes verbiage reminiscent of Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith.

MAINSTREAM #7 [Jerry Kaufman & Suzle, 4326 Winslow Place North, Seattle WA 98103 - irregular - \$1] Fannish type, with a long and reasonably good lettercolumn, articles on English choral works (only a graduate of Irish Fandom could do a humorous article on English choral works), blue food, cheap long-distance telephoning, fanzine Hugos, and editorials. Artwork good enough but scarce; repro good. I'm not as vitally interested in fandom as the editors are, but I generally enjoy their fanzine.

SING ME A SONG #4, 5, 6 [P.E. Presford, "Ty-Gwyn," Maxwell Close, Buckley, Clwyd., North Wales, Great Britain -- quarterly? -- no price listed] And I swear that #7 arrived a week or so ago and promptly disappeared, after I'd read it but before I could comment. Too damned much junk lying around this house -- 90 percent of it mine. Anyway, this is a small personalzine; letters, a few fanzine and book reviews, and mostly editorial comments. These things depend entirely on whether or not you like the editor and/or find him/her interesting. I enjoy this enough to comment on it more or less regularly.

NIEKAS #27 thru 30 [Niekas, 106N School St., Laconia NH 03246 for subs and RFD 1, Box 63N, Center Harbor NH 03226 for trades and contribs -- quarterly -- \$2.50] 70 to 80 pages, printed. Lots of material, a fair blend of serious, humorous, verse, articles, reviews, and letters. Generally good art. Obviously I'm not going to get into any specific details of a total of 296 pages of fanzine, but in general I enjoy NIEKAS, though I seldom find a lot to comment on. Possibly because of a somewhat professional attitude in the zine; generally the authors know what they're about and don't make any rash claims that can be disputed -- and generally don't infect me with their enthusiasm, either. (Not a criticism; pro authors don't infect me with their enthusiasm, either, but I thoroughly enjoy reading them. It's just a different attitude.)

UNDULANT FEVER #7 [Bruce D. Arthurs, 3421 W. Poinsettia, Phoenix AZ 85029 -- irregular -- for trade or comment] Editorial material, reviews, a short lettercolumn, and an interview with Terry Carr. Oddly enough, while I generally like the material of both Bruce and Hilde, this particular issue didn't seem quite up to par. (Which probably means that they were writing about subjects that don't interest me...) Generally enjoyable fanzine; ask for a copy of #8.

P*S*F*Q #6 [Michael Ward, Box 1496, Cupertino CA 95015 -- irregular -- \$2.50] Another printed fanzine, which seems to be The Way To Go. YANDRO may be going that route by next year, mainly due to lack of time to do the work of publishing. This is a basically serious and in some ways trendy fanzine. Material -- this issue, anyway -- is almost entirely on slightly dated but still current enthusiasms: feminism, Lovecraft, Dune, the Space Shuttle. Big and generally good lettercol. Art technically good but generally not my type.

DEBRIS #8 [John Boston, 225 Baltic St., Brooklyn NY 11201 -- irregular -- sample free for a SASE] Oddities in the news; 10 pages of material similar to our Mailboxings column. I think my favorite is the one about the man who was "shot in the arm by his German Shepherd while teaching it to attack and disarm intruders." He must have been a remarkably good teacher. This one is well worth your attention.

This isn't exactly a fanzine...midwest congoers may recall seeing questionnaires at various cons last year, from members of the Purdue Sociology Dept. I filled one out and requested a copy of the final report. Got one this April, a paper presented to the Popular Culture Association. Not much that fans didn't already know -- except possibly that the purveyors of the questionnaire weren't as naive as some con-goers suspected. They had "nearly 700" responses which is more than enough for most psych papers. I was amused by the item that 27 percent of respondents hoped to find some sex at the con but only 10 percent did -- not surprised, but amused. I'll go along with their conclusion that fannish sex is mostly talk. The paper is moderately interesting and I think mostly accurate.

EDITORIAL ADDENDUM (from RSC) In my list of things we did this summer, I forgot to mention that Juanita, Bruce, Lori and I made a pilgrimage to the grave of John Cleve Symmes, the inventor of the Hollow Earth Theory. (There is a model of the hollow earth on top of his tombstone.) I would have laid a doughnut on his grave except that there were none handy, so we settled for reading the inscription, taking photos, and trying to make out the markings on the hollow globe thru the scars left by vandals. Couldn't do it, but could see that it originally had included a map of the world as known in (as I recall) 1834.

NATTER REIN SCN

COLUMN

by

ETHEL

LINDSAY

Last Saturday I accompanied my cousin to an exhibition of Scottish Country Dancing. She wanted to watch the team from the class she had joined and I had always loved this type of dancing when I was young enough to dance and still had the puff to do so. The teams came from all over Angus -- Carnoustie had an adult team plus a team from the local primary school. There was a very varied programme divided between the massed adult dancers, the children, and individual teams showing off their best dance. Apart from being beautiful to watch everyone was enjoying themselves so much it was infectious. It was an exhibition, not a competition, so if any team got into a fankle it really didn't matter. Some of the children did with sometimes great hilarity.

Scottish Country Dancing is quite different from Highland dancing. The country dancing is a team affair and the Highland dancer is much more of an individual. Some of the steps are basically the same but the country dancer must lift and point the foot without dragging it across the floor as in Highland dancing. Shortly after this I saw some Irish dancing on television and felt it much inferior to the Scottish variety. Irish tradition is to keep the body immobile whilst the feet dance out briskly. It is certainly clever but not the least graceful; and I find the Scottish tradition much more pleasurable to watch. I am sure that the Regency dancers among American fans would love Scottish country dancing. There is the same pattern to be worked out, the same giving of a leading role to each pair,-- but you dance not walk to a sprightly jig or a stately pavane.

Today my brother David, my sister-in-law Ina and I went off to Forfar. I always love this drive as we are facing the Grampian mountains and they always look gorgeous whether covered by snow or getting occasional glints of sun. The return trip is just as enjoyable as then we face the North Sea and can see the sweep of the various bays that marks the coastal towns like Carnoustie.

Forfar is the County Town of Angus and is very old. Malcolm the 3rd of Scotland held a parliament here in 1057. Little of the layout has changed and there are even streets of cobblestones. It is definitely a country town surrounded by farms and woods full of partridge. Today as

we passed one grassy hill I had a sudden remembrance of myself at 17 with a group of student nurses laughing and joining in the crowds there to roll their Easter eggs. I remembered having fun with the young farm hands who clustered around us. I also recalled secretly looking down my nose at them. They were all so ponderously slow; I was always a sentence ahead of them if not a whole paragraph. Oh but I was a city snob then! Mind you I still have a feeling of superiority to Forfar -- a fine place to visit but who would want to live there!

I was born and brought up in Dundee which is Scotland's third largest city. I got some insight into my native town recently whilst reading a book called WITCH'S BLOOD! It is set in Dundee in the 16th century and begins when Dundee is taken by an English army. After the army departs a Dundee woman is left with a boy child by one of the soldiers and the neighbours give him the name of English. The book follows the fortunes of the English family and in so doing gives a fascinating history of Dundee. To me it illuminated many of the thoughts and actions that I had taken for granted.

In the 16th century Dundee was quite small and surrounded by travelling people.

The first English boy started at the foot of the ladder, gathering up the night-sobl thrown into the streets; this was later sold to the surrounding farms as manure. When one reads of the life in those teeming tenements and the desperate struggle that was needed to get just one foot up the ladder I cannot be surprised that there still lingers around these parts the desire to be superior to someone.

When I had seen the last copy of Scottische finished, and my faithful Gestetner taken out the door, I felt a vast relief. It was not so much the time consumed in producing a fanzine that had been bothering me, but the large amount of guilt I had been feeling whenever I procrastinated over an issue. Now I am feeling guilty when I don't write a letter of comment to the fanzines that still come in. When this gets bad enough I sit down and write a batch of letters. Hey ho, why do I always feel guilty about not doing things? What a terrible sense of righteousness I must have never to feel guilty about the things I do.

by Anne + Louise Miesel

From Ireland, Brian Duffy came
To seek his fortune and his fame;
Was hired to guard some magic beer
When the evil Turks drew near.

Throughout Vienna's first long siege,
With a wizard as his liege,
He fought many a chilling fright
And slept not a wink at night.

With trusty sword and matchlock gun,
He made those turbaned terrors run.
Brian fought the Turkish wizard
And slit that bad fellow's gizzard.

When everything was looking down
For hearty old Vienna town,
Our Brian Duffy saved the beer,
So let us raise a hearty cheer.



(suggested by THE DRAWING OF THE DARK by Tim Powers)

THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE MAILBOX

AL SIROIS sends a clipping datelined Stoneham, MA: "Horde of House Cats Eat Their Dead Owner." Seems this woman had 32 cats in the house, and dropped dead, and the cats got hungry, and... The cats also "drove off police attempts to recover the body" and were finally subdued by four animal control officers with "protective gloves, nets, and snares."// There's a collector in Vincennes, Indiana, after my own heart; a newspaper article credits him with owning "a dozen pieces of artillery, three jeeps, a command car, a half-track, three armored personnel carriers, and two tanks," one of the tanks being a Sherman. He's a former history teacher and currently the Knox County judge. (Know him, Hensley?)// SANDRA MIESEL sends an item from the Indianapolis Star Magazine about a raccoon who paints pictures. Abstracts, but they look as good as most museum-quality modern art.// Sandra also sent a reprint of an item from a St. Petersburg, Florida, paper, about a chemical combination of "methyl, ethyl, and keystone." Solid as a drunken rock?// SAM & MARY LONG send a clipping saying that over 2 million sales are claimed for a kit that nullifies your car's catalytic converter, and another one about a Detroit church which sponsors a regular religious program, a free medical clinic, a day school, and an auto repair shop. One-stop shopping.// Also from the Longs: news that the U.S. Army is experimenting with a war dance to "psych up" the troops.// A Republican request for campaign money was sent to "only proud, flag waving Americans like you who I know are willing to sacrifice to keep our country strong." Maybe that's why the Democrats won?// Local newspaper headline: "Harlan Finds No Easy Answers To Garbage-Disposal Problems." (No comment.)// BOB FRINEY sends a catalog page in which the Avon pb of AN EARTHMAN ON VENUS, by "Ralph McFarley," is listed at \$100.// KAY ALDERSON notes that there is now an Institute for Amorphous Studies in Michigan.// MARY SCHAUB sends a clipping describing how a fisherman "went to jail for sworfish smuggling." Seems a rather large and awkward item to smuggle, somehow...// AL SIROIS sends an ad his wife Linda got for a free sample of "Cuban seedleaf cigars." Feminine equality, maybe?// SANDRA MIESEL contributed an account of a new patented dog-washing machine, and a report on the restoration of Leonardo's "Last Supper"... "There was a scare last year when it was found that one of the biggest cracks had either widened or narrowed."// Someone whose name I didn't record sent a photo of a "SLOW: CAT CROSSING" sign in Eugene, Oregon. Maybe it's the climate; our Hoosier cats are pretty speedy.// ALAN FORD sent an ad for a cook for the British Antarctic Survey, but it's out of date now...// JOE MAJORS sent an item about a Kentucky candidate for sheriff who was charged with shooting one of his opponents. If you can't win any other way, I guess...// SCHAUB, with an article on the comeback being made by longhorn cattle. Lean meat is suddenly a marketing advantage, and the longhorns need less care than more civilized cattle, a big advantage now that inflation has hit every aspect of that care.// DON & MAGGIE THOMPSON send an ad for "Boar Mate," an aphrodisiac for hogs. You spray it at the sow, and if she acts interested you bring on the actual bear.// Which leads to an article from the LONGS on PLAYBOAR, the Canadian trade journal that features a littermate of the month and serious (they say) articles with titles like "Tanks for the Mammaries" (on artificial piglet feeders). MIESELS sent the same article, I see. Different newspaper but same article.// MAYDENE CROSBY sends one about a high-altitude balloon being used to carry instruments to detect anti-matter. Interesting, even if the article did say "...the giant balloon was needed -- to carry the detectors high enough to see cosmic rays before they hit any air." (I always thought that balloons, unlike rockets, needed to have some air around.)// ERIC MAYER sends a sheet of legal decisions, including one where a Michigan worker on assignment in England, who was killed by carbon monoxide while having sexual intercourse with a co-worker, was entitled to benefits provided for someone who dies on the job. Even though the death didn't occur on the employer's premises. Same sheet notes that a Detroit bankruptcy court was placed in receivership.

reading ('redin)

derived from

books

Golden Minutes

MR. MONSTER'S MOVIE GOLD, edited by Hank Stine [Donning, \$12.95] A collection of stills and posters for -- mostly -- early science fiction and fantasy films, taken from the Ackerman collection. Captions by Porry, introductory and closing articles by Ackerman, Eldon K. Everett and Stephen King. I had never realized there was that much fantasy being made in the early days; most of the material looks like it was from perfectly awful movies, but there is a fantasy starring Will Rogers that might be interesting, and several others I feel sorry to have missed. Including one or two that never quite made it into the theaters. One of these, "War Eagles," must be the bizarre unfinished movie that H. Allen Smith writes about in LOST IN THE HORSE LATITUDES; I always wondered if it was real or if Smith made the whole thing up. Evidently it was real. Stranger things in Heaven and Hollywood... It's a fascinating book for anyone interested in visual fantasy; I would recommend skipping all the written material except the photo captions.

SCARLET DREAM, by C.L. Moore [Donald M. Grant, Publisher, \$20] I've been acquainted with Northwest Smith for 30 years now, but until reading this collection of the stories about him I hadn't realized how slight my acquaintance was. "Shambleau" of course is in numerous anthologies, Wollheim reprinted "Black Thirst" in AVON FANTASY READER 10, these many years ago, and "Song in a Minor Key," an explanation rather than a story, I'd read and forgotten. The rest -- "The Tree of Life," "Scarlet Dream," "Dust of the Gods," "Lost Paradise," "Julhi," "The Cold Gray God," and "Yvala" -- I'd never encountered before. Read all at once, the stories do have a certain monotony; Smith, chasing a girl or a fortune, walks into a trap and fights his way out, never getting either girl or fortune but destroying a Horror and escaping to repeat the procedure in the next story. The writing itself is much better than that; almost any one of the stories, by itself, grips the reader until the very end. "Black Thirst" is my choice of the best of the lot; nobody any more really believes in the sort of evil described there, but Moore can almost make you believe it while you're reading, purple prose and all. Artwork by Alicia Austin detracts from the stories, since she essays a comic-book adventure style without any attempt to get into the spirit of the prose -- presumably Moore never made any sort of believer out of her.

A DARK HORN BLOWING, by Dahlov Ipcar [Viking, 1978] A fantasy based on an assortment of folksongs, primarily the Child ballad "The Queen of Elfin's Nourice." The Elf Queen's illness leads to a tangle of villainy in both elfin and human realms. An excellent story, particularly for folksong enthusiasts.

OATH OF FEALTY, by Larry Niven & Jerry Pournelle [Timescape, \$13.95 and \$2.95] Fast-paced adventure story of an elitist arcology on the borders of a future and somewhat degenerate Los Angeles. It's as much propaganda as the average feminist novel, though not for the same things -- this stresses Work Ethic, a simplistic view of crime, justice for the middle class, etc. I must admit that I enjoyed every bit of it, even while knowing that it wouldn't work. (Our nice Libertarian Republic vanished not because of nasty Liberals but because everyone wanted just a little more

than the law allowed for himself.) It's an enjoyable action-adventure novel; not very strong philosophically.

THE GOLDEN TORC, by Julian May [Houghton Mifflin, \$13.95] Second book in the Pliocene Exile serial. This is pretty straight action-adventure, with a cast of thousands, and quite enjoyable even though I don't believe a word of it. The various subplots are becoming as complicated as a soap opera and have about as much depth, but they do keep things moving.

MAJIPOOR CHRONICALES, by Robert Silverberg [Priam Books, \$5.95, Clothbound, \$12.95] I've always liked Silverberg's non-fiction, partly because of the dispassionate style that seems to fit the chronicling of history and archaeology. Unfortunately, he uses much the same style in his fiction, and it doesn't work at all well in depicting emotion and psychological stress. One can well believe that these stories were unearthed from dusty tomes of the past; that the chronicler is reliving them is much less obvious. They are presumably glimpses into the past of Majipoor, the world of LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE (which I haven't read). The emotions and psychology are there, placed carefully within each story; so carefully that I rather expected a quiz at the end of the book. It's technically well done, but I didn't like it.

MALLWORLD, by Somtow Sucharitkul [Starblaze, \$4.95] A collection of the stories which originally appeared in Asimov's Magazine. I never liked the background, but that's a personal foible; it's one of the few original backgrounds to come along in the last few years. The stories are generally light but entertaining; the "advertisements" sandwiched in between them are amusing. Karl Kofoed's artwork runs from poor to quite good. Overall, it's moderately entertaining. You could do worse.

THE COMPLETE ROBOT, by Isaac Asimov [Doubleday, \$19.95] All of Asimov's stories dealing with robots, in a 550-page anthology. There are 30 stories here; most have appeared previously in I, ROBOT and THE FEST OF THE ROBOTS, plus several from other anthologies, but this is the first appearance in book form for four of them. The stories themselves are familiar enough; the only question is whether you want them all in one volume. Considering that Asimov made his reputation on robots (before he made it as a popular science writer), it might well be worthwhile to have everything easily available. (On the other hand, you might already have the earlier collections and object more or less violently to paying \$20 for 4 stories. I rather object to the publishing practice of including one or two original items in a reprint collection, myself, but publishers certainly seem to like it.

FEDERATION, by H. Beam Piper [Ace, \$5.95 and \$2.95] Five stories, "Omnilingual," "Naudsonce," "Oomphe! in the Sky," "Graveyard of Dreams," and "When In the Course -," plus material about Piper and his future history by Jerry Pournelle and John F. Carr. (Interestingly, previous publications credits aren't given; Ace is quite good at forgetting things like that.) Carr's bio seems to have a few glitches in it...Piper killed himself because he was destitute and "abhorred state handouts," but left a gun collection that "would be valued in six or seven figures today"? Since my only memory of him is of a crying drunk at a convention party, I tend to think he killed himself in a fit of melancholia that had very little to do with his actual status at the time. The stories are good; I'll agree with Pournelle and Carr that Piper was an expert at applying historical precedent to science fiction. Feminists might be interested in "Omnilingual," published in Astounding in 1957, which shows a woman archaeologist figuring out the problem that has stumped her male colleagues. (Or they might not, if they're dedicated to the proposition that all science fiction before they came along was anti-feminist.)

STAR SEED, by David Andreissen [Starblaze, \$4.95] An excellent if somewhat melodramatic adventure novel. A bacillus has destroyed almost all air-breathing life on Earth (or at least all mammalian life; killing a human and a turtle with the same bacillus seems improbable), leaving one underwater research station and one nuclear submarine and their total complement of nine humans and a few dolphins to carry on, as long as they breathe electrolytically-generated air and never poke their noses

above the surface. They begin to discover other deadly anomalies and look for the source, which turns out to be an alien invasion, a solution the reader has suspected all along. From there on, with the valiant humans battling the alien horde, my disbelief was never suspended for a moment, but I rather enjoyed it anyway. The under-sea background is well done, and if you're looking for a rousing adventure with the Good Guys threatened but never destroyed, here it is.

LITTLE, BIG, by John Crowley [Bantam] Mine is a special edition for the Quality Paperback Book Club and carries no price. I got it solely because Gene Wolfe recommended it. It's a fascinating account of a strange family, with allusions to all sorts of things in life and literature (I suspect I failed to notice most of them). I'm not even sure that I liked it, but it was unusual enough to keep me reading all the way through (and if I read over 500 pages of novel, there definitely has to be an attraction there). The alleged plot is relatively unimportant; it's what Crowley says along the way that's interesting. (And probably the more literary classics that one has read, the more interesting it is.)

LONELY VIGILS, by Manly Wade Wellman [Carcosa, \$15.00] I actually paid money for this one, too, mainly because I'm a Wellman fan. It's a collection of his Weird Tales stories about John Thunstone and Judge Pursuivant, originally published from 1938 thru 1951. They're somewhat repetitious in plot (though not as much as SCAR-LET DREAM), but provide a surprising variety of Menaces. Generally the longer stories are better, which means the Judge Pursuivant stories are better; there is more time to flesh out characters and build up suspense. Some of the Thunstone stories have no suspense at all; a Menace appears and Thunstone zaps it. (And while the Shonokins are interesting enough to keep us watching their multiple appearances, Rowley Thorne remains cardboard in every story in which he appears)) Still, one Thunstone story, "The Third Cry to Legba," is one of the best items in the book, along with "The Hairy Ones Shall Dance" and "The Black Drama." (Most interesting title is "The Dreadful Rabbits," and Wellman almost manages to provide a chill from the most improbable Menace I've ever encountered.) Good to excellent illustrations are by George Evans. (I kept thinking that name was familiar and finally read his brief bio and learned that he was one of the stable of EC Comics artists.)

THE COMING OF THE DEMONS, by Gwenyth Hood [Morrow, \$13.50] I couldn't turn down a "historical science fantasy" by a writer from West Lafayette, so I bought it. Mistake. The history is okay, but the depiction of the rationalistic aliens and the one girl among them who yearns for a Greater Truth (not to mention the Humble Servant of God who is juxtaposed with the Worldly Cardinal) ended my interest almost immediately. Of course, I might have liked it better if I was a believer, but it's all so painfully crude that I doubt it. A bad imitation of Robert Nathan at his sopiest.

LAUGHING SPACE, edited by Isaac Asimov and J.O. Jeppson [Houghton Mifflin, \$17.95] A big, thick anthology of stf humor: stories, poems, and lots of cartoons. In over 500 pages you can crowd in a lot of short material; the contents listing covers 4 pages. There are classics ("A Subway Named Möbius" by Deutsch, "The Night He Cried" by Leiber, "The Merchant of Stratford" by Ramirez, "Quit Zoomin' Those Hands Through the Air" by Finney), there is good recent material, and of course there is some drek. I'd have preferred Alan Nelson's "Narapola" to "Silenzia" and could have done without some of the verse, but you can't have everything. All in all, it's an excellent job. Not a book to be read in one sitting, but to be dipped into when you feel the need of something amusing.

SPECULATIONS, edited by Isaacs Asimov and Alice Laurance [Houghton Mifflin, \$12.95] A gimmick anthology; stories are coded so that the reader can only find out who wrote what by going to some effort. You're supposed to see if you know enough about individual styles to match author with story. It's one of the dumber ideas of the year. Authors are Asimov, Scott Baker, Alan Dean Foster, Phyllis Gotlieb, Zenna Henderson, Joe L. Hensley, R.A. Lafferty, Laurance & William Carlson, Jacqueline Lichtenberg, Roger Robert Lovin, Rachel Cosgrove Payes, Bill Pronzini, and Barry Malzberg, Mack

Reynolds, Joanna Russ, Robert Silverberg, Jack Williamson, and Gene Wolfe. Assuming that you enjoy playing games with your fiction, how many of those people have recognizable styles? Anyway, I checked the code out with Lafferty to see how it worked (because Lafferty is easy to tell) and ignored it from there on out. The next problem with the book is that most of the fiction isn't very good. Lafferty's "Great Tom Fool" is well done as well as being distinctive. Otherwise... "Harpist" is an interesting back-country fantasy. "The Newest Profession" is acceptable if you prefer emotions over story-line. "The Mystery of the Young Gentleman" is a homosexual wet-dream but well enough crafted. "...Old...As a Garment" is an interesting idea. Aside from those there was nothing included that I didn't regret wasting my time reading. Avoid at all costs.

WINDHAVEN, by George R.R. Martin & Lisa Tuttle [Timescape, \$13.95 and \$3.50] I'm a bit late in reviewing this one, so keep it short. Essentially it's the biography of a woman in a human society adapting to an alien planet. Well handled, an interesting society and an interesting life. The authors perhaps try to cram more significance into it than it can take, but otherwise it's well done and recommended.

PRIDE OF CHANUR, by C.J. Cherryh [DAW #464, \$2.95] This is by far the best Cherryh novel I've read. Told from the point of view of an alien trader-captain who rescues a lone human (a new species to her) from a shipload of her own enemies, it provides the fascinating background of the hani, the problem of understanding when there is no common language, and an interstellar war with two races working uneasily together. (The hani idea of war is much like that of the British East India Company; you arm your ships in case of trouble, but you don't fight unless you're forced to because fighting is bad for business.) All the ideas are well worked out, and Captain Pyanfar is one of the best alien characters in sf. Michael Whelan has produced an outstanding cover for the book.

DOMINION, by Fred Saberhagen [Tor, \$2.95] A new book in the Dracula series. Which is beginning to wear thin about now, as series do. Saberhagen is having to reach further for his conflicts, too; this time he has to bring Dracula face to face with Merlin in order to give him an even match. It's reasonably well done, though the Littlewood family is a bit hard to believe in. (Interestingly since I'm opposed to continuing characters, I kept wishing for more of Dracula in this one and less of the rest of the cast.) The multiple viewpoints tend to get a shade out of hand, too, but overall it's interesting and worth reading. I'm not sure what Saberhagen can do for an encore, though -- and I'd be happy if he dropped the series with this one.

THE ICE IS COMING, by Patricia Wrightson [Del Rey, \$2.25] Another of the author's Australian fantasies. The mythological characters, Nargun, Mimi, Nanya, and others, are totally different from the common, or western European, brand, and the story itself is very well done. Somewhat simpler than the average because it was originally a juvenile, but it's recommended for adults as well.

THE ORPHAN, by Robert Stallman [Pocket Books, \$2.25] The first two parts of a story
THE CAPTIVE, by Robert Stallman [Timescape, \$2.50] about an alien who is a sort-of werewolf but not exactly. An alien child abandoned on Earth, but a considerably more self-possessed one than "E.T." In these first books it grows up, adopts a human family or vice versa, or perhaps both, creating semi-independent human personas along the way, and eventually marries. It's a strange, highly original, and fascinating story, and I was only put off from reading it earlier by covers that Juanita rather liked but I consider ridiculous. Anyway, it's a marvelous story and with any luck these first two volumes will be reissued whenever the third one appears.

WIND DANCERS, by R.M. Meluch [Signet, \$2.25] Another odd alien race. The background
WIND CHILD, by R.M. Meluch [Signet, \$2.50] for this one is idiotic, and the aliens' abilities include changing from matter to energy and back again by pure willpower, which strains my suspension of disbelief well past the breaking point. Despite this, the books are entertaining adventures; mostly because they are primarily about humans who have more or less inadvertent contact with the aliens. The humans are somewhat

grotesque themselves, but quite interesting. First book has a marvelous cover by an uncredited artist.

TO SAIL THE CENTURY SEA, by G.C. Edmondson [Ace, \$2.25] A sequel to THE SHIP THAT SAILED THE TIME STREAM. As with most sequels, it's not as good as the original, but it's still quite entertaining reading. There are plots and counterplots as the only ship able to move in time is sent on a mysterious mission with an impractical scientist and a fanatic security officer in more or less joint command.

OUTWARD BOUND, by Juanita Coulson [Del Rey, \$2.95] Book Two of "Children of the Stars." Conflict here is mostly ideological rather than physical; Brenna Saunder is risking life and fortune to discover the secret of faster-than-light spacedrive, while her lover Derek Whitcomb has given up on FTL and is using proven technology to build a sublight ship to carry passengers in cryogenic suspension. No possible compromise; either one of them gives in, or they'll be permanently separated when Derek's ship takes off for the stars. It's the ultimate in marriage-versus-career stories, but I must admit that I didn't like it as well as I did the first book in the series. Not enough action for me, I suspect.

PROJECT POPE, by Clifford D. Simak [Del Rey, \$2.75] Another group of Simak's early assorted but warmly human aliens. These include a robot religious order, a sort of quiet and genial version of The Heap, and a smoky bubble. There are also various oddly assorted humans, a plan to reach Heaven via spaceship, an alien invasion, and other events. In this case, the parts never quite added up to a whole for me, I enjoyed it while I was reading it, but it never suspended my disbelief and now when I come to review it a month or so later I've forgotten most of it already. Nice try but no cigar.

THE HUNTERS, by Jack Lovejoy [Tor, \$2.75] The plot here -- barbaric descendants of humanity overthrow their alien conquerors -- is no more believable than it used to be in the old pulps -- but it's just as much fun. Imagination used to like this plotline, as I recall. Anyway, this time the aliens have bred humans the way we breed dogs, and for the same reasons), and the Free Human who goes into the conquered lands to investigate finds a variety of breeds. And, of course, a girl. And the aliens and their machines. And a scientific genius -- a young one, for a change. It's a type of adventure-fantasy that I haven't seen in about thirty years, and a good example of the breed, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Not recommended to anyone who feels that science fiction should be a serious literary craft, but it's a good way for us lowbrows to spend a couple of hours.

WORLDS, by Joe Haldeman [Timescape, \$2.50] First of a trilogy, it says. Protagonist is Marianne O'Hara, who lives in a satellite colony with her husbands but is given a chance to go to Earth and study. What the reader gets is a tour of 21st Century human society, on and off Earth. Not at all my sort of book, but I read it all the way through, which proves it was interesting. Definitely a downer. Under my cynicism, I have this belief that humanity, if not improving, is at least not degenerating. If Joe has any such belief, he doesn't let it show in this book. A grim experience, but recommended.

ALDAIR: THE LEGION OF BEASTS, by Neal Barrett, Jr. [DAW #466, \$2.25] The alleged conclusion of the Aldair series. (I'm skeptical; there are openings left for a lot more stories, if there's a market.) It's a good rousing finish; I still think the series was one book too long, but it was the book previous to this one that I'd excise. Aldair and his group cross space and time, find allies among Men, vanquish their foes, and settle down to a triumphant middle age.

STATIONS OF THE NIGHTMARE, by Philip José Farmer [Tor, \$2.75] One of Roger Elwood's CRYSTAL SINGER, by Anne McCaffrey [Del Rey, \$2.95] best ideas has been mined for these two novels. In the mid-1970's Elwood edited an anthology series called CONTINUUM, which contained stories which fit into a series; each author had his or her own series. Now, two of the series have been published as novels. Farmer's

was a serialized novel to begin with; McCaffrey has revised and expanded hers. In general, NIGHTMARE could be described as "Archie Bunker Becomes Superman." Basically psychological (which immediately loses it a few points in my estimation). The real hero of the book is one Leo Queequeg Tincrowder, a writer of science-fictional soft-core porn, and a cynic. A readable book, if not top-flight. Much the same can be said of SINGER, which mostly concerns the emotions involved in singing. I couldn't stand McCaffrey's heroine in person, but the story of a woman who refuses to work at anything where she's not the greatest is an interesting personality study. The idea of valuable crystals which can be cut only by people whose trained voices are attuned to them is interesting and original, if not very believable. All in all, either book is entertaining, neither is award-worthy, and probably McCaffrey's is slightly the better of the two.

DOWNBELOW STATION, by C.J. Cherryh [DAW #420, \$2.75] Cherryh's new "big" book, which everyone but me seems to think is marvelous. It's one of these big involved sagas, with lots of characters, political infighting, intrigue, etc. Basic plot is a huge space station trying to survive on the border between Earth's fading empire and the growing power of rebellious colonies with independent space-traders shifting allegiances whenever it's profitable. Cherryh is unique in making the ex-colonies even more repellent than the empire; rather as though the Communists had taken Siberia but left European Russia in control of the Tsar, and were waging undeclared war along the border. Despite all this, I confess that I got bored with the story and didn't finish it; all the various characters reminded me more of a TV drama than they did of real life.

THE EYES OF TEXAS, by Daniel da Cruz [Del Rey, \$2.25] For any readers who feel that Heinlein, Anderson, and Pournelle are too leftist for them...I must admit that this saga of a foul Communist plot, defeated by a noble Texas millionaire, reads fast and the final battle is well and imaginatively worked out, despite my tendency to laugh in the wrong places now and then. I suspect the science involved is as good as anything in recent sf. I could hardly take the book seriously, but I enjoyed it; it's silly, but fun.

DUNSTON WOOD, by William Horwood [Ballantine, \$3.50] This one, on the other hand, was such slow and boring reading that I bogged down completely before I finished it. It's an attempt to do with moles what Richard Adams did with rabbits, and it fails utterly. Mainly, I think, because almost all the emphasis is on spiritual values. The author is riding his own hobby-horse and telling us what Life Should Be Like; I can forgive him for being wrong, but not for being tedious. Avoid at all costs.

BIPOHL, by Frederik Pohl [Del Rey, \$2.75] Two of Pohl's novellas from Galaxy, "Age of the Pussyfoot" and "Drunkard's Walk." In their initial versions, they gave me a bad opinion of Pohl's writing ability that I've managed only partially to overcome since. In the 20 years or so since, I seem to have forgotten them. Skimming thru reveals that they're not as bad as I once thought -- neither are they particularly outstanding. "Pussyfoot" is one of the early stories involving cryogenics, and it has a moral that I can agree with; "You can't go back." (I don't like it, you understand, but I agree with it.) I don't much like Pohl's future world, either, but it's more probably than most. "Walk" is something of a futuristic detective story; someone or something is making the protagonist try to commit suicide, and he has to find out why and who. He does, of course.

SPACEWAYS #1 thru 5, by "John Cleve" [Playboy, \$2.50] I told Andy these read like Doc Smith with sex and he looked a bit disconcerted, but they do. There is the same galactic-spanning adventure plot and much the same approach to future technology, not to mention future politics. (Though I'll admit to a number of puns that Doc would never have attempted, and a much faster pace.) There's a huge cast of characters, so that an individual with a minor role in one book may be the protagonist of the next. A fair share of the characters seem to be pirates, slavers, rapists, etc.; simplifies getting in the required sex. They're quick reading, though my dislike of series came out rather early in the game and I did little more than skim the last several.

DREAMRIDER, by Sandra Miesel [Ace, \$2.75] A different use of psi powers; Sandra's heroine can cross to alternate worlds as well as exploring the distant future, but only mentally. She's taught to use her powers in order to change her own bleak world (in which the liberals who believe that nobody should ever suffer have triumphed and the government forces happiness along with conformity). Both her own world and the future one of her mentors are well thought out, plotting is excellent, and if the characters aren't really outstanding they at least have some depth to them. Overall, very good.

THE NARROW LAND, by Jack Vance [DAW #490, \$2.25] Includes the title story (genetic innovators on an alien world), "The Masquerade on Dicontropus" (the advantage of nosiness), "Where Hesperus Falls" (an unusual method of suicide), "The World-Thinker" (pursuit in a mental world), "Green Magic" (the problem of a little knowledge), "The Ten Books" (living up to superlatives), and "Chateau d'If" (the ultimate vacation; switch bodies with someone else). The first story and the last are very good indeed; the rest don't wear all that well on second reading.

SOLDIER BOY, by Michael Shaara [Timescape, \$2.50] Shaara is one of those authors who did leave the science fiction field -- instead of just talking about it -- and went on to win a Pulitzer Prize for his Civil War book, THE KILLER ANGELS. Most of these stories are from the 1950s, two, "Opening Up Slowly" and "Starface," original with this book. Shaara was always a good writer; he says "All The Way Back" was his first story, and I've remembered it fondly for 30 years. (And still like it better than I do any of his four recent ones, which says something about both of us, probably.) Quite often he gets into pure emotions and I can do without them, but "Time Payment" (with the original ending) and "Death of a Hunter" and "All The Way Back" are worth the price of admission, and most of the others are well done -- even the ones I don't happen to like. Recommended.

THE BEST OF WILSON TUCKER [Timescape, \$2.75] Copyrights 1943 thru 1971. Includes "To the Tombaugh Station" (the original novelet), "To A Ripe Old Age" (the last man in the world -- with the D.T.'s?), "King of the Planet" (the problems of one particular immortality), "Exit" (the scientific jailbreak), "The Tourist Trade" (bugging the time travelers and vice versa), "My Brother's Wife" (a different sort of miscegenation), "The Job Is Ended" (another different sort of miscegenation), "Able to Zebra" (the big cover-up), "Time Exposures" (photographing the past to solve crimes). A variety of seriousness and humor; stories are more plot and less overt psychology than the modern norm. I enjoyed it.

STELLAR #7, edited by Judy-Lynn del Rey [Del Rey, \$2.50] Includes "Making Light" by James P. Hogan (an engineering proposal for Earth), "Horn o' Plenty" by Terry Carr and Leanne Frahm (swapping with aliens), "Excursion Fare" by James Tiptree, Jr. (the ship of the damned with a vaguely science-fictional twist), "War Movie" by Larry Niven (humanity as movie extras), "Folger's Factor" by L. Neil Smith (the pause that refreshes), "Pelangus" by Rick Raphael (sea-ranching problems), "The Mystery" of the Duplicate Diamonds" by Paul Carter (on the run through alternate worlds), "The Two Tzaddiks" by Ira Herman (religious disputes in a space colony), and "Identity Crisis" by James P. Hogan (overcrowding of a sort). No real classics, but I enjoyed nearly all of the stories. Recommended.

SWORD OF CHAOS, edited by Marion Zimmer Bradley [DAW #477, \$2.95] The second Darkover anthology. All original stories; 18 of them. 19, if you count Millea Kenin's atrocious pun at the end of the book. I think the major drawback is that the authors are nearly all infatuated with Darkover, and expect the reader to be equally so. Too many of the stories are incidents which explain a bit of Darkovan history but fail to stand on their own as stories. Still, Susan Schwartz, Lynn Holden, Aly Parsons, Dorothy Heydt, and Lynn Mims manage acceptable fiction. An excellent book for Darkover fans; an average one for the rest of us.

ISAAC ASIMOV PRESENTS THE GREAT SF STORIES 7, edited by Asimov & Martin H. Greenberg [DAW #489, \$3.50] "The Waveries" by Fredric Brown, "The Piper's Son" by Lewis Padgett,

"Wanted -- and Enemy" by Fritz Leiber, "Blind Alley" by Asimov, "Correspondence Course" by Raymond F. Jones, "First Contact" by Murray Leinster, "The Vanishing Venusians" by Leigh Brackett, "Into Thy Hands" by Lester del Rey, "Camouflage" by Henry Kuttner, "The Power" by Murray Leinster, "Giant Killer" by A. Bertram Chandler, "What You Need" by Kuttner, "De Profundis" by Leinster, "Pi in the Sky" by Brown. No brilliant and outstanding fiction here, but a good assortment of stf. "First Contact" is often reprinted and has given its name to a sub-genre of stf, and "Correspondence Course" was changed almost beyond recognition and turned into the movie "This Island Earth." "The Power" is a lovely story of a medieval sorcerer faced with an alien, and "Giant Killer" is one of the best depictions of aliens ever done. The rest are good solid stf of the times. Not as good a book as previous ones in the series, but well worth reading.

THE 1982 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF, edited by Don Wollheim [DAW #480, \$2.95] Includes "Blind Spot" by Jayge Carr, "Highliner" by C. J. Cherryh, "The Pusher" by John Varley, "Polyphemus" by Michael Shea, "Absent Thee From Felicity Awhile" by Somtow Sucharitkul, "Out of the Everywhere" by James Tiptree, Jr., "Slac//" by Michael P. Kube-McDowell, "The Cyphertone" by S.C. Sykes, "Through All Your Houses Wandering" by Ted Reynolds, and "The Last Day of Christmas" by David J. Lake. A good assortment; I voted for "Slac//" and "Polyphemus" for Hugos; don't recall if I voted for "The Pusher" or not but I at least thought about it. I'm not sure I'd pick all of the rest as the best stories of the year, but they're all good. An excellent anthology.

FANTASY ANNUAL IV, edited by Terry Carr [Timescape, \$3.50] Includes "The Monkey" by Stephen King, "The Brave Little Toaster" by Thomas M. Disch, "The Attleborough Poltergeist" by Richard Cowper, "The Hot and Cold Running Waterfall" by Stephen Tall, "Unicorn Tapestry" by Suzy McKee Charnas, "Strata" by Edward Bryant, "The Confession of Hamo" by Mary C. Pangborn, "Feesters In The Lake" by Bob Leman, "Don't Look Back" by Pat Murphy, and "Letters To the Postman" by Robert Aickman. Terry goes for the psychological and the literary story -- even the ones that I find self-consciously literary, as I do several of these. Well, I liked the Cowper and the Pangborn, but I won't recommend the book.

DRAGON TALES, edited by Asimov, Greenberg, and Waugh [Fawcett, \$2.95] Striking color work on the cover; artist not credited. Stories are "Gerda" by Evelyn E. Smith, "Dragon's Teeth" by David Drake, "Two Yards of Dragon" by de Camp, "A Hiss of Dragon" by Greg Benford and Marc Laidlaw, "The Dragon Fang Possessed By the Conjuror Piou-Lu" by Fitz-James O'Brien, "The Bully and the Beast" by Orson Scott Card, "The King's Head and the Purple Dragon" by L. Frank Baum, "Soft Come the Dragons" by Dean R. Koontz, "St. Dragon and the George" by Gordy Dickson, "John Robert and the Dragon's Egg" by Thomas N. Scortia, "Demon and Demoiselle" by Janet Fox, and "Weyr Search" by Anne McCaffrey. It's a good assortment; dragons traditional and non-traditional, serious and humorous, enjoyable and boring, but mostly enjoyable.

THE MISMEASURE OF MAN, by Stephen Jay Gould [Norton] Since I got it thru a book club, I don't have a price at hand. It's an account of the history of intelligence testing from Linnaeus to the present time, and the built-in defects in the various systems including our present one. A fascinating account; I'm not at all sure I agree with all of Gould's opinions, but his refutation of various IQ systems is masterful.

FOXFIRE 4 [Anchor Press, \$5.95] I'm a bit behind on this series...This gets into major operations such as logging, and more interviews than usual, but there is still a vast amount of descriptive material on doing things by hand. File a set away to use After the Bomb...

EDWIN NEWMAN ON LANGUAGE [Warner, \$6.95] Omnibus volume including STRICTLY SPEAKING and A CIVIL TONGUE. The earlier book is the better of the two, but TONGUE has some fascinating misuses of English. It also has too many allegedly humorous mini-dramas of language misuse. I've heard comments that Newman is too rigid. No, he's not. The idea of language is to make oneself understood, and too many people can't, these days. I think some of it is part of our German heritage; adding onto the word you

have instead of looking for a different word. Newman comes down hard on "remediation," for example. We start with "remedy," which, grammatically, gives "remedial." Then, extending the process, we get "remediation." The next step, presumably, will be "remediationable" to describe those persons who can be helped by remediation. After that, God and education departments only know. Of course, Juanita has been bitching about "educationese" ever since she was exposed to it, but a lot of it is still funny as well as unintelligible. (It's probably unremediationable, too...) I also liked Newman's comments on "input," "output," and "thruput" (which presumably describes input to one ear and output from the other).

GIVING GOOD WEIGHT, by John McPhee [Farrar, Straus & Giroux] Another book club edition with no price. A collection of McPhee's essays, on farm markets, floating nuclear plants, pinball expertise, a plea for not damming the St. John River, and a favorite restaurant. There's a bit of one-upmanship in the latter: "I know the place and I'll describe it all for you but not tell the philistines where it is." But McPhee makes it interesting, even so; he may well be the best non-fiction writer in the United States today. Certainly he can write entertainingly about more subjects that normally would bore me than anyone else can.

PADDLEWHEEL PIRATE, by Gordon Newell [secondhand, \$7.50] I suppose there's a bit of one-upmanship in reviewing this, too, but I'm still looking for a copy for you, Lee. This is a biography of Captain Ned Wakeman, who took not one but two sidewheel boats from New York around the Horn to San Francisco; the second one legally. He tried it with a third but it was sunk in a hurricane off Cape Hatteras. (Wakeman and some of the crew survived; strangely enough.) Wakeman was also a prominent member of the San Francisco Committee of Vigilance (the original of the term "vigilante"), was in the U.S. Navy during the Mexican War and operated as a smuggler after that war. Fascinating account.

ROBIN HOOD, by J.C. Holt [Thames & Hudson, \$17.95] Holt is Professor of Medieval History at Cambridge, and this is his search for a historical basis for the Robin Hood myth and his tracing of various elements of the myth. Interestingly, almost none of the current mythology is original; Maid Marian, Friar Tuck, King Richard, and even Sherwood Forest were all later additions (the original setting was Barnsdale). Robin himself and Guy of Gisbourne are the only original features to survive in current film versions, and both are somewhat changed from their originals. There is somewhat more emphasis on literary scholarship than would make for easy reading, but I still enjoyed it.

WESTWARD THE TIDE, by Louis L'Amour [MAG-A-BOOK, \$1.95] Another new departure in publishing: an abridged novel in magazine format, with ads but without story illos. This is Vol. 1 #1; they're up to #20 or so by now. The series has published a variety of fiction including at least one modern horror novel, but no fantasy. (I am, incidentally, assuming the abridgement; even in large size, 77 pages doesn't seem enough for a fair-sized novel. But the publisher says it's "complete," so...) L'Amour could be vastly improved by abridgement, anyway; I can put up with a lot of male chauvinism, but there are limits. Story is a typical L'Amour Western, possibly a trifle better than most, but quite melodramatic.

THE CURSE OF THE PHARAOHS by Elizabeth Peters [secondhand] From Tartan Books, actually. A sequel to her best novel, CROCODILE ON A SANDBANK, this covers further Egyptian digs by Amelia and Radcliffe Emerson, along with minor problems such as murder and an interfering reporter from the Daily Yell. (That choice of name is delightfully appropriate; Alan Dodd still sends me cuttings from a British paper that must be a lineal descendent of the Daily Yell.) This isn't quite as good as the original novel, but it's almost as funny and one of the author's best fictional works. (I still haven't read her non-fiction, though I did buy a couple. RealSoonNow...)

PHOTO ALBUM [Rosebud Educational Society] Sent for contribs to St. Francis Indian Mission. Surely you get their requests for donations; I get one every month or so, and send money on occasion. (Usually as pay for their Indian Calendars.) Photos

here are arranged more or less chronologically; the accompanying text is brief and covers mission history and nothing else. Unfortunately, most of the photo captions are in the back of the book and keyed to 3 different numbering systems instead of being with the photos; makes it difficult to find out what you're looking at. But the book is a good pictorial history of a Catholic mission on an Indian reservation from 1886 to 1976.

WILDERNESS EXPEDITIONS, By Heinz Sielman [Franklin Watts] And I got mine as a Christmas present and have no idea what it cost. I do know it's going to be too tall for any of our bookcases, though. A huge book; 10" x 14" and over 400 pages. Most of them containing color photographs; it's an account of 20 scientific/photographic expeditions to the world's wilderness areas. Absolutely gorgeous photos -- this review is taking a long time to write because I keep flipping thru the book to see them again. Text is acceptable if not brilliant -- it's also nonessential to the enjoyment of the book.

PRACTICING HISTORY, by Barbara Tuchman [Knopf, \$16.50] A collection of essays, divided into 3 sections, which are, roughly, about (1) the writing of history, (2) history itself, and (3) the usefulness of history. I loved the book, at least partly because I could read down any page in the first section while exclaiming "Yeah!" and "Right" and even "You tell 'em, baby!" I'm not sure I've ever found anyone whose theories of writing agree so completely with mine. And I've found few who can write history so entertainingly. (Well, Alan Moorehead, perhaps, or Stewart Holbrook, or just possibly Francis Parkman. Fletcher Pratt was that good sometimes, but not all the time.) The historical essays here cover items as diverse as one of Teddy Roosevelt's international escapades to the reasons for our entry into WW I to speculation on what might have happened if the U.S. had followed up Mao Tse-Tung's offer to come to Washington in 1945 and explain his position to FDR. Excellent book.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE NIGHT, by Ursula K. LeGuin [Berkley, \$2.75] A collection of essays about writing, and about science fiction. I disagree with LeGuin much more frequently than I do with Tuchman, but she manages a thought-provoking and moderately entertaining book. (Or, possibly I should say that editor Susan Wood manages it... but in this case I think more credit goes to author than to editor.)

NO-FRILLS MYSTERY [Jove, \$1.50] Basically similar to the stf entry reviewed last
NO-FRILLS WESTERN [Jove, \$1.50] time. The author of the Western came the closest to
NO-FRILLS ROMANCE [Jove, \$1.50] writing a good genre parody (assuming that was the idea, and it seems a safe assumption). The mystery could have appeared in any of the detective pulps of the 1930s with no essential changes (though some of the hardware might have led Thirties readers to assume they were reading science fiction). And Florence Stevenson remains the only author to have written a good parody of the romance; this is merely a poor example, not a parody. Overall, the price is outrageous, the writing isn't that good, and the only reason for buying them is in the hope they will become collector's items.

BRIMSTONE, by Robert L. Duncan [Tor, \$2.95] I see this in the stf racks now and then, which is only halfway a mistake. As usual with Duncan, a lone man is bucking a Big Business coverup -- Big Business in this case being represented by the Pentagon. It's an entertaining secret agent story; Duncan's always are. (Because they are, he's the only author in the field that I read regularly.) Try it if you like intrigue.

THE WIZARD'S DAUGHTER, by Barbara Michaels [Fawcett, \$2.75] Interestingly, with that title, this has less of the supernatural in it than is usual for "Michaels." There is a fair amount of references to seances and the like, but it's all obviously a Plot by the villain. The problem is to find the villain, and the author does a pretty good job of concealing him. Detection and romance.

PEROLA, by Phyllis Ann Karr [Fawcett, \$1.50] Regency. I had to wait awhile for the musical references in this one, but they were there. Reasonably good characterization, which is about all one can hope for in a serious Regency. (Phyllis, I hope you're not the one responsible for printing "My Lord Roxton had just rode out" on

pp 68 and then "remounting the horses they had rode in" on the same page. I can forgive the third misuse of "rode" on the next page because it's dialogue, but not the first two. Fawcett could use a proof-reader.) A trifle melodramatic, but enjoyable, even if the comic relief didn't appeal to me.

REPRINTS

THE DYING EARTH, by Jack Vance [Timescape, \$2.25] EARTH is, in my estimation, Vance's THE GRAY PRINCE, by Jack Vance [DAW #473, \$2.25] single best work; his imagery and storytelling blend to create a marvelous and unique future world; magical and decadent. PRINCE isn't that good, but it's an entertaining adventure and I appreciate the closing philosophy.

THE WEREWOLF PRINCIPLE, by Clifford D. Simak [DAW #471, \$2.50] WEREWOLF concerns a THE GOBLIN RESERVATION, by Clifford D. Simak [DAW #482, \$2.25] man who changes into A CHOICE OF GODS, by Clifford Simak [Del Rey, \$2.50] -- something -- and his attempts to find out what's going on. The other two are Simak specialties: a group of down-to-earth, "homey" characters in various guises and fanciful situations. There is generally plenty of plot and action, but basically the stories make it on charm. All of these are reasonably good; GOBLIN is perhaps the best.

THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST, by Robert A. Heinlein [Fawcett, \$3.95] UNIVERSE is a clear-EXPANDED UNIVERSE, by Robert A. Heinlein [Ace, \$3.50] ing-the-desk sort of book, fiction from previous books mingled with essays and odds and ends. Not a bad deal if you don't already have most of the material. BEAST is a bad deal however you look at it; it's not Heinlein's worst book, but it makes a good try for the record.

THE DREAM-QUEST OF UNKNOWN KADATH, by H.P. Lovecraft [Del Rey, \$2.50] Collections. THE DOOM THAT CAME TO SARNATH, by H.P. Lovecraft [Del Rey, \$2.50] KADATH's title story is a short novel; remainder of both books are short stories. You're not educated in fantasy unless you've read some of Lovecraft; of these two, I'd give SARNATH a slight edge in quality.

THE WEB OF THE CHOSEN, by Jack Chalker [Del Rey, \$2.50] Basically, two novels about DANCERS IN THE AFTERGLOW, by Jack Chalker [Del Rey, \$2.50] a human investigator facing almost incomprehensible aliens. Acceptable adventures.

GODSFIRE, by Cynthia Felica [Timescape, \$2.95] Human contact with aliens, from the alien's point of view. Excellent adventure, and Heao is one of the better alien characters in stf.

RED HART MAGIC, by Andre Norton [Ace, \$1.95] One of her books for younger children. Two children learn the value of cooperation by living through historical events (or past lives?).

RITE OF PASSAGE, by Alexei Panshin [Timescape, \$2.50] The one "young adult" stf book which outdoes Heinlein.

THE IRON DREAM, by Norman Spinrad [Timescape, \$2.95] The alternate world in which Hitler expressed his fantasies as a science fiction writer, and a nasty parody of a lot of science fiction of the 1930s. A classic.

THE DREAM MILLENNIUM, by James White [Del Rey, \$2.50] Told mostly in flashbacks, as a crew-member of a starship recalls his life in a particularly unpleasant human society. I found it quite interesting the first time around, not so much so this time.

BLADE RUNNER, by Philip K. Dick [Del Rey, \$2.75] Retitling of DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP. It's not much like the movie and I don't remember it all that fondly, but for those who want to read the original material...

TROUBLE WITH LICHEN, by John Wyndham [Del Rey, \$2.25] What happens if a beauty treatment not only makes one look youthful, but actually prolongs life? An original approach to the idea of immortality.

MILLENNIUM, by Ben Bova [Del Rey, \$2.75] The problem of loyalties on the Moon; to one's Earth nation, or to fellow colonists?

SHIELD, by Poul Anderson [Berkley, \$2.50] The man with the key to the ultimate military device...

THE DIVINE INVASION, by Philip K. Dick [Timescape, \$2.95] A religious-philosophical novel which I disbelieved but enjoyed somewhat (and forgot about as soon as I finished it; I just read the hardcover 7 or 8 months ago and I turned up a complete blank when the pb appeared. I would not say it was a memorable story.

THE TEXAS-ISRAELI WAR:1999, by Jake Saunders and Howard Waldrop [Del Rey, \$2.25] Actually, Israeli mercenaries in a war between Texas and the Union. (Texans seem to enjoy contemplating this sort of scenario; I'm not sure why.)

RETIEF'S WAR, by Keith Laumer [Timescape, \$2.25] More or less humorous interstellar politics; this is one of the few (or the only?) novels in the series.

THE FLYING SORCERESS, by David Gerrold and Larry Niven [Del Rey, \$2.75] Science battling sorcery in a very funny novel.

STAR BRIDGE, by Jack Williamson and James E. Gunn [Del Rey, \$2.50] What has been described as the overthrow-the-dictator plot; a competent adventure story with good scientific background.

THE PROPHET OF LAMATH, by Robert Don Hughes [Del Rey, \$1.95] A moderately humorous fantasy; not bad, but not as funny as it tries to be.

THE BEST OF JACK VANCE [Timescape, \$2.95] An interesting collection, but a long way from Vance's best. Though "The Last Castle" is one of his better stories.

THE BOOK OF PHILIP JOSE FARMER [Berkley, \$2.50] Not exactly a reprint, since a fair number of the stories were not in the original DAW edition. (But then, a fair number of them were.) This has a fairly wide variety of plots, styles, and imagery; it's an excellent cross-section of Farmer's writing.

ALCHEMY & ACADEME, edited by Anne McCaffrey [Del Rey, \$2.25] Considered one of the best of the original-story collections when it appeared in hardcover. Material is by John Updike, Sonya Dorman, Carol Emshwiller, R.A. Lafferty, L. Sprague de Camp, Norman Spinrad, Samuel R. Delany, Daphne Castell, Joe Hensley, Avram Davidson, James Blish, Joanna Russ, Betsy Curtis, Robert Silverberg, David Telfair, Gene Wolfe, Virginia Kidd, Keith Laumer, Josephine Saxton, and Peter Tate. A group of outstanding stories (along with a few of the sort that make the others outstanding). Good cover by Morrill. Good book.

THE MYSTERIOUS PLANET, by Lester del Rey [Del Rey, \$1.95] Inspired by the boom in
OUTPOST OF JUPITER, by Lester del Rey [Del Rey, \$1.95] science fiction, The Win-
ATTACK FROM ATLANTIS, by Lester del Rey [Del Rey, \$1.95] ston Company produced a
MOON OF MUTINY, by Lester del Rey [Del Rey, \$1.95] series of juvenile stf
novels throughout the mid and late 1950s. Emphasis was on action-adventure, and the
backgrounds were quite similar to the adult stf of the period; the main difference
was that the Winston heroes had to be teen-agers and the writing had to be pretty
straightforward. Four of Lester's contributions to the series are here reprinted.
The books are excellent juveniles; not quite so excellent as adult novels. ATLANTIS
may be a bit more prophetic than Lester intended, concerning as it does the "atomic"
submarine "Triton" ("nuclear" wasn't the preferred term back then), in trouble on a
test dive. (It gets captured rather than crushed, however.) Not for fans, but they
could be quite valuable in getting younger readers interested in the genre.

EARTH INVADER, by Randall Garrett [Leisure, \$2.25] Retitling of ANYTHING YOU CAN DO.
I vaguely remembered it from Analog; the Nipe was a remarkably well-characterized
alien for the time. The "invasion" is more or less accidental; the Nipe really isn't
interested in invading Earth, but once there it must survive, and since it's biolog-
ically superior to humans... Recommended.

MORE THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE MAILBOX

MIESELS send one about the first annual cockroach race in Roachdale, Indiana. (Joe Sanders, who grew up in Roachdale, commented that he had no objection to capitalizing on the town name, but the fact that several of the entries came from his old neighborhood was a bit unsettling.)// LONGS send an item about a retired logger, Rant Mullens, who claims to have invented the Bigfoot hoax in 1924, by carving wooden "feet" and making footprints with them in the vicinity of Mt. St. Helens. Predictably, an "associate professor of anthropology" at Washington State University doesn't believe him, and insists that Bigfoot exists.// Timescape, in its publicity release for the new edition of Spinrad's THE IRON DREAM, has been banned in Germany since February, 1982.// MIESELS send a recipe for antler brandy, invented by Ting Chung-Po of Hong Kong. (If you really want to brag about your obscure drinks...) Into brandy (preferably French) one mixes deer antlers, safflower, lycium seed, Rehmannia Glutinosa, sea horse, cistanche, boned fat tonic (?), turtle shell, aloes wood, garros wood, bezoar, pearl, Adenophora Stricta, and Cordyceps Sinensis. Store for at least 3 months and then filter. Supposedly a health tonic...// SCHAUB sends a notice that a Dallas man has invented a "Do-It-Yourself Bubblegum Kit" for kids. Wrigley's is supposed to be interested in it. If you think your kids can mess up the kitchen now...// And for inventors, ROGER WADDINGTON sends a cutting of a "north country" Englishman who invented a sundial that works at night (it has an auxiliary light source) and the joke got away from him. DESIGN magazine published an article on it, the BBC wanted to feature it on one of their shows (they didn't realize it was a joke; whether DESIGN did or not is unclear from the article), and a London entrepreneur is currently -- at the time of the article -- having 150,000 of them produced in Hong Kong.// LONGS, with an item on a new cattle feed; old newspapers and magazines. Cow can digest them; on a test they allegedly preferred PLAYBOY to CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. (Which would seem to be the writer's little joke, since the article later on says that while PLAYBOY is easier to digest, the colored inks contain too many heavy metals and only newsprint can actually be used.)// Somebody called the Modello Corporation wants Juanita and her "Star Trek Organization" to sell their "Star Trek II Video Game Watch" and "Star Trek II Deluxe (or "Digital"; the words alternate) Radio Watch" at \$49.95 each. I can see thousands of happy little Trekkers buying the things, but not around here. Of course, Juanita has her choice of watches; she can also buy the Official Ball State University Watch, for \$180 to \$195, depending on type.// American Express tells me that "your company has been recommended for the American Express Corporate Card System. As you may know, not every company has been invited to apply..." Maybe more companies would be invited to apply if they'd quit offering them to non-existent firms such as Coulson Robert (God knows what sucker list they picked that one off of; some computer operator screwed up).// LONGS send an item about publicity stunts that went wrong. One of them involved putting the keys to a new car at the bottom of the swimming pool filled with green Jell-O and paper money. (Haldeman is selling publicity gimmicks now?) Problem was that the Jell-O didn't look right so food coloring was added and all the contents turned semi-permanently green.// DODD sends a cutting on an attempt to ban slingshots (called catapults over there) in England. "Killer weapons," the newspaper calls them.// It's true what they say about Scandinavians; I have a clipping from somewhere about a Dane who tried to drink himself to death -- drowning his sorrows. He managed to get over 1 percent alcohol in his blood, "the highest amount ever measured in a person," but survived. He put down 2 quarts of Scotch, apparently quite rapidly.// LONGS send a clipping about a convent in Tulsa that has been advertising on TV for women to become nuns. And apparently getting a satisfactory response.// I think I clipped this one: a citizen of the Netherlands was approached by God and requested to collect stuffed birds and animals -- in pairs -- which "would rise up and live after Judgment Day." He got an estimated 250,000, which he kept in concrete bomb shelters in his back yard, before police charged him with shooting and stuffing protected species.

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

Kay wrote about shuttle landings at Edwards AFB in California. You might be interested in shuttle landings at White Sands Missile Range. Which is rather appropriate since the thing comes in simply like a guided missile...flying like a falling rock.

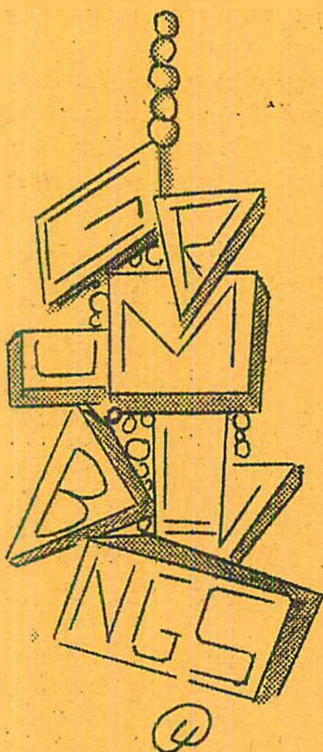
Dave Locke mentioned that Columbia was launched on 22 March and would take seven days to get from Florida to New Mexico. Not too speedy. Actually it took eight.

Chrys and I were at Mescalero lolling around at the Inn of the Mountain Gods when NASA decided to use White Sands instead of Edwards for the landing. We decided it would be a good time to head back to Albuquerque. With thousands of technicians and tourists pouring into that general area of the state all of the shop and inn keepers decided it was an excellent opportunity to get rich and prices shot up. NASA booked most of the available hotel/motel rooms in Las Cruces and Alamogordo for their people including the rooms in one X-rated motel. That led to some amusing moments and the technicians checked out as quickly as they checked in. The hucksters who normally infest Edwards at landing time crawled into southern New Mexico with their plastic souvenirs and genuine made in Taiwan Space Shuttle patches. These types allowed as how they'd have to sell more than usual to make up for the extra expense involved in traveling to White Sands.

The next blow came when the Army general in charge of WSMR announced that the public would not be allowed onto the range. Too dangerous, he said. There was some confusion as to whether the general thought it would be too dangerous for the public or whether the public would be too dangerous for the army. Either way the dismayed screams from the press, public, politicians, and chambers of commerce were heard a long way. New Mexico's governor, Bruce King, said in his best cowboy accent that he would activate portions of the New Mexico National Guard to provide crowd control. The state's congressional delegation rounded up support in Washington and told the Army that dire things would happen if the public was not allowed on the range to watch the landing. The Army relented. On Thursday, the 25th, they allowed that the public would be allowed onto a portion of the range to observe the return of Columbia. There were many warnings to stay on the road and to avoid picking up unexploded bombs, shells, warheads, and the like. People with campers and trailers began lining up outside the Tularosa gate the same day. The plan was to allow the public in through the Tularosa gate after which they would have to drive 37 miles across the desert to the viewing area which was located six miles from the landing strip. The media types had the usual field day advising people what to take for the trek. Water, tow chains, water, battery cables, water, and of course telescopes and binoculars because nobody was going to see a whole hell of a lot from six miles away without them. Nobody mentioned goggles and breathing masks.

Monday, 29th, dawned bright and clear and at six a.m. the Army opened the gate and the shuttle watchers, estimated to be between 30,000 and 40,000 poured onto the range. By the time they reached the viewing area the wind was picking up and within an hour no one could see six feet not to mention the six miles to Northrup strip. Most started back to town long before NASA called off the landing. Television reporters stopped a few of the sand-blasted vehicles at the gate to get reactions. The public was disappointed. They were not happy at all. (Those of us who know what spring is like in New Mexico and elected to stay home and watch it all on the tube sat back and giggled.)

On Tuesday the wind was down enough to allow the shuttle to come in..and it was, indeed, a beautiful landing. The crowd of on-site viewers was estimated to be something less than 20 percent of Monday's group. Evidently the rest went away cursing New Mexico.



The following weekend the Army announced that the range would be open for public viewing of the Columbia, however, no one would be allowed any closer than 1500 feet. We didn't go to that either.

All in all we got, from our point of view, some good publicity with television views of blowing sand and television commentators commenting that New Mexico was undoubtedly the most desolate place in the world. Things like that will, we hope, make refugees from the snowy lands think twice before venturing out here into the desert.

Susan Schwartz, 409 East 88 Street 5A, New York NY 10028

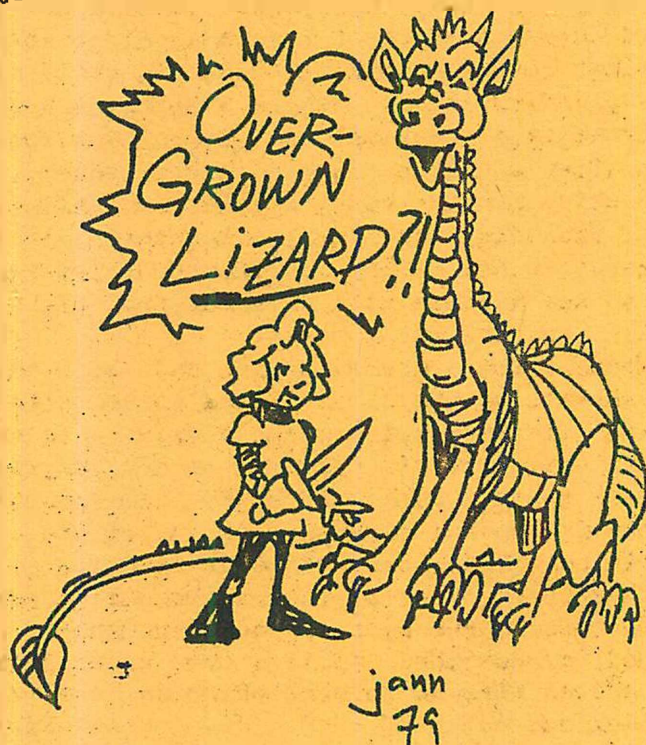
Lovely day today. I wasn't listening to the radio carefully, so I missed the charming news that Grand Central Station had a subway fire, so all the East Side trains were out. This naturally means that the buses disappear, all but a few, in which people seem to try to outdo the Guinness Book of Records in bus-stuffing. So I walked to work. Ordinarily this might have been pleasant; the shops are interesting, I stopped in at a French bakery and picked up fresh-made croissants (ham and cheese in flaky pastry), and everyone was doing the same thing. Unfortunately, I thought I might go to a concert and was wearing three-inch heels. I don't want to hear it about my inbecility in even owning shoes like that. They're pretty. And they're extremely comfortable, I mean, I've never ever had a blister, and I can get blisters from sneakers. But still...35 city blocks. I was 15 minutes late and was congratulated.

I think I'll write a first contact story in which an alien answers a high tech recruitment ad or something. One of these years, when I decid getting fired won't kill me or something...

I didn't learn to like certain children's books until I was old enough not to mind being mistaken for an overgrown kid. So what do I know about the stuff? I was the little brat who always insisted on getting a note from Mother so I could take out adult books. Very upsetting to librarians who think they know best what a nice little girl wants to read. (I'll tell you what a nice little girl wants to read, Besides Robert Heinlein and Greek mythology. Damned near everything, and MARA, DAUGHTER OF THE NILE. Which has always struck me as a very pleasant historical novel. One reason I like Juanita's historicals is that they have the same sort of feel to them. Just reread DARK PRIESTESS, and enjoyed it.

We've been working on a survey where I have to call all these managers. I'm very good now at asking people questions, but at first it was quite difficult. I'd get into these power trips with secretaries, whose ability to say no to callers is jealously guarded. One thing I learned: it's harder for a female voice to be let through to the manager; once it gets in, it's easier to get good responses. And they don't swear.

Heading up for Baltcon. For some damned reason -- probabl' the line of work I'm in -- they've got me on a panel on computers. I can't program worth shit, if you'll pardon the vulgarism. But I can't. What I can do is use computers in fiction or come up with weird ideas for their use in advertising. And when I found out that the program chair was a programmer... Seriously, given the backlash against women who write SF and fantasy, especially fantasy, it's just as well to hit people with an SF-based idea. Keep them guessing the way Juanita does



with her books. I like this habit of alternative fantasy and SF novels. And historicals. But then I'm fond of good historicals, and by good I mean not just plots, characters, etc. and not just good research, but a believable texture. I don't like taking 20th century characters out of the period, dressing them in SCA garb, and then inflicting them upon a hapless century. That way lies solipcism. If I read one more novel (aside from the one I'm going to write) about Celtic matriarchy or warrior women in which I get the feeling that the author believes it, I'm going to be ill. Fantasy is one thing. So's imagination. Revisionism is another.

I am also bored with the sort of backlashes I'm sensing. It's the usual categories. Gadgets are better than magic because gadgets are what boys do and magic is what girls do. Therefore blasters are good; unicorns are bad. There's good and bad stories about both.

What's happening is that I'm getting it from both sides. I get hit by one person with this stuff about "gentle" fantasy. I don't especially like it. Most of it is written by women in their early 20s (and who are therefore objects of envy to me), and while some of it's damned good, you can get cavities from reading lots of it. At the same time, I'm tired of the sort of turgid experimentalism of the males of that age.

I spent an evening trying to explain zines to a professor, and that was amusing. So is explaining fan fiction. I have one friend who refers to everyone in SF as a "fen." She's on swampy ground, I fear.

That business about animals never going to the vet...you know what's big in this City? Diets for pets. If that isn't bad enough, cat and dog psychologists. Mostly, as you might imagine, for cats. Do you supposed that Grundoon could qualify as learning-disabled?

Facials and body treatments...there are times when such topics are the only things that enable women to keep up conversation, or to get to know other women. I assume men have some of the same rituals, though of course the ones I know will try to assure me that they always talk about serious, meaningful things. I do not see such talk as especially serious, either, or intrinsically more meaningful than facials, etc. Of course, if it's affectionate teasing...and yet, do consider that most women take as a matter of course that men will comment and have the right to comment on feminine trivial things, but that's men's gossip is somehow immune. Then of course there are the women who trivialize "man talk." I don't understand it all. I do know that I've encountered very little hassle since I explained to a scoffing guy that shopping trips were the female version of the hunter-gatherer ritual. Like explaining to a Frenchman an American's palate as geared for soft drinks.

It's been hideously hot here and still hasn't cooled off enough for my taste. My electric bill is going to be a thing of horror. Con Ed imposes a 20 percent surcharge in the peak months. Typical New York. If this place had heraldry, I swear its blazon would be the hand outstretched, guarded by a knife, a needle, or a joint or something. God, what a city. My wallet was ripped off (along with my checkbook and makeup case) last week. The thief got \$8 and my credit cards, which will do him no good; this city has emergency numbers that operate 24 hours a day, and I called them. But meanwhile, my club cashes checks so I don't have to trek uptown everytime I want money.

Finally found a copy of Sandra's book and sat down happily with ice cream to devour both. I like it very, very much. It's damned well written and really touching...and she was so worried! I'm going to try to review it for Niekas. Speaking of which, that piece of pedantry on dragons was my paper for the international conference on the fantastic one year. All the quotations were originally in Old English, which was fun but not especially useful.

The cannibalism in COURTSHIP RITE got to me. So did the fact that I think I was eating a rare roast beef sandwich while reading the book. So did the ritual mutilations. OK, OK, I've read about sundances, but still...gross!

Did you see the article about Steven Donaldson in People? They mention that he met his second wife at a "con" which is, they say "what sci-fi types call their gatherings." God help us. Ugh. Can you see People coming to a con? I'd love to. It's

the sadist in me. We could really upset them. Imagine explaining filksinging to an outsider. My own mother heard Asimov singing CLONE OF MY OWN and was totally boggled. She did mention he had a beautiful voice.

Saw BEAST MASTER, which isn't much to write home or anywhere else about. Here's the beautiful female warrior about to be sacrificed. You tell me how she manages to wear perfectly applied blusher and eyeshadow...mine rubs off in the subway, which is not quite as rigorous as human sacrifice.

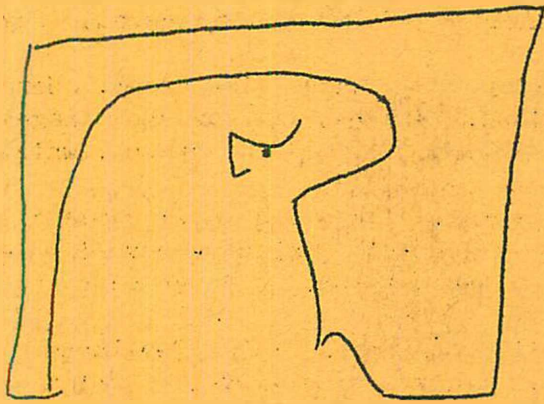
I'm sitting here typing away and drinking mint tea. I know, I know; you and Juanita probably go and pick your own and steep it. I got this jealousy-provoking letter from Sandra about Hoosier corn and tomatoes; my mouth watered. I do so adore food.

[[Oh, I read the adult books, but I read the children's books, too. Developed a mad passion for the works of James Willard Schulz. A dozen or so novels about a white boy living among the northern plains Indians (which Schulz actually did). QUEST OF THE FISH-DOG SKIN is the only title that I can recall at this late date.// Major problem with fantasy right now is that too many people restrict the term to imitation Howard and imitation Lovecraft and nothing else. (I blame Lin Carter for a lot of that.) Most "gentle" fantasy is just swords and sorcery with the swords blunted.// Grundoon qualifies as a possum mind in a cat body; learning not just disabled but disconnected.// Fortunately, "our" group of fans manages to ignore both male and female rituals. I get enough of the former at the office. RSC]]
[[I've been spared the three-inch heel, or two-inch-plus heel, for that matter, by a lifetime affliction of rotten ankles. I fall down on occasion, without any warning or logical reason, walking on level ground in flats. You could imagine the thrills I'd be courting if I wore high heels.// No, no mint tea. Indiana is a major agricultural source of most kinds of mint, I understand, but I've never been able to like mint, personally. Wrong kind of taste buds. I do wish more manufacturers would realize that I'm not alone and would offer a greater variety of flavors on some products than "peppermint and spearmint, you'll love them." I love neither. At least a few products are now also coming with a choice of cinnamon as well as mints, which is a relief. Now if they'd only do so in the gum guaranteed not to stick to the fillings in one's teeth -- of which I have an incredible number; I'm increasingly sensitive to altitude changes and really need such a chewing gum to help relieve the pressure in my ears when I'm on a plane, but right now I have to grit my teeth -- excuse the expression -- and endure the flavor of mint in order to get the therapeutic effect I'm seeking. Bah.// We have a comparatively short growing season in the Midwest, of course, contrasted with the long ones in California, for example. On the other hand, tomatoes, in particular, are weeds hereabouts. Plant them after the frost-free date, May 26, for our area, and stand back quick. They don't really need any care and will thrive frighteningly well without any extra watering, fertilizer, or even pesticide, and wherever you pitched the rotten discards during last year's harvest volunteer plants will spring up all over the garden this year, and resist killing with hoe or stomping. Back, back, I say -- my freezer's already full, you mad cousins of the nightshade! JWC]]

James Toren, 27 W. Main Street, Amelia OH 45102

I'm sending this letter off instead of waiting until Midwestern in hopes of getting a letter printed, as I want to make some foreign contacts and Yan with its many subscribers in other countries seems like a perfect starting point, if you'll be kind enough to print this part of the letter. I have many passions, two of them are DOCTOR WHO and bubble gum trading cards. I need people in other countries who can supply these items not available here. I'd like to correspond and either buy or trade material.

The Toren family just opened a collectibles shop here in Amelia. If this sounds like a plug, it is, any fans in the area can feel free to drop in. But I sure missed the con, it's kind of like the most important week end of the year, where I can talk to people who know what I'm talking about. I can also buy things that I can't get anywhere else, and it's like those days have to last the whole year.



Dave Locke,, 2109 Harrison Ave., #9, Cincinnati OH 45214

The Cincinnati Directory of Businesses lists an "Alias Smith and Jones," which is headed by a person named Jones. No listing for Starsky & Hutch, I haven't called Jones to see if they have any recruiting needs...

Some amusing things happening at Management recruiters. Due to a misprint I dialed what I thought was a company's phone number and got Dial-A-Prayer instead. Well, you're supposed to try and get through to a hiring authority, so I guess I was trying to get to the top. Another time I got past the receptionist and connected to the President, who responded to my "how are you" inquiry by in-

forming me that his plant was on fire. Well, we'd heard the sirens, but didn't know where the action was. Yesterday I was interviewing a hillbilly engineer who got laid off in Indianapolis and wanted to find a job in CinCity. He wanted this because, he said, he'd lived in Cincy for a couple of years back in the fifties and "might still have some friends left in the area." If we couldn't find him a job here, perhaps we could find one in Denver, Colorado? Why Denver? Because he liked to ski. Ann, one of the recruiters in the office, walked by at that point and he addressed her with: "Are you one of them there lady recruiters?" Pissed her off. "Yes, I recruit ladies and gentlemen both," she replied. This fellow had the entire office rolling around on the floor. He also had a resume showing oodles of jobs held since 1954, each for a year or two at a time. He provided us with strange dialogue to address to each other for the entire rest of the day.

You ever use something called Liquid Bandage? Using it is sort of like valsparring a wound, but it's effective and by the time it wears off the hurtie has disappeared or at least is no longer vulnerable. However, you do smell like a banana for the first few hours.

You and I are seeing eye to eye on when room parties degenerate. I'd have said 1:00 or 2:00 but that's close enough. I normally have a very large capacity for social substances and somewhere just past midnight the other partakers began to lose my interest when it comes to conversation. As Brian Garfield described it in DEATH WISH: "The talk became looser, crowded together the guests dropped confidences with increasing frankness. Gradually the men became more lecherous, the women more amorous, unburdening themselves to one another with hurt I-want-to-be-loved smiles." Sounds like a typical party to me.

I qualify as a treacherous old bastard? You say the nicest things. I knew there was some reason I liked you.

Speaking of Yandro, the logo on the last issue wasn't one of mine. Mine aren't that slick.

Fred Brown's ARENA was twice adapted for television. The poorer version was the second one, for STAR TREK. Earlier, much earlier, it was done for OUTER LIMITS. Nick Adams played the lead. It wasn't bad, though I'd hesitate to say it was good. My favorite TV adaptation of Brown was the Hitchcock version of THE LAST MARTIAN, with Steve McQueen. Low-key, and well handled.

Eric Mayer is quite lucid on the subject of pontification about standards in fanwriting. Like him, I consider it invalid. Use example, not preaching. Of course, feel free to preach, too. There are lots of people who play the game of assigning or reaching for standards in fanwriting and fanzine production, and the view from here is that they are missing the point. Each one acts as a missionary for his view of quality, as opposed to seeing fandom as a place to hobby in -- where you can pick and choose what appeals, and do what one wants. All the Standards Crowd is telling anybody is that they want to impress upon others that the quality of others' hobbying does not meet their expectations. Shit, some of these people are rabid. Fortunately,

they carry no badge of office, and nobody has to pay undue attention to them. And I'm not altogether sure that many do. I think most of the Standards Crowd just talk to themselves and to each other.

Nice seeing you at Midwestcon, and having a chance to chat for a bit while the Midwest sun fried our brains and made our eyes squint. Not next year, though! The next Midwestcon will be at the Midway in Tri-County. We haven't seen it, but it sounds superb. Indoor pool with good air conditioning and no chlorine odor. Large consuite. An easy walk to all kinds of eateries, including Markets International which houses boutiques, specialty shops, and oodles of international fast-food places. "Oodles" probably translates to about 17.

Read an interesting newspaper column by Dave Barry, who I believe is a syndicated columnist. At one point he postulates that books are too long. Some of our famous works of literature could easily have been summarized in a few words. Here are three examples he gives:

1. MOBY DICK -- Don't mess around with large whales, because they symbolize nature and will kill you.
2. A TALE OF TWO CITIES -- French people are crazy.
3. Every poem ever written -- Poets are extremely sensitive.

[[Interestingly, the filksings generally last until 4:00 ~~an~~ 5:00 AM before descending into the sillies. Probably because a lot of the singers don't imbibe while they're singing, and those who do generally go off to parties when they get high instead of interrupting the sing. The room parties are usually dead or dying by the time the filk breaks up.// You gave me an idea for a one-sentence review of Asimov's FOUNDATION'S EDGE, but since I'm getting paid by the word for the Amazing reviews...REC]] [[Filkers, some filkers, do imbibe, but it's mostly a lubrication for dry tonsils, not a steady thing. (Hard to sing -- unless you're introducing a unique form of gargling -- while sousing simultaneously.) Hence by and large we get far less to none of the creeping idiocy described by Garfield.// You get better mileage out of Liquid Bandage than I do. One dishwashing session or one enthusiastic filksing and I have to replace the peeled-off coating. But it's indispensable for con-going for me, now, because of filking. I can't play guitar with a bandaid covering a bloody hangnail or other guitar-handling digital injury. Too bulky. Liquid Bandage doesn't bulk up. Filkers ought to get paid for testimonials for the product. Forget the guy squarming his hands in the flowerpots to prove how good Liquid Bandage is. "I couldn't play "It's A Long Way From Amphioxus" without my Liquid Bandage..." ... JWC]]

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

Got a uniquely silly rejection slip, something worthy of Ruth Berman's collection of weird ones. I'd submitted some poems to a "little magazine." My SASE came back with the rejection written across the corner of the envelope. The editor spent as many words on telling me why "Ms." was inappropriate as rejecting the work. He'd also ostentatiously crossed out "Ms." on the address and written in "Miss." (Guy is an English pro who's written a well-received non-fiction book. But from Virginia. Maybe he and Robert Adams would get along.) Comes the next issue of the target magazine, they announce that they are no longer accepting poetry submissions at all because this editor accepted enough to keep them for the next five years. I wouldn't have wanted to wait that long anyhow.

Gene Wolfe didn't believe that truffles



contain porcine sex attractant. But he didn't believe in the existence of Ardath Mayhar, either.

I was reading up on the mudras, symbolic hand gestures in statues of the Buddha. Demonstrated some to John; "This is Touch-the-Earth, this is Fear-Not, this is Gift-Bestowing, etc." He said, "But what of the one-handed set-shot?" What the world needs is a basketball Bodhisattva, dedicated to leading Hoosiers to Enlightenment.

I'm also reading SMALL TOWN AMERICA by Richard Lingeman. Since he's from Crawfordsville, he uses a lot of Indiana and other Midwestern examples. Interesting material, amusingly written. (Before one Illinois hamlet could be chosen county seat, a rival town "began bustling ominously.") It's given me some interesting ideas about frontier development in the world of my otters, including things like an ecstatic religious cult called the Stompers.

Perhaps the BR Bookstore will have another sale in conjunction with the fair. They're still putting out stuff from that history prof's collection, including really bizarre items like the DECRETALS OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT (proceedings, in Latin). John picked up THE HIGHLAND CLEANANCES by John Prebble (not available in the US, Canadian pb). He relishes reading about Scots doing dreadful things to one another. I got Arthur Waite's BOOK OF CEREMONIAL MAGIC which is unintentionally funny in spots, a sort of consumer-report on various grimoires. Mite glanced at it, but decided that describing the preparation of a Hand of Glory wasn't quite the right subject for an essay on a "process" for her English class.

John highly recommends S.V. Niapul's book on Jonestown, JOURNEY TO NOWHERE. Ghastly indictment of the California Thing and Third-World pretensions, says he. Liked it better than the other Niapul, AMONG THE BELIEVERS, which is getting a bigger promo.

How's That? Department: Newspaper review: "QUEST FOR FIRE is based on a novel by J.H. Rosny, the French Jules Verne."

The orthodontist spooked poor Peter this afternoon; had a large rasp, a huge set of pliers, and a spool of utility wire laid out for him. "We're going to put another kind of wire on your teeth today, Peter." (He gets the braces next week. These were preliminary appointments to separate the teeth.) The kid turned utterly gray and when the joke had been explained muttered, "This will not go unremembered."

He got beaten up on the school playground for giving another student's story a killer review. At least we haven't had to face that.

I wrote Fred Saberhagen asking a few questions about the MS I'm supposed to write an afterword on. Gave him a list of his 12 magic swords matched with 12 major Greek gods -- what cunning, what subtlety he showed, I thought. Unfortunately for my theories, he hadn't had any specific assignments in mind, just made up 12 basic categories of activity for the enchanted weapons. It's mere coincidence that they fit the traditional pantheon so neatly. Oh, these unconscious writers.

The trilogy is supposed to be eventually used as the data base for an elaborate electronic game. Baen practically ordered me to go out and play Pac-Man so I'd understand the appeal of the things but I refuse. I take a perverse pleasure in ignoring various modern fads.

Saw an ad for plastic garbage cans which showed raccoons clambering over them. No claim that they couldn't get into the cans, just that the cans were durable enough to survive their attentions. ("Why is it that despite their rotten traits, raccoons have a good press?" asks John.)

[[Maybe after I've passed on to my reward (a slam dunk, in all probability), John can be known as "the Indiana Buck Coulson." RSC]]

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

For folk music with understandable words, try the John Renbourn Group -- "The Lady and the Unicorn" (Reprise 6407), "A Maid in Bedlam" (Shanachie 79004), and "The Enchanted Garden" (Kicking Mule KM 312) especially. Another good one is "Simple Gifts" by Benjamin Luxon and Bill Crofut (Cousin Jacks, no #). But my two favorite folk records at the moment are "The Strayaway Child" (hammered dulcimer and guitar music by Jerry Read Smith and Tom Fellenbaum) and "The Great Hudson River Revival" (Flying Fish

FF 214).

The second issue of Fantasy Empire was included in Bob Weinberg's last catalogue, so I was able to get a copy. No luck on #1 so far. Enjoyed the second half of your article. Among other things, it brought home to me your objections to Steeleye Span, because there were a couple of songs on their records that I was never able to decipher until reading the words in your article... (But I still like SS anyway...)

"...much better than the typical Tower product" could win a prize in the Faintest Praise of the Year contest.

The new 'privilege' of National Space Institute membership is a subscription to Space World, still being published by Palmer Publications in Amherst, Wisconsin. Ray Palmer is gone but his influence remains; the magazine still looks like it was produced in a chicken coop.

The only thing worse than stuffy textbooks (in a remainder book catalogue or anywhere else) is obsolete stuffy textbooks -- which is what most of Marboro's offerings are. Same for Barnes & Noble's mail-order catalogue. The store itself, however, has lots of good stuff -- which is why I try to stay away from it; it's too easy to come out of there with shopping bags full of goodies.

Every year at the Frankfurt Book Fair there is a competition to see who can discover the most far-out (absurd, etc.) title on display. The 1981 candidates included such things as a religious tract entitled Children Are Like Wet Cement, a book on absentmindedness called Short Term Visual Information Forgetting (a 'how-to' guide, I guess), Waterproofing Your Child, A Pictorial Book of Tongue Coatings (better heard about than seen), or The Power of Positive Intimidation in Selling.

There is a rumor that Pinnacle Books has come up with a competitor for Berkley/Jove's 'Second Chance at Love' series: "Last Chance at Love -- Terminal Romances". I won't be surprised if I actually see this materialize at the local pb store.

Should you ever run across a spare copy of ACT OF PIRACY by 'Frank O'Brian', I would be interested in purchasing it. I've been looking for that book for some time to add to my Brian Garfield collection, without any luck. (Was reminded of this by a recent glance through Y255, which got buried on my desk soon after arrival, before I had finished reading it. Finding it now is like having a new issue show up unexpectedly...)

I recently finished a batch of essays for Twentieth Century Western Writers, and have been up to my ears in Westerns. I think I've reached a temporary saturation point. Have also managed to read quite a few mysteries, and even some sf/fantasy. The best of the latter have been the first two volumes of Gillian Bradshaw's Arthurian cycle, HAWK OF MAY and KINGDOM OF SUMMER. Now there are a couple of books called OUTWARD BOUND and DREAMRIDER that I'll have to get to.

Among the mysteries was one called SCI FI by William Marshall: a 'police procedural' novel set in Hong Kong and concerning murder and terrorism during the All-Asia Science Fiction and Horror Movie Congress.. It starts out pretty badly, in a high-pitched hysterical style, full of juvenile pseudo-humor, but once it gets down to the business of telling a story, it is pretty good. The climactic scenes, when the villain fills the convention hotel's sprinkler system with petrol and then starts a fire in the lobby, would -- er, warm Irwin Allen's heart. I liked the book well enough to try another in the same series, THIN AIR, which I picked up in Boston yesterday.

Elizabeth Atwood Taylor's THE CABLE CAR MURDER was published by St. Martin's Press in December 1981 [\$11.95]. Publisher's Weekly liked it. I've been watching for it on the Tartan Book Sales lists...

Just got a copy of Stephen King's THE GUNSLINGER. I had read all the stories in F&SF and liked them, and the book is of course up to Don Grant's high standard of production. But I have to say that I am disappointed in Michael Whelan's color illustrations. In all but two of them, he chose to emphasize the Western theme rather than the fantasy, and the results are just plain dull. Sigh.

If I were superstitious I might begin to think I was a jinx. I wrote an introduction for one of Don Grant's R.E. Howard volumes (LORD OF THE DEAD), and it took four years for the book to be published (by which time the original introduction was out of date, so I rewrote it). I wrote a bunch of essays on Western writers back in 1979

for an ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FRONTIER AND WESTERN FICTION, and that book promptly went into stasis. (It is finally on McGraw-Hill's schedule for this Fall, I am told.) I wrote an introduction for a Gregg Press reprint of one of Luke Short's Westerns, and a 'hold' was immediately put on publication of that series. A year and a half later, they still haven't decided whether to proceed or not. I wrote an introduction for a collection of Christianna Brand's crime short stories, and Southern Illinois University Press thereupon postponed publication by a year; the book is not expected to be issued until Fall of 1983, or perhaps Spring of 1984... I'm holding my breath waiting to hear of a delay in publication of TWENTIETH CENTURY WESTERN WRITERS; that seems to be the only project which is still on schedule. Ironically enough, that is also the project on which I dithered far past the deadline for material, not finishing my assignments until I received a piteous letter from the editor. If there is a lesson in all of this, I don't think I want to know it.

The end of an era: my basement is no longer the East Coast warehouse for Advent: Publishers. Back in 1973 when I bought this house, I offered the use of my basement to store Advent's stock, so George Price loaded it in a truck and drove out here. Ed and JoAnn Wood were doing the invoicing and mailing, and it was easy for them to drive up from Hartford, Connecticut when they needed to replenish their stock of a title. But the Woods have now moved to Dallas. So, last week George flew out here, rented a Hertz truck, and we spent an afternoon transferring 146 cartons of books from my basement to the truck. George then planned to drive to Hartford and add the 90-or-so cartons from Ed's garage, and then drive the lot down to Texas. Not my idea of a vacation. But it turns out to be the cheapest and most convenient (and most reliable) way to get the stock relocated.

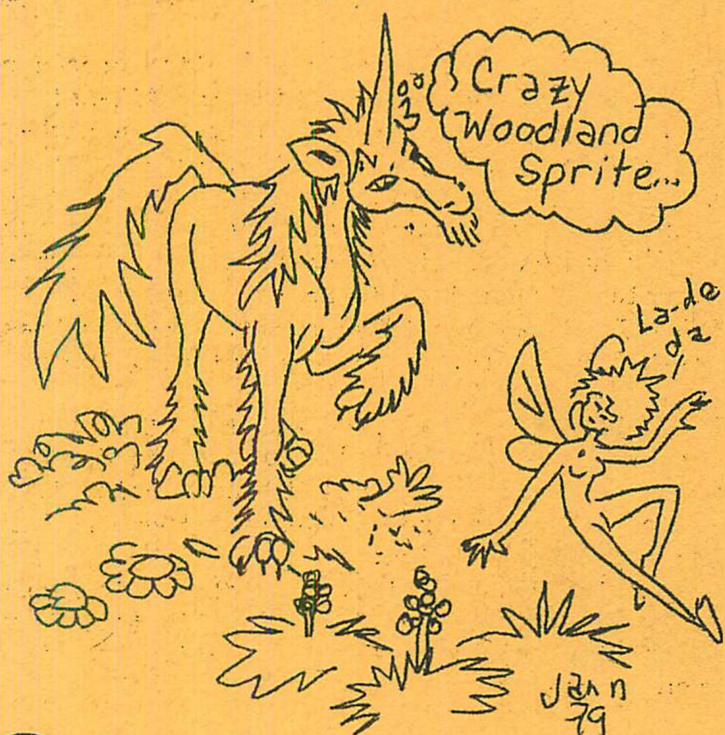
[[You're second on the list for ACT OF PIRACY. I have mine, and Lee Hoffman is next.// Note to readers: I'm in the market for a used copy of the Taylor book.// I don't recall seeing an Advent table at Chicago. I thought surely there would be one...said hello to a lot of the old Chicago fans; Price, Wood, Joe Sarno, Sid Coleman, and Earl Kemp, but they weren't selling anything. RSC]]

Paul Anderson, 21 Mulga Road, Hawthorndene, South Australia, Australia 5051

I hope to see Sagan's COSMOS on our TV this season but it may be quality stuff so I am not holding my breath. In any case it is about 20 years late. The show should

have appeared in the late 60s when the interest in ecology got moving again. Science lost an awful lot of popular support when various mistakes proved costly. That was not helped by the slanging match around the characters of the straw target of Von Daniken, in preference to getting close to looking at his evidence. The put downs of the man and therefore his theory did more harm than good.

I object to the axiom that if the theory of a "nut cult" is different from the accepted norm then the supporting "evidence" is then of less value than it could be otherwise and should not be looked at. It is like looking at a flying saucer landing on your roof and then going in to watch TV because it can't exist.



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

Just read Marion Bradley's THE HOUSE BETWEEN THE WORLDS. I saw mention of it in your last book review column, and I happen to like parallel worlds stories. Oddly enough, this is the first MZB book I have read. Light, pleasant reading, and kind of fun with the Berkeley setting since I lived in Berkeley for a while, but ultimately unsatisfying. Seemed a little flimsy and Jerrybuilt as to characters and settings.

Also picked up the new James Tiptree collection, OUT OF THE EVERYWHERE. Have read some of the stories. This was my introduction to Tiptree. I must say he/she is good. A little trendy with ecological themes in story after story, but the ideas are rich and the story telling holds my interest.

Think I am moved to investigate a little more Tiptree.

The last time I was talking on the phone to the Longs, Sam recommended James Hogan to me. Said as hard sf goes, he does it well. (We chatted briefly about DRAGON'S EGG which I recommended to him, having read the book and liked it, getting it after reading your review of it a while ago. Though Taral in a letter seemed to think the neutron star beings a little simplistic; maybe so, in fact.) So I picked up the only Hogan I could find, GIANT'S STAR. Haven't read it yet. Same makes the premise of some of the novels including this one sound good, that mankind (I hope I have this right from what he said) supposedly is descended from the planet that is now the asteroid belt.

I remember your birth announcement for Bruce in Yandro and now he's getting married. You can imagine what an old stick-in-the-mud bachelor that makes me feel like!

The weird thing about Jessica Salmonson, as far as I know, is that she is a militant feminist but used to be a man but had an operation, right? I remember a New Year's Eve party at Stu Shiffman's where Ivedon Carol was complaining about Jessica because of this, saying, "How can she be for women's rights? She's not even a woman. I hope I have all this right. Those quotes should be quasiquotes (oldtime fannish custom that seems to have vanished).

I'm almost finished reading a book you reviewed, Brunner's PLAYERS AT THE GAME OF PEOPLE. I'm near the end, and soon to find out the secret or secrets that underlie the premise of this book. I hope he ties up the loose ends before the book is over. This is the kind of stuff with emphasis on science fantasy that I tend to prefer to hard sf (unless the hard sf is very well done). It touches on the theme of a privileged few living lives of power, pleasure, and privilege, seemingly at the expense of the unsuspecting masses. This theme is quite relevant to today with its Beautiful People paraded in the mass media as demigods and goddesses for the adoration of the dumber people. I have sometimes wondered if on very esoteric levels their magic lives don't involve some kind of magick or voodoo or maybe even superscience goings-on (well, not really for that last one), and thus Brunner's book is kind of up my alley. Attitudes of the people in the book also remind me of attitudes of some of the fans in the innermost circles of smofdom, including at times, I dare say, myself. Tie this in with my years of listening to rock music and being intrigued with fast lane lives of certain rock stars, and you might say that I'm glad somebody in sf has modernized this theme, kind of an updating of that Fritz Leiber novel you reviewed and



I read last year about only a Few being Real, the masses being automatons. This is kind of a psychedelizing of that old sf idea. Phil Dick has also used it from time to time, and, come to think of it, too bad Phil Dick passed away last week. But, then, he was supposed to have been a heavy drug user, and that may have accounted to some extent for his death. I liked his writing more than you did, I know that, though it seems to me he never really did what he might have done if he could have transcended his idiosyncracies more. But maybe his psychological quirks were what made him what he was as a writer, for all of that.

Yeh, I remember Dave Rike's stuff from way back. Clever, intelligent writer. Also, he has had two short letters in (ahem) Pong. Glad he's getting back in the microcosm again.

I know what you mean about Britishers putting specific Britishisms in their letters. I have been corresponding with the Longs for two years, and even Mary (who, as you know, takes care of most of the correspondence), who has been over here for a while, still slips in Britishisms, whether slang words that she takes for granted ("sledge" for "sled") or references to Obscure English Things that I know nothing about. Sometimes I think being English is like being in a secret society, more so than for any other ethnic group. English people seem to like to discuss ingroup British things in front of non-Englishers. (Though I'm half UK extracted; and my mother's father's name was Harold, come to think of it. But I still get thrown by the Britishisms.)

I'd love to work that racket -- get known as a toastmaster and get my expenses paid to cons. Except that I would stand up at the table and not know what to say or do. I wonder how you learn to toastmast. They should have schools for it the way they have schools for bartending. That would be a dandy scam. Tucker could open toastmaster schools for fans and nonfans (slightly different courses for each) and have franchises all over the place. He could become the Colonel Sanders of toastmastering.

It is an outrageous fad these days to turn nouns into verbs, but somehow I doubt the verb "toastmast" will catch on. I hope not.

Funny, I never get any of the feminist fanzines. I'm all for equal rights for women, especially in the pay dept., and I'm a little less sexist than I used to be, but I still have a ways to go. And of course sometimes the extreme feminists practice reverse sexism. I hope you don't think I'm too far beyond the pale, Juanita, on this issue. I guess the main thing is not to stereotype people, male or female, something I have a bad habit of doing sometimes, and which I'm trying to move out of. Though if I am able to stereotype a person in order to be funny in print, I am known to succumb to the temptation. Sometimes this has a boomerang effect.

[[Well, in fairness to Jessica, you don't have to be a woman to be for women's rights. I hope Carol isn't as much of a sexist snob as that quote makes her sound. (Anyway, hasn't she ever heard the old Catholic cliché about new converts being the most militant? If it works for Catholics I don't see why it wouldn't work for women.))] Think you could operate a Famous Toastmaster's School, Tucker? I think Juanita would sign up... RSC]] [[Eliminating stereotypes-to-be-sneered-at while increasing appreciation of other beings' different life styles and choices should be the ideal. I wouldn't limit opening horizons to just sexism. As long as we have a tendency to scorn any behavior that doesn't fit in our own little niche, we've all got a ways to go. As a small sample, it'd be nice if certain Eastern US media types would get rid of their automatic attitude of derision whenever they encounter a regional accent that doesn't match their own. A southern or midwestern or western accent does not necessarily mean that the speaker is dumb or prejudiced or a variety of other "non-civilized" things -- though you'd be hardput to believe that while listening to or reading certain East Coast commentators. Regional snobbery is as intolerant as any other form of human prejudice, I fear. JWC]]

Alan Dodd, 77 Stanstead Road, Hoddesdon, Herts., England

Yes, I suppose basically darts were often here what you bought for kids and hoped they would not put someone's eye out, but these days even carrying a set of darts

could be considered an "offensive weapon" but then anything can be considered that under our police laws which they bend to suit themselves. I have not handled a dart in years; I used to do some at fairgrounds to win goldfish and other things but they were always heavy, overweighted body darts with poor flights. Most flights these days are apparently plastic.

Just a short while before your latest letter arrived I safely received the envelope of printed matter you kindly sent me, and looking at the picture from the Muncie newspaper it looks as though one of your rooms is even more crowded with books and magazines than mine is. I had begun to think I was the only one one, from the way my landlord's agent often says of my living room every 2 years when he calls to make application to increase the rent -- "You're rather crowded in here" -- trouble is the rooms are so tiny I have to "shelf" as much stuff off the ground as I can. It still looks pretty untidy, but I simply haven't the room to have everything I want tidied away neatly.

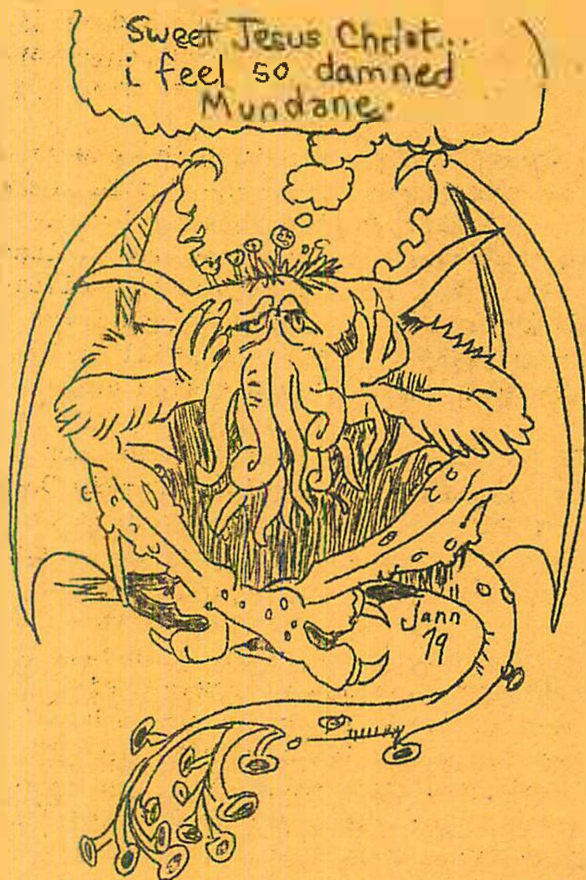
Till I saw this Muncie picture and the GUN WORLD I had not realised you had such a straggly looking beard now; the last time I saw one like that it was Man Mountain Dean wearing it. You always used to be clean shaven with a Forry Ackerman type moustache. I don't think I would ever have recognized you as you are today. As Confucius he say -- "Man with beard have something to hide" ...

The excursions on Concorde were extras to make more money to cover the expenses of the plane; they try all kinds of ideas but the fact is there are simply not enough people with the kind of money to pay those exorbitant fares needed to cover their costs. The idea itself is not worthless though; possibly you already know the Russians have a number of military versions of it based opposite Alaska so that in the event of war they could attack Washington and New York etc. from there with the knowledge their advanced speed and electronic defenses could get them past any conventional fighters and missile defense. The idea is good -- but a good idea is not always a commercial one. People can't afford half the regular air fares let alone Concorde prices. What they would prefer is a cheaper fare in something like a Zeppelin, taking more people and a slower time, rather than a faster flight at higher prices.

It sounds like Overhead Door isn't any more dedicated to coming in to work on a blizzard day than most of our businesses are. At the moment the train drivers' union are on strike several days a week so people find it impossible to get to work by train at all. Big banks are bringing people into the city by hired buses; other companies with important executives are putting them into hotels for three days rather than try getting them in. The odd thing is that hotels are so expensive in London, it is cheaper for some big firms to send their executives abroad to hotels for 3 days. One man was staying in a hotel in Zurich, Switzerland, for 3 days a week, at £27 a night -- the Zurich Hilton; while if he had stayed in London it would have cost £80 a night at the Churchill. Very strange happenings, all this.

On telephones, the rental charge for the instrument here gives you only the use of the phone company's instrument; you get no free local calls or any free calls at all on phones here, except the emergency line, 999, for fire, police, or ambulance. You pay a standing charge for both the electricity and piped gas supplies even if you never use them. I pay more for my standing charge on the piped gas than I actually use, so I can't economise by using less. I still pay the extra. Water rates are strangely not based on how much water you use but on the rateable value of where you live. If you pay high property taxes, live alone, and use little water, you pay a lot more than a huge slum building where dozens use the water. So you can use as much water as you like; you don't pay for quantity, only if you live in a swank area.

It seems that everyone who delivers anything you have bought here expects tipping for it, with furniture removers, particularly, and almost anything bulky you buy that needs delivery. The worst is the delivery of solid fuel, because if you are not at home or are infirm and can't go to check the number of bags, often the deliveryman will unload one short, keeping it and selling it later. Since the average bag of solid fuel costs about five pounds, he makes more than if he had got a tip of a pound for bringing it. Either way he can't lose, but unless you are prepared to put all the fuel back into bags to see how many it fills you never know whether you've been



ripped off or not.

Since so many other people seem to want tipping in the U.S., I'd have thought this was also common to you too, even more so, so it is rather surprising that it is one branch of services that apparently doesn't expect tipping. Hmm.

Although a percentage of my salary is deducted each week to pay for the National Health Service, dental treatment is allowed to be charged to a certain amount; this amount was drastically increased on April 1st, making it possible for the dentist, still operating as National Health, to charge more for any treatment he gives. Strangely enough when I went to the dentist last week, the first six monthly check up after the prices went up, suddenly one of my acrylic teeth is not strong enough and may have a cavity forming underneath and needs a gold crown on it. So I have to go back twice in June to have the tooth crowned -- this under our "free" National Health scheme is going to cost me £48! I could nearly have had a holiday for that not a few years back.

The post office are offering a discount service this month: if you buy a book of stamps costing £1.43p or £1.55p, and give a coupon in published

in the paper, you get 15p off the cover price of the book of stamps, the first time this has ever been done.

The actor Bob Hoskins you mentioned in your letter seems to have attracted quite a bit of attention in America by his TV appearances. Mike Deckinger in San Francisco mentioned him in the film THE LONG GOODBYE, that he appeared in as an East End gangster who comes up against an organisation even more ruthless than his own -- the I.R.A., and he gives a very good performance in that. Before FLICKERS he appeared even more successfully in the 7-hour TV version of PENNIES FROM HEAVEN, which was remade as a feature film in America with Steve Martin. At the moment Bob Hoskins is appearing in the unlikely role on stage of Nathan Detroit in the National Theatre's GUYS AND DOLLS. He does a lot of voice overs for commercials as well; he is quite a character, apparently.

[[All the fans we know have overcrowded rooms (except for the DeWeeses, and they have an 11-room house). Goes with the hobby.// Kay Anderson told me that the more of my face I covered up the better I'd look, so I grew the beard. RSC]]

Gene DeWeese, 2718 N. Prospect, Milwaukee WI 53211

Normally I don't bother doing "bad" reviews, but Glut's FRANKENSTEIN LIVES AGAIN is so irritatingly horrible a mishmash that I'm tempted, at least for Geis's mag. Totally unimaginative, almost as if he were doing a novelization of one of the old Karloff movies, though he keeps insisting it's all based on Shelley's novel, despite the iron bolts in the monster's neck. I was suspicious when the two quotes they used on the cover and flyleaf were one by Ackerman and one by Famous Monsters...

Got an interesting letter from Brian McNaughton a few days ago, along with a copy of his SATAN'S LOVE CHILD. He's explaining how it got written, part of the explanation being how onetime Pinnacle editor Zentner was, while at Carlyle, virtually required by law to publish nothing but porn, due to something in his previous contract

with Pinnacle. And he (McNaughton) says he's still doing stories about "a cop named Wicked Walter, who catches crooks by witchcraft." Too bad he hasn't been able to get into some major market. Except for those lapses I mentioned in those reviews of his other two Carlyle books, he's really an excellent writer.

Strange murderers we have here in Milwaukee. One guy stabbed his aunt to death because she wouldn't give him as much money as he asked for, then shot his mother (not quite dead) because she wouldn't drive him to Texas, then kidnapped his 16-year-old sister and forced her at gunpoint to drive him to Texas, where he's been on parole for something or other. The sister attracted the attention of the Texas police by driving 90 mph..

Then there's the guy they picked up today. He apparently -- according to his statement -- was out drinking with buddies from the restaurant he works at until about 4 a.m. one day last week, following which he went home, left about 6 a.m. with a 30-30 rifle, went to a parkway, took some pot shots at some cars, then at some joggers, all of which he missed except for one car (maybe). Then he hid in some bushes along the parkway (scenic road along a river, houses along one side, river flood plain along the other), sighted through the rifle's scope at a few people, then plugged a 70-year-old woman out walking her dog. Then he hides the rifle, makes a slight detour, then makes believe he's a jogger and stops to help another passerby give first aid to the woman he's just killed...

Makes you wonder about some of these studies that show that rats go insane if they live under overcrowded conditions. More and more of the rats seem to be going bananas.

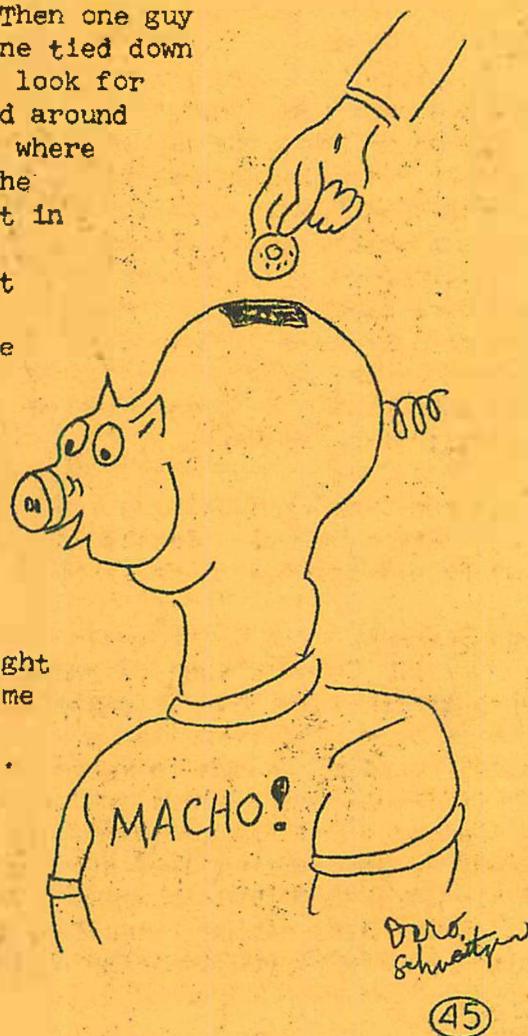
Then there's the Oshkosh International Experimental Aircraft Association convention, which didn't have all that good a time this year. Three killed in a crash when, during a "flyby" (which I gather is a sort of airborne show and tell for all the attending pilots), one pilot wasn't paying attention and rammed into the tail of the plane in front of him. Then one guy was running the engine to charge up his battery (plane tied down but no wheel blocks) when he got out of the plane to look for something. The plane ripped up the tie lines, taxied around for a while, ran into a VW Rabbit, then into a tent, where it chopped 1 1/2 feet (all of the left and part of the right) off a woman. (They've reattached the one foot in a 14-hour operation, but they don't know yet if it's going to take.) And, finally, one of the planes left and apparently the pilot didn't think to check the gas. Anyway, he ran out of gas over 27th Street here in Milwaukee and crash landed in the street. Said he would have made it "if that guy in the car hadn't accelerated just when he did."

All in all, I think Oshkosh is a good place to avoid during the EAA convention. Or maybe the whole state of Wisconsin. (Though there was a news item tonight that someone who was coming to the convention has been missing since July 31, last heard from over Colorado...)

Mary Schaub, 306 West Chatham St., Apex NC 27502

Isn't it wonderful what a movie can do to plain old history? I admit that not all the facts are necessarily grande drama when strung out the way they happened, but if the film-makers are going to gussy things up, I do think

You know...
Being a male
chauvinist pig
has been downright
profitable for me
...ever since
the operation...



they ought to say so, loud and clear (can't you see E.G. Marshall popping up to disclaim the next segment? "You should be aware that this film has taken considerable liberties with historically accepted fact." Trouble with that approach is that the fact part would still be undistinguished from the fiction. I still prefer documentaries that are factual and fictitious stuff that is happily fictitious.) How about that fortuitous-Italian orphan surfacing in South China just when Marco blundered in to observe the tax collecting? I think the Doge of Venice and Burt Lancaster could have been seen lurking in the suburbs at least -- they didn't get all that much exposure in the 1st episode anyway. That last big/little battle was almost lost in the sweep of the steppes. ("Who is it we are fighting? More to the point, where are they?") I gather the film company obtained the services of the Mongolian cavalry corps, and either they weren't all available at one time, or they are a smallish unit. In the main, though, it was a nifty spectacle for those of us not likely to go tramping around China any time soon.

I enclose a timely bulletin on the latest beauty aid, Dead Sea mud. Now that is a marketing conundrum of sorts -- how to sell the stuff. I guess they'll come up with some alluring name and do a great business. They already sell stuff that looks awful -- there's an apricot-based scrub material I've seen advertised that looks like spoiled oatmeal mixed with marmelade. I like the consideration of names in the article -- "Black Mud" just didn't cut it as a grabby monicker. At about \$7 an ounce, "Liquid Money" might be appropriate.

"Flickers" was most entertaining. Took some fairly close listening to catch the dialect dialogue at times. I had rather hoped that Violet wouldn't ever speak an audible word, but they had her break out in a soliloquy to the Nanny, ruining her comic reserve. I hadn't seen Bob Hoskins before that I recalled. I had read that he was a masterful Iago in a production of "Othello," but he surely has a dab hand for broad comedy as well. The actress who played Maude reminded us of Winifrid Tyzack who was Claudius' mother as well as a lead in the "Forsyte Sage;" either of them would make a fine Eleanor Roosevelt.

[[I kept wishing "Marco Polo" had been done by Nat'l Geo Society as one of their specials; that way we could have seen all the marvelous Chinese scenery without the need of suffering through the producers' strange idea of "improving" the original chronicles. Except for the spots that were so awful they were funny, the bulk of the production was so wretchedly dull, saved only by the scenery, in many acts. Most pathetic was that "battle scene." Anyone who has seen KAGEMUSHA must have giggled at this "massive army" and the "massive encampment of the rebels." I was also fascinated by the fact that no matter what day of what month of the march was supposed to be going on -- per the tidy printouts at the bottom of the screen -- the background skyscape never changed. It was always a symbolically angry grey potential storm cloud behind the Khan's head. How nice of nature to cooperate for days after days like that. Bah. It takes special talent, it seems, to transform a (probably) spiced-up original travelogue of a real adventurer's amazing journeys and turn it into bland oatmeal -- and ersatz oatmeal, at that.-- for "modern" audiences. JWC]]

Don D'Amassa, 323 Dodge Street, East Providence RI 02914

I find myself forced to agree that fandom is changing and that not all of the changes are ones that I personally find admirable. Some are external. The rise in postage and other costs is at least partially responsible for the decline in fanzine quality. Escalating costs and attendance figures certainly contribute to the problems that plague conventions lately. But I also agree that there isn't really much we can do about it. Institutions that don't change with the times generally die out anyway. The reasons that fans are so vocal about it is, perhaps, that fandom is inherently a conservative group. Many of the values we tend to be conservative about may be liberal values, but that doesn't alter the fact that we are less than pliant about surrendering them. If you want an example, try suggesting that abortion is undesirable some time.

Susan Schwartz should realize that the idea of using obnoxiousness to attract attention is not peculiar to fandom, nor to males.

I'd like to reinforce the recommendation to Gary Deindorfer of John Barth's THE SOT WEED FACTOR, as well as the new novel, LETTERS, which is not everyone's cup of tea, and is militantly self indulgent, but great fun nonetheless.

Mary Schaub, address above -- from later letters

I can't help picturing a true no-frills book -- would the characters be able to afford a full name each, or would they go by abbreviations? Could the author take the space to characterize sufficiently to establish just what he was economizing on? I get the notion it would be like those funny tales from the early 1900's with just about every detail carefully blanked out: "It was the ___th of March, 18___, and I was proceeding down the Rue de ____, my ____ in ____." Sort of like censored war dispatches.

I noted with interest your family crest on Yandro 255. Heraldry is an interest of mine, in an amateur fashion. After a mere 6 years, I have gotten the official approval of my SCA design for a device (I can but hope that in the good old medieval days, heralds moved a bit faster; I can see the wretched knight riding out with a blank shield and having to shout as he thunders into battle, "They say I'll be getting my shield painted any day now, honest!"). My first design was rejected because they felt it was too druidic. True, I had oak leaves, an owl, and a crescent moon, but it was not intended as a druidic design. I foxed them with my new design (haw), an azure's fox's head; I figured no blue foxes had been too closely associated with any cults... so far, I haven't heard from any disgruntled foxes. Your crest is surmounted by a pelican in her piety, of course (the fact that heraldically the bird is always shown with the head and body of an eagle doesn't matter -- curious case). The symbolic burden is maternal solicitude, and it has been found in ecclesiastical arms. The pelican is supposed to be pecking at its breast to provide drops of blood for its young (news to the real pelican, this). The fleur-de-lis came from France, so perhaps you have a French ecclesiastic in your family tree (an educational sight, that).

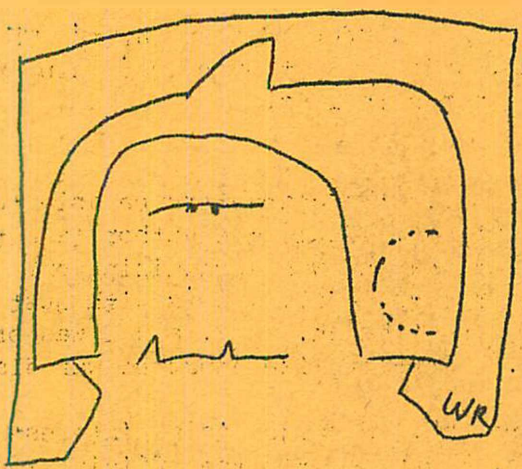
Ethel Lindsay, 69 Barry Road, Carnoustie, Angus, DD7 7QQ Scotland

Here comes Yandro 253/254 and I also have a letter from you outstanding. As you can imagine after finishing off SCOT and disposing of my duplicator I went into a blissful period where I did not feel guilty about not being at the typewriter. Then the zines began to pile up and the letters and I discovered I wanted to write again. A nice feeling though...no pressure!

In Y I am agreeing with Juanita's thoughts on fandom; no use fretting about changes. Mind you I'm not so sure that the older fans (over here we get called the Old Guard) are as bothered by the changes as folks think. After all look how I can adjust to seeing young men prancing about the streets with orange coloured hair and safety pins used as jewelry; I guess I can adjust to the minor ripples in fandom. One of the puzzles was how to address a Christmas card to a couple who were not married. Finally figured out one should address it to Mary Black and Tom White, which ought not to offend anyone!

Now Dave Locke's story of his radioactive rubbers made me recall the days when we used a giant magnet to remove foreign bodies from the eye. That is foreign bodies that had penetrated the eye. It really was giant and we had to remind all the doctors to take off their watches before it was switched on. To test that it was actually switched on, we would wave our scissors in front of it and when they became glued to the point the doctor knew it was operative. Very uncouth methods in those days. Now it is all micro equipment. Anyway, all my scissors became magnetized of course. Very handy for picking up pins, downright annoying when they stuck to a bedpan. Dave Locke's column reminds me of the time that Walt Willis said to Eric Needham, "I find your thought processes a little difficult to follow." That was the time when Eric was producing a weird theory about dead flies in lampshades.

Letter column now. Apropos the death of Lennon, one ironic fact is that he said he preferred living in NY to London because in NY he could walk freely through the streets. Lennon was never my favorite Beatle, but then I am very square and prefer



Cliff Richard to all four of them together. The BBC start tonight a four part series about Cliff, who has been on the scene since the fifties. It should be a tuneful programme, but it cannot be exciting. Cliff never took drugs, didn't bother with groupies, has had no divorces (quoted as saying, "I'm not going to get married just to prove I am not gay"), and has never been in any scandal; he's just has a good singing voice that has stayed that way. Of course he did Get Religion but then no one is perfect.

[[Yeah, I run into the unmarried couple occasionally; mostly I object to typing two names on the envelope, but then I'm lazy. RSC]] [[The new etiquette books deal with this modern situation -- the

names should be typed on the envelope in alphabetical order, with no allowances for sex. Seems sensible. JWC]]

Dave Rike, P.O. Box 11, Crockett CA 94525

I'm reading through the New Whole Earth Catalog (2nd Ed., Sept '81, NY Random House). Great book, even better than the ones they put out during the early 70's. It has a Sense of Wonder about it and a very stf-ish consciousness. There's plenty of goodies for everyone in it, so I would recommend it highly, to you and to the rest of my friends.

I'm also re-reading Laney's Ah! Sweet Idiocy! I came across a copy in rummaging thru some boxes in the basement. It's incredible; someone penning his memoirs after only 5 yrs in fandom! However it is an engrossing document and despite Laney's biases and distortions will remain a part of the literature of fandom, such as it is, because no one else had bothered to portray the Way of Life of the LASFS during the mid-40's. Even Alva Roger's commentary does little but correct a few minor details. I have a copy of the original besides the reprint Eney did in A Sense of FAPA, the collection of FAPA reprints he did for the 100th mailing. I "bound" the original in an Elbe spring binder along with Rogers's commentary.

I saw an announcement at Dark Carnival, a stf-fsy book shop in Berkeley, for the Omegacon. In Hayward. Well, they say there's going to be fanzines for sale in the dealer's room, so I'll check it out since I'm interested in fmz and maybe there'll be someone with Advent: Press books for sale. Ha! It was a comic-booky media con.

There were costumed types coming in, but most of them looked like cut-up pajamas and old sheets taken from a book I saw on how-to-sew your own tacky Star Trek costume. There was no character or personality coming from them that would associate them with their costumes. Most clothing nowadays is either a costume and/or a uniform and I see people all the time when I go down to Oakland or Berkeley who are able to put a little personal touch to what they have on. There was a black woman at the hiring hall the other day who came in with jungle-green tiger stripe camouflage fatigues on. She had tailored them so they were form-fitting and not baggy and they looked good on her, like a leisure-suit, not as some sort of para-military Guerrilla-type. The problem the costumed-types face, I feel, is that the street scene has out-paced them, there's more happening outdoors than's happening within themselves and they can't keep up. The hip-scene, Tolkien, and the rock'n'roll lifestyle (besides the the guerrilla-consciousness of anti-war politicians which was added to this in places, like Berkeley) all came together and slowly blended together, starting in the early 60's, to a point where people let it just hang out in the street and they are able to practice acting out their roles, real or unreal, full-time. That's heavy competition. Fans coming from this sort of environment (I don't mean just Berkeley since

it's spread thruout the country years ago) work harder when they dress up for the costume ball.

[[I think you either had to have been there, or have an abiding interest in old fan-history, to enjoy Laney. My major reaction when I read the FAPA reprint was joy that the snotty son of a bitch was long gone before I entered fandom.// RSC]] [[I agree the compulsive costumers who can't come up with really imaginative costumes and merely wander around looking -- and sometimes smelling -- weird are a lost cause. I just wish some of them with noisy adornments, presumably trying desperately to attract some attention to an otherwise blank persona, costume or not, wouldn't wander around convention hotel halls jangling bells and clanking swords at 5:30 AM when I've just crashed from a hard night's filksinging. Sigh. JWC]]

Joe L. Hensley, 2315 Blackmore, Madison IN 47250

One thing I've noticed such publicity does for you is that it sometimes brings the creatures out of the woodworks. Last spring there was a feature about me in the magazine section of the Louisville Sunday Courier Journal. As a result I wound up being father confessor to some people who were sincere, but hadn't paid their dues. Can you believe someone who has written three novels, but doesn't know there are writer's books and magazines? There was another guy I felt sorry for. He wrote and wanted to know what I had to pay up front to have my books published. I wrote him a polite letter about royalty publishers and subsidy publishers and got a reply which sort of doubted my veracity. So I Xeroxed off a copy of a contract and mailed it to him. When he originally wrote he said several publisher were "after" his books. Those publishers turned out to be vanity houses. Ah, well.

I'm moving along at my customary pace on TRIAL BOOK, which I've vowed to finish sometimesoonnow. Maybe I'll get a first draft by last summer and a final by the fall. I keep thinking it's different than things I've done before, but it really isn't, just a little more complicated, plus it's set wholly during a trial. Robak.

Went to Lexington, Kentucky last week and made my first and probably last visit to Rupp Arena. Neal Diamond was playing there and though I'm not that much of a fan we went because my brother was/is playing for him. Had center tickets about ten rows back and it was Loud. Char loves it, but I'm not much for it. 22,000+ people, wall to wall.

[[I'm with you on the concert. Music is supposed to be enjoyed in the quiet of the home, on records...RSC]]

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

On the question of our decimal coinage, there was what must have been a carefully orchestrated campaign between those who would refer to "pence" and those who would rather it were "p" when it was introduced; a case of 2p or not 2p... Which battle seems to have been won by the latter, so that now you have pee-worth instead of pennyworth; and indeed, you can't give anybody a fourpenny one any more. Though I suspect inflation has as much to do as lack of usage, for sending catchphrases into oblivion: "would you buy it for a nickel?" doesn't seem to be around any more, along with our threepenny bit; and how



long can we see a bicycle as a "penny-farthing"?

I'd agree that it does help your fannish career if you can live within range of two or three post-offices; back in the days when book-rate was low enough to bear comparison, I used to divide the parcels I sent between our local office and main office at Malton; and while those in the main office always took the rule-book out and studied it most carefully, whereas our local man would always use rule-of-thumb. Too, once in the system with a number of stamps on, it seems that nobody questions the rate charged (it's probably only the idlers who have time to consult the rules) and so all my parcels and packets go through unchallenged. Though now that the lowest inland rate as advertised is £1.20, I'm not too keen to go and find out what the new overseas rates are.

There was even a time, up to a couple of years ago, when I could have taken an afternoon stroll to Old Malton complete with parcel and sampled the going rate there; but now all the post offices are closed on Saturday afternoons (and no Sunday collections, either) and there's not the opportunity any more.

Which is the trend, I suppose; I know I had a dose of future shock (or rather bemusement) when I met Lynne Holdom during her tour round Britain on a grey, quiet early-closing day in Malton and learnt that Saturday's an American early-closing day; which is our busiest day of the week. And it'll probably take a revolution to shift it nearer the weekend, let alone Saturday itself, from the middle of the week; I can foresee howls of protest, at least from parents who have to make up pocket money that their elder children earn by Saturday jobs in shops or on market stalls. And traditions die hard over here, anyway.

Well, I've been going back to the library, to the Nevil Shutes and Dennis Wheatleys, and the books of travel and adventure that I used to read before sf, out of choice rather than necessity. For several reasons, one of which was going to be that the more sf I read, the less I've liked, but that was before my hibernation and I haven't read any sf since; maybe the main one was to try and find if they still read as well as they did. But I must get back the sf habit, before the publishers discover whence their falling sales and send the heavy mob around.

And a footnote to postal usage...last weekend I had a day out at the coast, at Scarborough, so I took a packet of books I was sending to Australia with me (trust an sf fan...). Book rate, so I left it open at both ends and tied it with string; only to find when I passed it across the counter at the main post office that to go book rate, it should have had a paper band around it rather than string tied (and how long would that last?), which was new to me.

Though the man behind the counter was very helpful; he pointed out that the way it was would cost £1.45, and re-wrapped it would be 80p, and gave it back to me. Being far from home and without the means, I thought better of it and took it along to a little local office in the other part of the town where they put it on the scale and looked up the rate, and said it would be 49p. So I paid it, and hurried away just in case they changed their mind. Mind you, will it get there?

Browsing through Yandro (at last) I saw your review of BASIN AND RANGE just when I was bowing to no-one in my admiration of John McPhee. He's one of the writers that I look out for in my perusal of the New Yorker (well, with recent coverage of the nuclear holocaust, psychiatric patients, and Russian family history) along with Roger Angell's baseball articles, as one of those who can take any subject and write entertainingly about it, and well.

And seeing that you enjoyed it, there is another book that I've just read which has all the McPhee style, and which I can thoroughly recommend, and that's OLD GLORY by Jonathan Raban, if it's published over there. The author's an Englishman, who, inspired by Huckleberry Finn, took a sixteen-foot boat down the Mississippi (yes, I know it was a raft) on a voyage of exploration; and like COMING INTO THE COUNTRY, it's a marvellous account of the people he meets as well as the country and the history; I would have said the new McPhee, if the old one wasn't still thankfully with us! Certainly it's going to be my Book of the Year.

Ah, if you're still looking for Badger Books in hard covers, it isn't Dobson Books you should be hunting, but those by Robert Hale. I don't want to cast asper-

sions on your British publisher, but as well as undoubted classics like NYSHIP and CHARLES FORT...he's had a remarkable string of titles by authors no one's ever heard of, and which the libraries fall upon with glee; mind you, I'm not sure the borrowers do...

[[Another couple of writers who qualify for the nearly-always-a-good-read category are Berton Roueche and Farley Mowat. JWC]]

Jack R. Herman, Box 272, Wentworth Building, Sydney University, Australia 2006

Like Juanita, I am pleased to see large crowds being attracted to the flights of the Shuttle. While it always helps the Space programme to have both wide popular support and the interest of those at the top, I am a little less happy with stunts like the dedication of Shuttle flights to certain 'oppressed' people, Presidents turning up at Shuttle landings (causing the craft to go an extra orbit so the poor ol' man can get his shut-eye) and high-profile use of the Shuttle for martial purposes. While the Shuttle is little enough compensation for those who see some future for Mankind in Space, it is all we've got (in the US) and it must get as much push as possible.

I found every version of the HITCH-HIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY since the radio one to be vastly inferior to the original -- and that includes the record, the books, and the TV series (although I've only seen a bit of this). The thing was created as a radio play and a lot of its humor relied on the lack of vision and on the interaction of the voices with the script. It certainly doesn't work as well as a book. (Altho being able to imagine the voices helps.)

Brunner's idea has some merit. Marc Ortlieb came up with a slightly more fannish version in his Toastmaster's speech at the recent Australian National con -- the speech is reprinted in the most recent edition of WAHF-FULL -- Number 9. But the question I ask Brunner is this -- what are we poor Aussie (and New Zealand) fen supposed to do while the Europeans and North Americans are being so united by Fannish Airlines?

[[I noticed that some American science magazines, formerly scornful of the Shuttle and blaming the Shuttle program for the loss of some of their own programs, are now beginning to jump back on the bandwagon -- on the theory, it seems, that any space endeavor is likely to spawn future grants and funding for other space oriented projects. And I think they're right. Whatever the political quibbles about certain facets of the existing program, getting Out There, even a short distance, and learning, and becoming steadily more reliable, has a very good chance of creating an eventual spinoff effect into related "Buck Rogers" proposals. In the higher echelons of the US bureaucracy, nothing succeeds like a past record of success; "The Shuttle worked; maybe we can afford to throw a few crumbs to these ivory tower types who want these other things..."// The extreme pro and con reactions to HITCH-HIKER'S GUIDE make me wonder if I shouldn't unearth an old fanzine column I did on the differing natures of people's senses of humor. I have no objection to others finding HHGUIDE the greatest thing since the invention of the pratfall, any more than I object to a certain clique which reacts to every comma and scan of the studio audience on SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE as the ultimate end of hilarity -- but it ain't my cuppa. And I refuse to believe I don't have a sense of humor. I simply have a different sense of humor. I thought variety was the spice of fandom, right? //DUFF for ANZAC FANLINES? JWC]]

Alexander Yudenitsch, Caixa Postal 9613, 01000 - São Paulo, SP, Brasil

Our inflation, which had been falling during the preceding 10 months, has taken an upswing during the last 3; 6 percent in April, 7 percent in May, and 8 percent in June! No way will it reach "only" 80 percent at the end of 1982, as the government intended. Looks like we'll be back to a 3-digit inflation rate quite soon (this is an election year, and there will be elections at all levels -- except for President, which is by indirect voting in 1984). I agree with those who think that inflation is, very predominantly, more a socio-psychological problem than an economic one. That

is even more so in Brazil, where "monetary correction" (instituted in 1965 to help fight inflation...) feeds inflationary behaviour back into the economy. How does it work? Cost-of-living indexes, determined by government institutes, are used to "update" money sums every 1 or 3 months. For example, you put \$100.00 in a savings account and, at the end of 3 months, you get 1 1/2 percent interest, plus an "inflation correction" which, this last year, has been about 20 percent for 3 months; so, after those 3 months, your account has \$121.50, or something like it. Sound dandy? It does, but, of course, after those 3 months a \$1.00 magazine will probably be costing about \$1.25, so you really didn't come out ahead. Same goes for salaries; they're adjusted (by law) twice yearly: once, by inflation indexes only; and once, by inflation indexes, plus whatever can be bargained by the workers' unions with the owners' unions (and if they don't come to an agreement, Labour Courts determine/arbitrate the "productivity index"). Again of course, the cost of living always manages to be 2 steps ahead of salaries. Lewis Carroll had an apt description: "Here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that."

[[The idea of 80 percent inflation is shocking, but I suppose it's better to have high inflation with automatic corrections than 10 percent without even a cost-of-living increase in my salary, which is what I've got. RSC]]

Sam Long, 1338 Crestview Drive, Springfield IL 62702

I was looking through Y255 again the other day, and on page 43 I ran across a commentworthy bit, viz., Maia's 7-Up bit. I suppose that since 7-Up is the "Uncola," it would be the favorite drink, (after blood) of Dracula, since he is Undead. (By the way, I fancy that addressing the count as "Dracky-poo" would deter him as efficiently as brandishing a crucifix would, maybe even more. I've never quite understood why cloth, with its cross-weaving, is not effective against vampires. I've thought that all those little crosses would make clothing intolerable for ol' Dracks, unless he chose to wear leather (either folksy, a la Davy Crockett, or kinky, a la S & M), or non-woven plastic clothing. Similarly, clothing on his victims should be abhorrent to him. Perhaps there's a lower limit of size of crosses that affect vampires, analogous to the photo-electric effect, wherein electrons are not emitted from an illuminated substance unless the light is of a certain wavelength of shorter.)

Weird headlines: Dave Rowe mentioned one to me recently. A British paper, observing that the Socialists in Britain were in disarray over the Falklands crisis, had the headline: BRITISH LEFT WAFFLES ON FALKLANDS.

Back to strange signs -- did I tell you the one about a pub called The Swan in England? This particular one was owned by Courage Breweries (not a good brand; it takes courage to drink Courage), whose trademark is a golden cockerel on red. So there you are: golden cockerel, sign right below it saying "The Swan". (By the bye, that's another reason I don't care for Courage beer -- they don't have inn-signs painted for their pubs -- just their stupid cockerel. There are some breweries that keep several inn-sign painters on staff to keep tradition -- and beauty -- alive.)

If they didn't like having
their minds ruptured now & then
I figure they'd be in
medical school



Gio

Dave Piper, 7 Cranley Drive, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA 4 6BZ, England

I'm like Bruce; I never kept in touch with my teachers, nor many of my school friends, come to that. I see one of them, very rarely. I did keep up contact for a couple of years after leaving school but then went in the Army and lost touch. Gawd knows what we'd have in common now. Precious little, I guess. There was one kid (Bob Whittle...there, I actually remember his

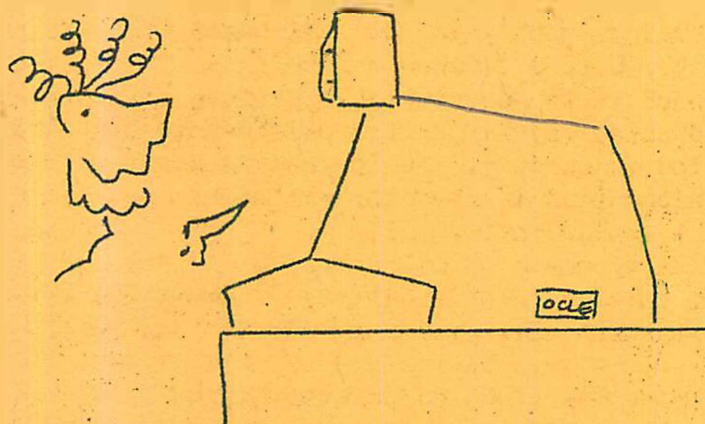
name and I haven't thought of him for years and years!) who read a little SF but no one else I can think of. Funnily enuff, there was one guy I lived with in the Army who read SF as well...just one. (Er, 'lived with'...I mean in the same hut). As SF has been one of my main interests for over 30 years now (over 30 years!!!) (Omigawd!!!) you'd think, wouldn't you?, that I'd have met more than a handful of people who read this brain-rotting stuff. But I haven't. 'S'Funny that.

I had a sorta brainstorm a few weeks/months ago and decided I was gonna pack up trying to grow things to eat, in the garden, and instead go for flowers and such. So, we bought some rose bushes, flowering shrubs, and the like. And 5

(of the eleven...my batting average doesn't seem to improve with use!) rose bushes took...and, tonight, this very moment, I've just been gazing with vast parental pride at my Very First Rose What I Grew From Nothing-Like. Well, a bud anyway. Probably have some damn green-fly or somesuch, but...it's a start. Never know. By the time you return to these shores I may have the 'picture' garden of Ruislip.

[[I figure we have plenty of scenery around here without planting more; what I want are edibles. RSC]]

Meet the Sphinx.



Don Ayres, 1555 Brockton #1, Los Angeles CA 90025

It is late to comment on Yandro 253/254, but I would like to take exception to Bob Adair's review of "Altered States", since it reduces it to the wrong denominator.

(Despite the quarrels between Chayevsky (sic?) and director Russell, there seems to me little difference between film and book.)

In any event, to contend that the film espouses the cause that "Love Conquers All" or that "There are some things man was not meant to know" strikes me as a fundamental misreading/misviewing.

A more apt summary would be "Love is all".

This is not an unexpected result from Ken Russell: "Mahler" pointed to it, although it can be seen as far back as "The Devils".

The importance of that last line is not the line, but that the character has never said it before. He summarizes his odyssey moments before this, but Adair seems to dismiss this.

Hurt's character began his search for Truth, determined that he was going to find "the fucker"; he ended by finding that there was only an abyss and that love was the only thing that mattered. It matters because it is our only assurance against the coldress that we have -- or that we can have.

The statements "There are things man was not meant to know" or that "Love conquers all" are from a deistic era to which both film and novel are alien in their conclusions. The ending of the works stand in staunch opposition to that tradition.

Now, scientists are as diverse a lot as any other, but I have to contend that I've only seen three adequate representations on the silver screen that compare to my University experiences. These are "Altered States", "Quatermass and the Pit", and the scene in "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" where one of the scientists remembers that there's a world globe in the director's office. Of these, "Altered States" gives the more complete portrait of life in the sciences (not just the Eastern Universities, though the prestige is there).

In many respects, I think that this film delivered as much and more than it prom-

ised in its early moment. It's too bad that Adair couldn't see as much, for it is one of the best movies of its year.

Rick Brooks, R.R. 1, Box 390, Fremont IN 46737

Re Juanita's remarks on the changing nature of fandom: I used to have a sense of belonging. But when the large cons came in, the place filled up with strangers. Large groups of people make me itchy.

Too, there were few open parties left. If it weren't for the filksings, I'd have my choice of the N3F room or going to bed early.

What with that, the increasing costs (a room now costs more for a night than a week's room and board here at home), and the discomfort of traveling, I just don't go anymore.

Jean Weber, 13 Myall Street, O'Connor ACT 2601, Australia

Reading and enjoying the latest (?) Yandro (253-4), I note some comments from Darrell Schweitzer about finding post offices that offer advantageous interpretations of regulations. Following Eric Lindsay's advice (he and the rest of Faulconbridge fandom have apparently trained the local PO to accept whatever they (the fans) think is the correct interpretation -- the fans probably generate more mail than the rest of the town together), I have been developed a very handy relationship with the postmaster in the next suburb. (The one in my suburb is a grouch.) My friendly one is always complaining about how the main PO never sends him the new regulations and multiple copies of postal rates, and so on, so I make a habit of going down to the main PO (when I'm going there anyway) and picking up whatever he wants, and hand-delivering it to him. In turn, he has accepted me as the local "expert" on bulk mailing and other esoteric things. At one time I was posting for 2 organizations as well as my own things, so I generate quite a bit of volume, too. I agree it's not always worth the expense to run all over town to save a few cents (which is why I cannot be bothered to go where food bargains are), but if you post enough, it could well be worth it, especially if the POs involved are in areas one would be likely to visit for other reasons. Also, my local man will often accept mail at times when the regs don't require it (bulk mail on Saturday mornings, for example).

I was amused at Susan Shwartz' comment that Ms had come to mean "unmarried female of left-wing persuasion". Just a few weeks ago I got a letter from a British friend (now living in Western Australia) who objects to MS because to her it means "married female who doesn't want to admit it".

I very much like your Modest Proposal Concerning the Handgun Problem. It very much appeals to the civil libertarian in me, whilst also satisfying my concern about violence in general and weaponry in particular. Though I'm mildly unhappy about the idea of sort-of promoting other forms of violence as a way of countering firearms violence.

Dave Locke's (presumably humorous) suggestion of divorce ceremonies, at the end of which the ex-husband and wife punch each other on the mouth, irritated me because it reinforces the adversary approach to divorce. I think a ceremony would be great, particularly in the many cases where the divorce is amicable, but a punch in the mouth ruins it. It's like the problem of a friend of mine who recently divorced, and who was able to reach a mutually-acceptable property settlement without all the lawyers, etc., but who had to get a court order requiring her husband to sell her his share of the house, so she could avoid sales tax. They could have just handled the transaction without the courts, but with a whacking tax.

"Things that go bump in the Mailbox" is absolutely delightful. If I had a second typer to stick a stencil in and add things to as they come up, I'd like to run a similar type column, but I don't, and I'm far too lazy to collect a pile of stuff and type it up in one hit.

[[I think Dave was looking for a divorce symbol, equivalent to "You may now kiss the bride". Frankly, I'm not sure I believe in amicable divorce. If they're that damned friendly, they ought to be able to stick together. RSC]]

Don & Maggie Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Road, Mentor OH 44060

How about a review of Fantasy Empire, anyway? Geez, I push and shove and nag you into writing for me and now I have to push and shove and nag you into doing a review. How do you expect all the fans you've accumulated via Yandro to be Buck Coulson completists if you don't review Fantasy Empire?

Well, we liked THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY, smartmouth. We don't think the book is the funniest SF novel to hit the field, but the radio show is -- to our way of thinking -- one of the finest bits of radio work we've ever heard. For one thing, Adams deals with a vast number of SF clichés in a fresh way, bringing up each (The Ultimate Answer to Life, the Universe, and Everything; the evolution of mankind; the end of the world; the end of the universe; what it is that controls Everything; the creation of Earth; how different races in the galaxy can communicate with each other) and offering a Different View of each. And the performers (especially David Tate as an incredibly annoying shipboard computer) were delightful. (Heck, even Rula Lenska was in the radio cast -- which is an extra gag to American audiences, who had never heard of her when she appeared in TV ads as "international star Rula Lenska.")

But we don't demand you listen to the radio show. We know better than that.

Regarding trademarking the word "fanzine," we get the definite impression that Things Have Changed in the wonderful world of trademarks. Used to be that you had to have a unique spelling of a generic term in order to trademark it -- or come up with a new term or somesuch. No longer, as far as we can judge from the recent spate of trademarks, which include "Super Heroes." I'd be very curious to hear why the change came about -- and how lawyers are faring with the new wave in which generic terms are being capitalized for trademarks. (Used to be people would get nasty letters when they used a term like scotch tape without capitalizing it. But now, apparently, there's a difference between super heroes and Super Heroes, the latter be a Marvel or DC bunch of super heroes. Strange. I'd have thought it was just ignorance on the part of the trademark office -- except that I saw an ad recently for something else generic that was trademarked. Something like Paper Towels...)

[[But I don't review promags, dammit! You don't want FE lumped in with the fanzines, do you? Oh well, he says, looking long-suffering...RSC]] [[The recent court decision that Monopoly can't be a trademark may prove even more interesting, and provide undoubted future work for Parker Bros.' lawyers...JWC]]

Al Sirols, 385 Norton St., New Haven CT 06511

I am now researching an historical novel about William IX, the Duke of Aquitaine, long about 1100 AD. He was quite a character, which is how I got interested in him. Seems he was quite the ladies' man. Once he got all incognitoed up as a mute and spent a week with some high-born ladies whose husbands were out crusading or whatever. To assure themselves that he really was mute, the women dragged a cat down his back. William kept his cool, remarkably, and didn't cry out. Then he went back to his castle, and composed a most bawdy song about the scene (he is regarded, historically, as having been the first troubadour), and made sure it was widely distributed. Like I say, quite a character. And as far as I can determine, there are no novels about him. Do you folks know of any? I don't want to go over someone else's ground, but I really think that the Duke would make a fascinating protagonist.

James Sieger, P.O. Box 86, Sullivan WI 53178

I've been watching Monday's program on abuse of children. And it has struck me: Why is it that people who make such a stink about such abuse, insist that so many unwanted children be born, by forbidding abortion?

And, another thought, how many millions of human beings have died because an unwanted child named Adolph Hitler was forced to be born? Why is it that these so-moral anti-abortionists do not include the toll upon lives and society, of those children who are born unwanted? Being an unwanted child, myself, this is not entirely an academic argument.

Personally, I feel that police on horseback would be better capable of handling civil disorders and many law enforcement problems. Especially if armed with sabers.

Think ye: a major complaint is innocent bystanders getting hurt when a cop shoots and misses his malefactor. But a sword extends only as far as one can reach -- it doesn't keep on going to hit somebody in the background. And forget the bad example of Cossacks; in the hands of a decent man there is no need for a sword to kill or maim. What it could do in trained hands, is inflict a painful wound that would make a culprit bleed like a stuck hog and be too busy shrieking to feel like making any more trouble.

And consider: the last time American horsemen used swords was at Scollay Square in the Boston Police Strike of 1919. A squad charged a mob with drawn swords. No one was hurt, because the mob scattered and ran like hell. Which was precisely the purpose of the charge. Do you think the mob would cooperate so promptly if the troopers were armed with nightsticks or tear gas grenades? Part of a sword's effectiveness is psychology.

Andrew Zerbe, 1524-D South 16th St., Birmingham AL 35205

So you've discovered the United States Exploration Expedition. Actually, the whole subject of the United States Navy in the Pacific prior to the Civil War was quite interesting. When I was taking Naval History we had a rather hilarious class session covering it. My favorite story after the Wilkes one is the account of Thomas ap Catesby-Jones. He commanded the Pacific Squadron in 1847. Thinking war had been declared between the U.S. and Mexico, he captured Monterey, whereupon, he discovered that war had not been declared. To delay being relieved of his command, Jones ordered the ships under his command to take long cruises to the furthest reaches of the Pacific. His successor never did catch up with him, as Jones eventually returned directly to Washington. After the Mexican War was declared.

[[One of the international sports of the mid-1800s seemed to be capturing California.

Just read a short item about an Argentine expedition that also captured it. RSC]]

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

On Dave Locke's article, one could write a book trying to even explain to the IRA what a fanzine is, and then imagine trying to explain that by trying to explain Fandom, science fiction, and cons. Impossible! Agree that most Job Descriptions are suspect and mean very little, and only good for falling back on in disputes. It is like breaking the rules to fit oneself but falling back on them when somebody else sees things differently. In note to JWC comments to Simmons' letter, I often wonder about people who drink any kind of diet drink or light beer. I wonder about the rest of their habits like eating, drinking, and physical exercise. How old is one to be an Old Crock and qualify for the Old Column? A good letter would do too, but I was just wondering about the necessary age level. Could you publish a list of all the Old Crocks subscribing to Yandro or otherwise receiving Yandro?

On TV last night and tonight a two-part movie "Goliath Awaits," and to quote from the TV guide: "Wed, 8:00, on channel 50, Detroit -- a young diver investigating the wreck of a forgotten luxury liner discovers it's inhabited by more than 300 survivors organized into a utopian society." Does that sound familiar? Like a book by James White -- LIFEBOAT.

[[Some of the Old Crocks might object to being specified as such. I think you mean IRS instead of IRA (though I wouldn't want to have to explain fanzines to the IRA, either, if it comes to that). RSC]] [[My reason for drinking diet soft drinks is strictly for my health. Since I'm fairly sedentary, if I drank only sugared drinks and ate a lot of sweets -- I never did, so there was no need to cut those out -- my weight would go totally off the scale. I didn't find any particular sacrifice in switching to Tab after years of Coke. I'd developed some mid-age health problems in addition to weight and sugar was the easiest thing to jettison. I simply stopped drinking sugared drinks and went to drinking only diet drinks. There is a lot of diabetes in my family, and one of the odd elements of that disease is a touchy insulin thermostat -- meaning I react badly to sugar in another way, with

shakes and sweating, if I overindulge (though I'm more likely to get that scary reaction if I go too long without eating a small snack of cheese or other protein between "real" meals). Like a full-fledged diabetic, I now find drinks and foods containing added sugar taste very weird and cloying. On the other hand, cutting out extra sugar means I really savor class B veggies with a lot of natural sweetness, such as carrots or onions or squash. Yummy. However, on the occasions when I decide my diet and girth will tolerate beer, I want beer, not ersatz. It's not the sweetness I'm after; it's the malt and various other flavors. (Sometimes a mediocre beer can be made drinkable by adding salt to bring out a bitter undertone -- but not always. Some beers are simply undrinkable -- all of the light beers, to my taste buds. Finally, I'm drinking diet colas for both taste and effect -- caffeine, since I don't drink coffee at all. I'm drinking beer solely for taste, I can't see swilling down a six-pack of ughish "diet" beer. The only effect that would have on me -- besides creating nausea -- would be a full bladder. Forget it. JWC]]

Bob Barmore, 427 S. Mound St., Muncie IN 47305

Looked into what it would cost to put together a mag, using local typesetting, printing, &c, doing my own layout. Cheaper than I thought. The promags spend nearly half of their production budget on chrome-coat covers...other than that, it looks (from a worm's-eye view) like the dividing line between "promag" and "fanzine" is distribution and finances.

Distribution is probably a bear; I'm told one has to deal with many, many small outfits to get a mag on the stands nationwide. (Even at that, IASFM, for example, gets about 40 percent of them back. Geez. How can they pay anybody?)

[[Promags survive by not paying anybody much. Of course, Ray Palmer was noted for not paying at all if he didn't have to, and various other editors have paid only upon threats of lawsuits. It's been a tradition ever since Gernsback. Bob Silverberg once pointed out that the top rate of payment for Astounding was slightly lower than the bottom rate of payment for True Romances. (This was admittedly a long time ago, but I doubt if things have changed all that much.). RSC]]

Kay Anderson, 8386 Hollister, Ventura CA 93004

Went to the Shuttle landing over July 4 at Edwards. We went up early Saturday afternoon, and got to the base about 3. It's 16 miles off Highway 14, which is not exactly a major thoroughfare. The airman on the gate had braces on his teeth and looked about 16.

The lakebed is very interesting, strange stuff. There is about an eighth of an inch of extremely fine powder on top, like velvet, but underneath it is very hard. The surface is crazed and cracked, but the cracks are only an inch or so deep, so in essence it's a very flat smooth surface. I never felt anything quite like it. Stomping on it is an odd sensation. It's not actually hard, like concrete, yet it is.

We got directed out to one of the sites along Rosamond Blvd. But as soon as we pulled in there we were directed out again because that was a NASA guests lot. Finally we went around behind that ridge and up to the top, not far below a dome and a dish antenna in rest position, and stopped a little bit down the crest of the ridge. Which, it turned out, was an absolutely marvelous grandstand seat. The people you saw on the news, standing in a crowd down on the flightline and waving the little American flags, didn't get nearly as good a show because they were on the same level as the lakebed. We were 250 or 300 feet up, on the ancient lake shore. The ABC remote camera, and a NASA camera were about 30 feet further up the hill, and lots of ABC's angle was used. It was the shot through the heat shimmer.

It wasn't too crowded up on our hill, though the NASA visitors, at the bottom of the hill, was an area that filled up fast. They had more porta-potties, too, and I'll bet they had toilet paper in theirs. We had four outhouses for our whole hill, and one water tanker, whereas out at Media site #5 there was a john about every 30 feet. Maybe reporters drink more coffee and thus need more johns.

The official estimate of how many people came to watch from the east shore was half a million, figuring four people per vehicle. But one cop there said she bet there were a million people over there, because most of the vehicles were campers and it seemed like each one contained ten people. They were parking them door handle to door handle. We had wondered what was going on across the way but didn't figure it out till the next day when we saw the news coverage. We could see the line of headlights along 395, though it was 20 or more miles away. They came along the road all night, then seemed to disappear behind a mountain and reappear snaking down a pass, to end up on the east shore. It was like they were going into a black hole. Later we realize that as one row of vehicles found a place and turned out their headlights, another row was forming behind them. Eventually it was 20 rows deep and miles long. In the morning we could see the sunlight sparkling off the windshields over there. We had the sun in our faces till close to the landing, but the people on the east side had the wind in theirs, along with any dust that was raised.

The two things that struck me most about the shuttle as it landed, even though I knew in the abstract what to expect, are how big it is and how suddenly it is down. The first tracking cameras picked it up practically at the edge of space, as usual. It's just no time at all, literally, between when it is first picked up, coming in over San Luis Obispo at Mach 7 or better, and 100,000 feet, and when it's on the ground. With the NASA camera and ABC camera on our hill about 50 feet from us, we had an advantage; they had a small dish antenna and got a fix on it first and we looked where they were pointing. The sonic booms were much different from what you usually hear, since this aircraft is much bigger and blunter. They sounded like two cherry bombs going off ten feet away, rather than like cap pistol shots or small firecrackers. No rattle, no feeling of impact, but they were loud.

We heard the sonic boom behind us and almost at the same instant saw the Shuttle making its final approach turn far in front of us, NE across the lakebed, it's out-running its own sound so much at that point. I had expected the Shuttle to look white, but against the sky it's black. From the instant we spotted it till it was rolling down the runway couldn't have been over a breath or two. The thing is a swan, very definitely. Once it's down and no longer against the bright sky, it's sparkling white, very unlike any aircraft skin you ever saw. The tiles gleam and glitter and it really does look alive, like it's about to fluff its feathers and preen. The black markings are swanlike, too, and it lands in utter silence, with great dignity. Up close, you can see that the little violet-tinted cockpit windows remind you of the way a swan's eyes are set too close together and the way a swan looks down its nose at you, rather aloof and irascibly superior. And, to paraphrase the song lyrics, rather than being like a swan; just here and gone, it's just gone, and then it's here. It practically materializes.

The chase planes escorted it down, then pulled up, went around again, and came by low and close together, as if soliciting their own applause, taking a bow.

The Challenger, mounted on the 747, taxied down the lakebed after Columbia got down and parked at the other end of the runway. In fact, Columbia passed Challenger as it came down. The 747 pilot popped it in gear and here it came, in a cloud of dust, and lifted off right in front of the reviewing stand. We got a nice view, and then it swung around south, giving the east side people a show as it went directly over them, came back through the cloud of dust it laid down to take off, and went by the stand again, turning on all the landing lights as it did so, then swung past us. It was at 500 feet then, as it tipped its wings in salute, but we were 300 feet up on the shore, so it seemed so close that I swear if I was standing on top of a car I could have touched it. You could clearly read the words "United States" and "Challenger" on its side, with the naked eye.

Later on we went over to look at the Enterprise, though the security cops chased us away after about half an hour. During the time we were there we could touch it. I had expected the tiles to be something like Correlle or Carning cooktop surfaces, and these looked and sounded, to a knuckle-rap, like cinder block. And I was surprised at how small the tires are, no bigger than my car's.

It isn't often that you have the opportunity to be that close to all three Shuttles in one day. The Enterprise doesn't function, but the Columbia and the Challenger are the total of Earth's actual spaceships in existence right now, as far as we know.