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THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION

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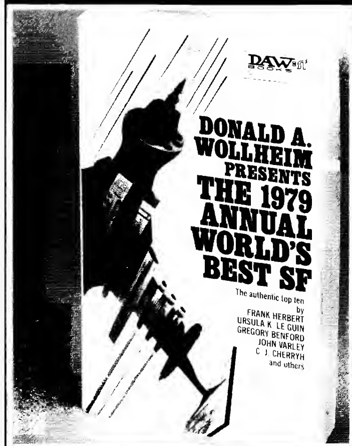

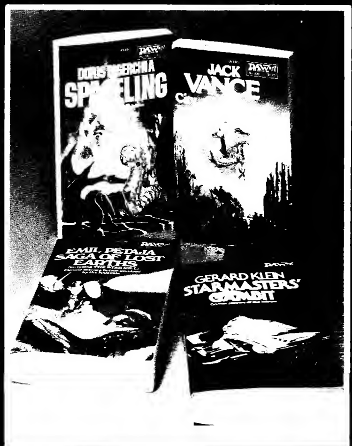

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STARSHIP

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION

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BEATLEJUICE BEATLEJUICE

EDITORIAL

RICHARD LUPOFF APPRECIATION ISSUE: As you'll have noticed, this is the Special Richard Lùpoff Appreciation Issue of STARSHIP. Besides the regular review column by the esteemed Mr. Lupoff, there's a long interview with him by Jeffrey Elliot, liberally illustrated with photographs. That's a departure from previous interview formats, and something I'd like to try more in the future.

There's also an article, "The Realities of Philip K. Dick," which first appeared in a different form as the introduction to the Gregg Press edition of Phil Dick's short story collection, *A Handful of Darkness*.

I've known Dick Lupoff since he and I lived 10 blocks from each other in New York's upper east side, fifteen years ago. He was the Hugo-award winning editor/publisher of XERO, a very impressive fanzine. I was the neofannish editor of six issues of a not very good fanzine ,named ALGOL. In those days we were both in apa F, the weekly amateur press association founded by the Fanoclasts, wherein I learned how to write personal writing—as these words here might be called—and where, in the due course of research for his Canaveral Press book, *Edgar Rice Burroughs: Master of Adventure*, Dick began a review column appropriately entitled "Lupoff's Book Week." Because he did a weekly fanzine, you see . . .

I asked for and received permission to reprint those reviews in the pages of ALGOL, and it's been downhill ever since. Dick switched from reprinted reviews to writing new ones sometime in 1965 or 1966, and from salaried employee to free-lance writer several years later. Both of us, I feel safe in saying, have considerably expanded our horizons, personally and professionally, in the years since.

It's been one of the great pleasures of my life in science fiction to know Pat and Dick Lupoff, and to work with him. Let me add that this issue of STARSHIP appears in time for this July's Westercon, where Dick Lupoff is Guest of Honor. I'll be there, in the company of thousands, celebrating Dick Lupoff's good fortunes with the rest.

THE CHARGE RETREATS: Regular readers will note that STARSHIP no longer accepts Master Charge or Visa for payment. The discount rate my bank was charging was usurious, to coin a word, and when I asked for lower rates—having discovered others in this field were paying a great deal less than I—I was told that the amount of business generated was, from their view, less than satisfactory. I pointed out that I didn't have any incentive to use charges in other areas (for instance, in renewal notices), and the bank said that they couldn't give me lower rates until I brought in more business. Faced with the evidence that the more business I brought in the more I'd stand to lose, I've decided to forego the pleasures of providing a convenience to my customers which has become a great inconvenience to the magazine.

NEW FACES OF 1979: They include University Roman, the typeface used for the heading of Justin Leiber's article this issue. I took advantage of a special offer Sam Flax Artist Materials ran, to restock supplies of Letraset, the brand of dry transfer lettering I use in the production of this magazine.

Why dry transfer lettering rather than having headlines set in type? Because, although Letraset is currently going for more than $5.00 a sheet, I can still make dozens of words from each sheet, and so it becomes considerably cheaper than having words set by themselves. I can also play around with combinations of various sizes and faces to create interesting patterns and designs in type.

Among new faces I bought were Bookman Bold, to complement the Bookman Bold Italic already in stock; Korinna, which complements stocks of Korinna Bold and Korinna Extra Bold in hand; Souvenir Medium, widening my range of that typeface; and Peignot Light, which broadens my collection of the Peignot face to include Light, Medium and Bold. For an example of Peignot Light, see the first line of type in the heading for the Lupoff interview.

I'll be using these and replacement sheets of typefaces I already carry to broaden and enrich STARSHIP's graphic finery in this and future issues. I'll also continue to attempt, where feasible and where such attempts do not impinge on the business of communication, to find alternatives to the standard three column format which this magazine has. Such attempts are tempered by the cold equations of time, deadlines and money. But I promise that the graphics of STARSHIP will never be dull.

SFWA MEMBERS: Should take note that copies of this issue go to the full SFWA membership list. To the members of that professional body, I send greetings. A surprising number of you have either never heard of this magazine, or have failed to buy a copy. Here's your big chance to get an issue free—an offer no member of SFWA could possibly refuse—and to become aware, at the same time, of a paying market for nonfiction about the SF field. I also hope you'll find this the closest thing there is in SF to a special interest magazine/trade journal about the field. I sincerely hope you, and all readers of STARSHIP, find the special

subscription offer elsewhere in these pages of especial interest. I welcome your submissions and subscriptions.

SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE: This is the last issue of STARSHIP which will have SFC as a section within it. Beginning this summer, SFC will begin life as a separate newsmagazine serving the SF field. It will be published monthly, with the first issue appearing probably in August. Cover price will be $1.00. Right now, charter subscriptions will be accepted at $8.00 per year, for 12 issues. The magazine will be mailed at first class rates in the US and Canada, and possibly airmail, with correspondingly higher subscription rates, overseas. As this editorial goes to the typesetters, all rates have not yet been definitely established.

I, Andrew Porter, will be the publisher of SFC. I bring my experience as publisher of this magazine to the job, as well as a wealth of other experience, including being assistant editor at *F&SF* for 8 years; associate editor at Lancer Books for half a year; advertising, production, and editorial experience with a number of magazines, both trade and consumer, including *Boating Industry, Rudder, Toy & Hobby World, Electro-Procurement, Modern Floor Coverings*, etc., etc. Also, for two years, from 1966 to 1968, I was editor/publisher of SFWEEKLY, a weekly newsmagazine covering professional SF, published in New York.

Contributing editors on SFC already include Jack Williamson, who is writing a monthly column as President of the SFWA. Covering movie and TV news is Chris Steinbrunner, a long time SF and mystery fan, editor with Otto Penzler of the *Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection*, officer of the Baker Street Irregulars and the Mystery Writers of America, a producer at WOR-TV in New York, a station that regularly and mysteriously runs more SF films than any other in this area. Covering recordings and radio is Jim Freund, until recently host of *The Hour of the Wolf*, a weekly SF program heard over WBAI-FM, Pacifica radio in New York City. Jim is now producing a new SF program for WBAI with a broader range of themes.

A number of other professionals, journalists and writers in this area will be working on SFCHRONICLE. New York is, after all, the heart of the science fiction industry; this is where nearly all the publishing is done, even if half the writers have migrated to earthquake country. The literary agents are here, as are the editors and publishers, and it is here that SFCHRONICLE will be produced.

For current news stories—some reprinted from the March SFC update circulated at conventions during February, March and April—see the issue of SFC bound into this issue of STARSHIP. Full subscription details will be published there.

TENTACLES OF TERROR: The Evil tentacles of that vast and menacing machinery of malice, that calamitous collection of malignant men, otherwise known as your friend and mine, the Post Office, has done It again.

It, this time, being delaying another issue of this magazine in the mails. The Spring issue was sent out on February 12th, as usual by third class bulk. One subscriber, located on the shores of the Susquehanna River near a now infamous nuclear reactor, tells me that it took over three weeks for the magazine to go the fifty miles to his home. Similar stories have come in from other subscribers; nothing at all has come in from foreign subscribers, including those in Canada. Another less than normal sized letter column is the result.

There is, unfortunately, not very much I can do about this. I would dearly love to do something to certain mailmen; the stories that a certain postal employee and fan tells in his fanzine are incredibly horrifying for users of the mails. It is, unfortunately, a Federal Crime to assault postal people.

The most recent example of postal horror stories I can tell is that all my income tax forms for this magazine and myself took 20 days via first class mail to travel from mid-Manhattan to my home in Brooklyn Heights—a distance of some five miles—and that as I type these words, I wonder whatever happened to an important manuscript for this issue, mailed two counties away a week ago . . .

ADVERTISING: I am very happy to report that this issue has the largest amount of advertising of any I've ever published. Not coincidentally, it is also one of the largest issues I've ever published. As I've said before—Lee Smith, are you going to read this part?—the amount of advertising determines the total number of pages. The more advertising, the greater the total page count. Keeping a rough ratio of about 35% advertising to 65% editorial, this issue runs substantially larger than last. For the few of you who complain about the amount of advertising run here, I repeat that without the advertising a great many things would have to go: color covers, perhaps typesetting, payment of contributors and thus the quality.

For an indication of the amount of advertising other magazines run, perhaps you'll find these figures interesting. The February 1979 issue of *Redbook* was 53% advertising; the February 12, 1979 issue of *Fortune* was 58% advertising; the December 4, 1978 issue of *The New Yorker* was 68% advertising, and finally the *Southeast Business Edition* of the October 16, 1978 *Time* was a solid 75% advertising, only 25% editorial.

I would like to welcome the following first-time ever advertisers to these pages: James A. Rock, Odyssey Publications, Stackpole Books, Atheneum, Chicago Fantasy Newsletter, Cathcart Gallery, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Big O Publishing, the SF Shop, Vantage Press, Borgo Press, and Poison Pen Press. Please patronize my advertisers—mention where you saw their ads, if writing to them; let them know where responses are coming from. Advertising is the life blood of this magazine.

THE ISSUE: Besides a keen look at Richard Lupoff, this issue also features an article, hilarious at times, on how to write or perhaps how not to write SF, by Robert Sheckley. I strongly suspect his methods do not work for all. The incomparable Sandra Miesel returns to these pages, writing about Randall Garrett and concentrating on one of his many works. Vincent DiFate, stymied by his editor on purely financial grounds—I didn't want to go bankrupt—turns from the evolution of a cover

Continued on page 26.

ALGOL IN ITALY: Subscriber John Gara, currently in service with Our Boys in Italy, sent this picture of a hydrofoil ferry operating out of Naples. Note the curious lettering on the side . . .

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EXCITING SF IN THE TRADITION OF URSULA K. LE GUIN

FRITZ LEIBER & EYES

Justin Leiber

I was first struck by the influence of Fritz' writing on himself in the summer of 1968. My wife Leslie and I were living in Buffalo. I hadn't seen my father in a couple of years. Fritz was driving in from Los Angeles to do a science fiction workshop at Clarion College in nearby Pennsylvania. We were to see him at Clarion and then he was to visit us in Buffalo. I had just finished reading Fritz' *A Specter Is Haunting Texas,* then serialized in *Galaxy Magazine.*

The specter in question is a tall and very thin native of the satellite communities who most wear a support exoskeleton to visit a Texas which some two hundred years hence has annexed much of North America. Scully, an actor by profession, becomes a useful symbolic figure in the bent-back revolution against the ruling class of Texans, who use hormones to reach Scully's eight foot height without mechanical support. Science fiction is replete with stories in which the protagonist and a small band of conspirators try to free "the people" from an evil dictatorship. Such stories reveal and reinforce a belief that is common among SF readers: that the character of society is determined by a technocratic elite. "Revolution" in this view happens when a good elite, with fresh intelligence and technology, takes over the dumb masses from the bad elite. Scully, to the contrary, is just a co-opted speech maker, a spectral mascot. Scully, artist-actor like Fritz, does not change the world—he reflects it darkly. The *Communist Manifesto* begins "A spectre is haunting Europe, the spectre of Communism . . ." I asked Fritz whether anyone in SF had noticed the source of his title. He said no.

When I saw Fritz that summer of 1968 he was sporting all of 140 pounds on his six-foot-five frame—a mighty gaunt reduction from the accustomed 200 or so pounds. He was Scully, or so it seemed to me. He had the somewhat silly giddiness of Scully. And he was putting on a crazy dramatic act (at Clarion anyhow). I still have a clear vision of this cadaverous scarecrow capering about and teaching fencing at a drunken backyard party at Clarion. You have to remember that this was the height of the Vietnamese War; LBJ had just withdrawn from running for a second term, which relieved the worries of *Galaxy*'s lawyers (*Specter* begins "Ever since Lyndon ousted Jack in the Early Atomic Age, the term of a President of Texas has been from inauguration to assassination. Murder is merely the continuation of politics by other means.")

You might get a little of the style of the apparition of Clarion, Scully Leiber, if you see Fritz striding through that strange film *Equinox. Equinox* was first shot with Fritz and four *quite* amateurish actors. No sound. Later a pro villain, Asmodeus, and sound were added for commercial distribution. Fritz wasn't around at the time to dub. Hence, though you see a lot of him in the film, he says nothing. He just runs endlessly through the underbrush clutching a magic book. (A much younger, handsome and inexpressive Fritz appears in conversation with Robert Taylor for a second in the Garbo movie *Camille.*)

The same Scully version of Fritz turns up in the two other major-award-winning stories of that three year period, *Ship of Shadows* and *Gonna Roll the Bones.* In *Ship of Shadows* (1969), the protagonist, an ancient and alcoholic floorsweeper of a space bar, shadow boxes his way to reality, sobriety, eyesight, *and teeth.* When he visited me in New York City in spring 1970 Fritz gave a little talk on his false teeth which I can only describe as brilliant. To speak of such a subject with wit and insight, careful attention to precision and economy of expression, is characteristic of Fritz. Though he never lost his conversational gifts his basic diet at that time appeared to be several vitamins and a quart of hard liquor a day.

In *Gonna Roll the Bones* (1968), one finds recognizable—if myth-proportioned—visions of Fritz, his wife Jonquil, mother Virginia, and the Cat (that is, my father, mother, grandmother, and Gummitch [see "SpaceTime for Springers" for more on the last]). The protagonist, Joe Slattermill, the Quixote of the crap tables of all times and climes from Vicksburg to Vega, saunters out to shoot dice and comes up against death himself. Fritz drove back to L.A. from Buffalo that summer of 1968 in a Datsun that Jonquil had named "Dunkirk," in honor of the little boats of that desperate evacuation of the British Army from France in the summer of 1940. Fritz stopped in Vegas. According to one tradition, he had to cash in his spare tire for gas for the last leg into

L.A. (see "Night Passage" for a joyful evocation of sexuality and long night drives in the desert after the gambling casinos). "Nature imitates Art" as Oscar Wilde put it. Like Joe Slattermill, Fritz won in losing. *Gonna Roll the Bones* ends "He turned and headed straight for home, but he took the long way, around the world."

In "Waif" (1974) and related stories Fritz does some analysis on his sexuality. Indeed Fritz has written—looking back several decades—about the sexuality submerged in some of his earliest work. In "Adept's Gambit" (1947 publication, though written years before), we find that grand sword and sorcery pair Fafhrd and Gray Mouser in the ancient Tyre of this world, rather than their now customary world of Nehwon with its adventure, vermin, and vice infested Lankhmar—that classical-medieval port, the one full realization of a city of which we find hints throughout the literature of sword and sorcery. At the center of "Adept's Gambit" is a reclusive, evil young man who experiences the world voyeuristically by sending his sister out under his mental control. Fritz has remarked that he would not have realized at the time he wrote it how much the story suggested about his own sexuality. Fritz, an only child, spent much of his childhood with staid and ancient relatives while his impossibly romantic father and mother toured with his father's Shakespearean repertoire company. He secretly burned the sheets of his first wet dream. It would seem wholly natural that his first literary mentor was H.P. Lovecraft, that his first stories were supernatural horror, part of the attempt to revive that quintessentially Victorian sensibility, decadent romanticism, in which the reek of sexuality pervades a landscape of alabaster corpses, little girls in white, unspeakable cellars choked with leprous toadstools, all "splashed with a splendid sickness, the sickness of the pearl" (G.K. Chesterton). What *is* extraordinary about Fritz is that he has explored the genre and himself with clarity and determination. In a way, *A Specter is Haunting Texas* is the supernatural horror story turned inside out: with the specter as point-of-view we get a picaresque farce. Scully is an explicitly sexual specter, brimming with life and fun, revolution and ribaldry. And, above all, Scully is a professional actor (as his father) from Circumluna. When he comes to Earth for his brief weeks as a specter, the Shakespearean figure is literally true for him: "all the world's a stage."

In "237 Talking Statues" (1963), Fritz makes a kind of amusing peace with his literal father, Fritz Leiber Sr., or "Guv" as we called him. Guv was a major Shakespearean actor in the 1910s and 1920s. Fritz, under the name "Francis Lathrop," appeared in Guv's repertoire company in its last tour (1934). The Depression meant the end of such companies. Guv's had survived as long as it did because it had a two year contract with the Chicago Civic Theatre. Fritz now thinks that Guv knew the last tour couldn't succeed but it would mean that father and son would tour together at least once and it would provide Hollywood exposure. The final tour seemed planned so that there would be a good run in Los Angeles before the financial collapse. In any case, Guv went on to do character roles in the movies and settled into a house in Pacific Palisades. Guv peopled the Pacific Palisades house with statues and paintings of himself and Virginia (Fritz' mother), usually in Shakespearean roles; others were represented in less profusion—a statue of me at age four was the major figure in a modest backyard fountain; Fritz has a head Guv did of him over the hall of his present-day San Francisco apartment. Guv also liked to paint young women in bathing suits, working from his photographs. The Guv's art work was what you might expect of a man who had also put together a fine darkroom and shop, meticulously maintained and stocked with a very large number of tools, cabinets, and devices that he had made for himself. The kitchen, for example, was brightened by walls peopled with nursery book characters that would gratify a professional Disney in their craftsmanship and unpretension.

In the "237 Talking Statues" we find "Francis Legrande II," a mildly alcoholic midlife failure, making his peace with his dead "famous actor" father who, just like Guv, peopled his home with theatrical self-images. Francis talks to his father, who speaks out of one or another of his self statues, particularly the part of Don Juan. Francis speaks of his jealousy and suspicion; his father arranges his own exorcism with affection and dispatch. Mother is persuaded to let one of the cluttering images go. The Don Juan statue is donated to the Merrivale Young Ladies Academy.

The Guv died in 1949. Fritz and Jonquil wound up their Chicago affairs in 1958 and moved to Los Angeles. For a few years they lived in the Pacific Palisades house with Virginia. Then they moved a couple of miles down the coast to Venice, a low rent hippy-haven with remnants of the canal system that justified the name. Fritz moved north to San Francisco after Virginia's, and finally Jonquil's death in the end of the 1960s. Virginia herself appears, appropriately, as Fafhrd's implacable mother Mor in "The Snow Women" (1970). In some sense she also appears in that story as the eighteen-year-old Fafhrd's first (and last) respectably betrothed Mara. Single and double analogs of Jonquil also appear in the Fafhrd-Gray Mouser saga. But more on that subject later.

Fritz has continued the Guv's renaissance person tradition, though in a more literary and arcane, more theoretical and less manual, way. Naturally, he is an expert chess player. He won the Santa Monica Open shortly after moving from Chicago to L.A. The *Chess Review* published his version of the *real* first meeting between Sherlock Holmes and Professor Moriarty, "The Moriarty Gambit" (1962). Scene, the first round of the brilliant (and quite real) Hastings International Tournament of 1888. Game, a winning double-rook sacrifice, the most impossibly gaudy of all the grand mating combinations in which the opponent's Queen is drawn away from the action by the forced "gift" of two rooks, so that the minor pieces may spring a mating net around the opponent's king. The game and players are not actually recorded in the official records of the Hastings International because both Holmes and Moriarty withdrew from the tournament after the first round.

Fritz is an accomplished fencer. At the University of Chicago he studied psychology and philosophy; there was even a mercifully brief flirtation with religion at the General Theological Seminary in New York City. And he is a very knowledgeable student of magic, drugs, and psychic powers, though a wholly skeptical one.

He is also a great student (professor?) of cities. "Smoke Ghost" (1941) cunningly transforms the "blasted heath" of tradition into the lonely, smoke-ravaged rooftops of warehouses in downtown Chicago. In "Catch That Zeppelin" (1975), we tour Manhattan both in present day and in an alternative world. Fritz can show you what he has deduced to be Sam Spade's movements through the streets of San Francisco in the *Maltese Falcon* just as he has toured so many through the countless byways of mythic Lankhmar (Joanna Russ has her adventurer, Alyx the Picklock, remember having an affectionate brawl with Fafhrd in what must be Lankhmar's Silver Eel, and in Fritz' "The Best Two Thieves in Lankhmar" (1968) Alyx turns up, as an observer of Fafhrd's silliness, in the back of the same tavern). Fritz' second novel in the "Change War" series is set in late Republican Rome—it has yet to be completed because it has, according to Fritz, become an excuse for reading ever more extensively about the Eternal City. In Fritz' recent novel, *Our Lady of Darkness* (1977), we even find "Thibaut de Castries" *Megapolisomancy: A New Science of Cities.*

It is characteristic that Fritz' visual art is minor key. I have a picture over my desk of San Francisco's skyline that Fritz did with his spatter-paint technique. When I was a kid "little books,"

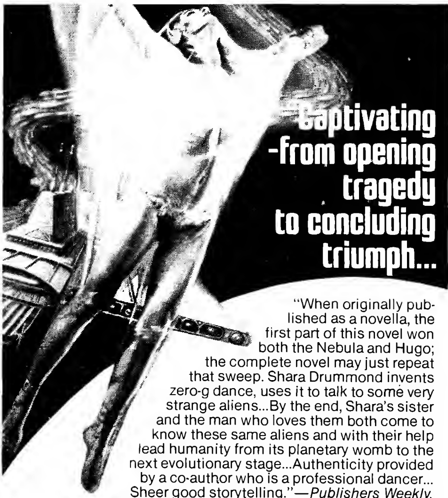
cartoon stories of "Terrinks," "Molly," and "Pommer," appeared on birthdays. Fritz and his friend Harry Fisher (Fafhrd and Gray Mouser) made a Lankhmar game decades ago. The two were recently reunited as guests of honor at a fantasy game convention organized by TSR Games, which now markets a commercial version of Lankhmar.

By far the most valuable device in Fritz' present apartment is a good astronomical telescope. It gets systematic use. Indeed, Fritz' telescopic work helped him discover a tiny degeneration, now successfully laser-arrested, in one retina. Since you look through a telescope with only one eye, you can pick up such damage early. Fritz' first thought, after eliminating stellar phenomena, was that there was something amiss with the telescope; then he worked back to the eye. Outward vision is inward vision: "he headed straight for home, but he took the long way, around the world." This incident is the theme of this essay in a minor variation.

Recently, Fritz showed me a short piece that recounts his examination of his cheap, functional, hour-minute, digital-display, electric clock. The prose is a model of clarity and concision: an exercise in observation, deduction, discovery, and more deduction, that is a miniature, a bit of Cellini goldwork, of disciplined thought and investigation. The final discovery that the clock has a 67-second minute and a correlative 53-second minute in each hour is reached through a series of observations and deductions that give us a sharp picture of what ought to happen when one thinks about the discontinuities between the physical features of machines and the rather different cognitive functions—such as giving the correct time—that we want them to exhibit. What makes this intellectual paradigm so interesting is that it maps a territory that is characteristic of the best of recent work in human cognitive psychology. Fritz read my article, "Extraterrestrial Translation" (*Galileo* Seven) and part of my *Structuralism* (G.K. Hall, 1978), in which I write as a professional philosopher about cognitive psychology, and then he handed me his piece about his electric clock. *Padre, padrone*: father, master. Perhaps it's comfort that Fritz mentioned that when he was taught to play chess, Guv decided that he wanted to learn too; Guv beat the kid. Grand-*padre*, grand-*padrone*.

Fritz was an editor of *Science Digest* from 1945 to 1957. Particularly during that period he produced scads of articles on scientific subjects. One standard family activity of the late 1940s, when I was about a nine-year-old, was the old collation march around the dining room table, assembling copies of *New Purposes*, a mimeo magazine that Fritz got out, with a little help from his friends—and for his friends. Reflecting on that period in my own life, I am struck by the degree to which I was being shown the future. When Marshall McLuhan danced into the cultural gestalt in the middle sixties, I was able to yawn. McLuhan's first book, *The Mechanical Bride*, appeared at home shortly after its publication in 1951—it contained a substantial analysis of Fritz' "The Girl with the Hungry Eyes" (1949). *The Mechanical Bride* had the standard McLuhan scam: it fell "stillborn from the press" because the audience was out of phase. Doing hard puberty at the time, I was particularly taken with the lingerie ads that McLuhan analyzed.

Fritz is above all prodigal in the variety of literary forms he has employed—and invented. Poetry from sonnets through the varieties of more gaudy meters, ten page letter correspondences in the pre-twentieth century manner, short stories written to fit magazine covers, essays on social questions, short plays, songs and chants, parodies of Robert Heinlein and Micky Spillane, historical and crime tales, a still to be completed book on the fantasy novel, and so on. What strikes one is the degree to which much of this is motivated by friendship and the challenge of yet another form. *Sonnets for Jonquil*, a blue-covered mimeoed publication, contains some of Jonquil's poetry and a note on her other writing, including a play that Fritz helped put on, plus some sonnets by Fritz about Jonquil. "The Lords of Quarmall"



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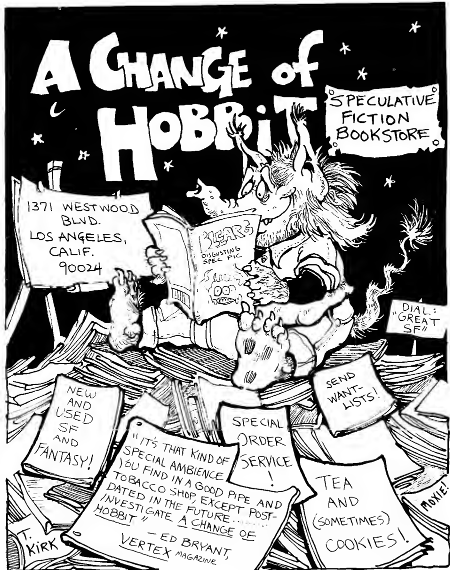
(1964) bears the note "In 1936 my comrade Harry Otto Fischer conceived, began, and abandoned the story 'The Lords of Quarmall.' Twenty-five years later I decided I was up to the pleasant task of solving the mysteries of the tale and completing it without changing his words at all, except to add details of the plot. Harry, in some ways a very patient person, laconically commented that he was glad to discover at last how his story ended." If you read that story, which appears in the fourth Fafhrd-Gray Mouser book, and distinguish Harry's passages from the story that Fritz wove round them, you will have a curious lesson in comradeship.

(Have I forgotten to mention the stories and novels that have won Fritz more Nebula and Hugo awards than any other writer? And the fact that next year he will become the only writer except Heinlein and Bloch to have twice been the exclusive guest of honor for the World SF Convention? Ah, but that's the point. Though Fritz presents himself a free-lance writer by trade, with no high art pretentions, there is simply no one in SF with anything remotely like his prestige or talent who shows less of an interest in the big money or is more of a soft touch for fanzine editors who beg for a piece to give their magazines some class.) Fritz simply likes to write a lot of different kinds of things and if half of them are ahead of their time or behind their time or so far out in left field that the people who have the right background to read it can be counted on your fingers—well, tough. "The Moriarty Gambit," for example, calls for a reader who likes to play out others' games from chess notation and who knows the Sherlock Holmes stories and is crazy about them. But since Fritz *is* known for his award-winning SF writing, I want to say a little about one of his most original and form-forging works, *The Big Time.*

The Big Time introduces the "Change War" world in which a vast war is conducted through space and time by "Spiders" and "Snakes," and by humans and extra-terrestrials who have the rare quality of flexibility and alienatedness that allows them to be recruited out of their ordinary life and time into the big time, the world of all times and possibilities. Many time travel stories suggest that one might travel to the Ice Age, mash a blade of grass, and change all history (for want of a nail the horseshoe was lost, for want of the horseshoe the horse was lost, for want of the horse the man . . . the battle . . . the war . . . the race . . .). But if you think about it, *if time travel is possible,* then all of time must exist at once in some sense—the past cannot have wholly disappeared if you can get to it, nor can the future be wholly unmade if you can go there and back. This raises the question as to how one can change the future or the past. This also raises the question: what is "the present"? If you can travel the big time continuum of space-time-history from ancient Egypt to the distant future, who is to say what slice is the present? Strikingly, Fritz has an elegant answer to these questions: the "law of the conservation of reality."



The idea is to extend the conservation laws of physics once more, into the psychological, historical, and higher physical sciences. Two conservation laws were the hallmarks of 18th and 19th century science: 1) Mass (matter) is neither created nor destroyed, though it may change form from a liquid to a gas, enter into a chemical reaction, and so on; 2) Energy is neither created nor destroyed, though it can change from random heat to mechanical motion, sound, ranges in the electro-magnetic spectrum, and so on. These conservation laws generalize cruder and more specific conservations and they have been generalized themselves in this century. We now have, as Einstein's $E = MC^2$ suggests, the law of the conservation of mass-energy: the total amount of mass-energy is conserved, though you can transform, as stars do all the time, one into the other.

The law of the conservation of reality, like the other conservation laws, suggests that nothing is really lost, nothing spontaneously evaporates or appears: you can, with a great expenditure of reality through time-travel agents, transform something in the space-time-history continuum (replace Julius Caesar with a secret spider agent, throw a tactical A-bomb into the Peloponnesian War), *but the rest of the historical continuum will conserve reality,* it will change the absolute minimum needed to accommodate this intervention. In another change war story, a big time recruit goes back to prevent his being shot in ordinary time, altering as little as possible so that no bullet hits him. Nature makes the proper hole in him with a meteor just as the bullet would, this mere improbability being the most conservative step nature can take in changing the continuum of

history. Time travel in ordinary time violates reality: reality reshapes the pattern of events so that the violation fits right in with a new reality of ordinary time.

What has to be the "present" in the continuum of ordinary time? The "present" is simply the slice of history that is most conserved, least changeable, most influential.

Formally, *The Big Time* maintains the most strict unities of classical drama. *All* the story takes place within a few hours and in one large room, a rest and recreation station outside of time. The cast—the Place is obviously a theater and the action dramatic—of entertainers and agents come from choice points in history, or slight-altered, "change-war torn" history. This provides the challenge of displaying very different accents and ways of thought together. The Place is like a ghostly theater in which characters from different plays meet. Take Karysia Labrys, originally of the ancient Crete of the Triple-Goddess, who gives the following description of the battle she has just returned from with a Lunan and a satyr:

Woe to Spider! Woe to Cretan! Heavy is the news I bring you. Bear it bravely, like strong women. When we got the gun unlimbered, I heard seaweed fry and crackle. We three leaped behind the rock wall, saw our guns grow white as sunlight in a heat-ray of the Serpents! Natch, we feared we were outnumbered and I called upon my Caller . . .

But I didn't die there, kiddos. I still hoped to hurt the Greek ships, maybe with the Snake's own heat gun. So I quick tried to outflank them. My two comrades crawled beside me—they are males but they have courage. Soon we spied the ambushsetters. They were Snakes and they were many, filthily disguised as Cretans . . .

They had seen us when we saw them, and they loosed a killing volley. Heat- and knife-rays struck about us in a storm of wind and fire, and the Lunan lost a feeler, fighting for Crete's Triple Goddess. So we dodged behind a sand hill, steered our flight back toward the water. It was awful, what we saw there; Crete's brave ships all sunk or sinking, blue sky sullied by their death-smoke. Once again the Greeks had licked us!—aided by the filthy Serpents. Round our wrecks, their black ships scurried, like black beetles, filth their diet, yet this day they dine on heroes. On the quiet sun-lit beach there, I could feel a Change Gale blowing, working changes deep inside me, aches and pains that were a stranger's. Half my memories were doubled, half my lifeline crooked and twisted, three new moles upon my swordhand. Goddess, Goddess, Triple Goddess . . . Triple Goddess, give me courage to tell all that happened.

Let's suppose you did recruit such a fighter and equipped her with ordinary English, rather than the stilted language that scholars will likely use when they translate a popular, pre-literate folk epic poem like the *Iliad.* If you didn't notice the rhythm in Kaby's chant, read it out loud. The passage is in the meter of our oldest and noblest poem: classical hexameters. But also note the fierce feminism of Kaby. Joanna Russ's Alyx is much like her, particularly in *Picnic on Paradise* (1968), and Russ's work is recognized, correctly, as the first real entry of feminism in SF. But Fritz thought up Kaby in 1958.

I could make similar points about the rest of the cast. The narrator-entertainer, Greta Forzane of Depression Chicago, Prussian Erich von Hohenwald, WWI poet-soldier Bruce Marchant, riverboat gambler Beau, Doc of a Nazi-occupied Tzarist Russia, Sidney Lessingham of 16th century London, and so on. The plot and action form a tightly-structured roller coaster that leaves you breathless. But the Lunan Illilihis provides the final revelation, slid in so casually that I missed it until this last reading:

Feeling sad, Greta girl, because you'll never understand what's happening to us all, because you'll never be anything but a shadow fighting shadows . . . Who are the real Spiders and Snakes, meaning who were the first possibility-binders?

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Who was Adam? Lilith? In binding all possibility, the Demons also bind the mental with the material. All fourth-order beings live inside and outside all minds, throughout the whole cosmos. Even this Place is, after its fashion, a giant brain: its floor is the brainpan, the boundary of the Void is the cortex of gray matter—yes even the Major and Minor Maintainers are analogues of the pineal and pituitary glands, which in some form sustain all nervous systems. (p.169)

The mind is the big time. For we find there a constructed reality, a panorama of space-time-history that flexes and readjusts as one reconstructs the past and repredicts the future, reintegrates the macrocosm and microcosm: at the same time, in the mind's big time, there is the continual play of possibilities, of alternate histories and worlds. The cast of the Place worry that the Snakes and Spiders may have messed so much with the fabric of historical reality that it may fission, smashing the conservation of reality as an atomic bomb explodes the conservation of matter. But that's what madness is, isn't it? The Ego can put it together no longer.

You will also notice a view of the mind that is as old as Plato and as new as Hermann Hesse's *Steppenwolf*: the mind is composed of many persons, forged in fear and love, from experience, history, and imagination, and when the mind acts or receives reports, it does so through one or another of these characters and must take account of that character's weaknesses. In one of his brilliant philosophical puzzle pieces Jorge Borges has Shakespeare wonder that he has no "real me" inside but rather a vast cast, he is "everyone or no one." Borges' story concludes when God tells Shakespeare that he feels the same way. In another short-short, "Borges and I," Borges, comparing his inner sense of self with the construction that is reflected by the body of his writings, concludes that "I do not know which of us is writing this line." But all of this is simply *more* true of the writer than of most of us. Einstein once summarized what he thought was the philosopher Kant's great insight so: Reality is set us *as a Task*.

In his initial choice of supernatural horror and sword & sorcery genres, shy Fritz would seem to have found just what he needed to lose himself in. These are pulp, lowbrow genres—no pretension in that. They impose on those who write them a special, colorful, and gaudy vocabulary and style. They also impose a special sort of atmosphere, landscape, and arcane lore: excepting SF, they are alone among pulp forms in combining brawny, physical combat with the cut and thrust of intelligence and secret lore. Finally, these forms dictate clever, gimmicky plot construction and rapid action; even the kind of emotional punch is much restricted. One can, and people do, write recipes for these genres: from that it seems to follow that one reveals nothing about oneself in writing one except that one knows the recipe and can follow directions. Further, because these are both pulpish and minor genres, to write them reveals no pretentions to high art or fair fame. Rather, they generate a relatively small circle of initiates and playful semi-professionals—perhaps here Fritz found something of a replacement for "the company," his father's Shakespearean band.

Of course, Fritz undoubtedly got some simple pleasure from picturing the sword and sorcery world of Lankhmar, from making a barbarian adventurer Fafhrd that had his height and none of his self-consciousness. But the artist, of course, has a craft and is trying to tell a story to someone else. Even if the artist starts with a simple, wish-fulfilling cast and dream, the artist is driven to make the dream more dazzling, compelling, and seductive. The wish fulfillment may be made more complete and less obvious to the reader: always the artist is forced to understand the magic, the machinery, with which the reader is bewitched. But the artist isn't after

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self-therapy either, though that is a byproduct. That is the disanalogy with the telescope incident. When Fritz noticed something in the heavens that couldn't be there, he checked the telescope, and finally worked back to the damage in his eye. Then, naturally, he got medical treatment. Now it is part of my thesis that Fritz started with escapist, and deliberately unpretentious, genres—Id demanded gross meals, and shyness (murderous Superego) insisted on concealment in pulp genre—but, as Fritz improved his art and grasp of form, his artistic daemon, reflecting on past work and planning new, simply forced him to realize various pathologies in himself, forced him into better self-understanding.

When the Id demands skillful pornography from the Ego's endless spinning of wispy webs, it should watch out, for it may find by some sudden slight that it is not the king speaking to a humble player but the bull facing the matador.

Fritz soon grew unchallenged by the supernatural horror and sword & sorcery forms with which he began: once one gives oneself to art it may become discontent with simple tasks and low dreams. The first substantial works he made are rich in ideas and technologies, though retaining much of the atmosphere of the earlier tales. The unpretentious pose of professional pulp writer is maintained. The ideas and characters are there to wring the maximum punch from the dramatic, swift-moving action that clever plotting affords; style and narrative structure are unobtrusive. The protagonist is invariably an attractive and uncomplicated character with whom the reader may easily identify, both innocently awaiting the tricks that are in store. Though the protagonist often shares a couple of skills or experiences with the real Fritz—the writer has to know something about the settings he puts his characters into, surely—the protagonist is no confession of the real Fritz, nor is there any tricky interplay between protagonist and artist. All this begins to turn about in the later works. *You're All Alone*, *Gather, Darkness!*, and *Conjure Wife* of the 1940s are followed by *The Big Time*, *Specter* and *Our Lady of Darkness*.

In *You're All Alone* (1950) is one of the narrowest and most dramatic expressions of paranoia that I know. The protagonist discovers that almost everyone in his present-day world operates like a Leibnizian "windowless" monad. They are all following a pre-arranged, automatic pattern that makes it look like they are inter-acting while in fact they are not—if you are one of the very few who can break out of pattern, no one will notice you, and indeed they all continue "interacting" with the empty space you are programmed to occupy exactly as if you were there. The "all" does not include a small number of evil breakouts who are exploiting the situation and hunting down everyone else who has broken out of the automatic interplay. Eerie effects come from manipulations of the automaton normals, from re-hiding in the automatic pattern. It's a scary story, and should one stand back and think about it, suggests something about the writer (about a grim Chicago downtown business-and-bar world), but everything is done to lead the reader away from that issue, and the author has no place in the story. It's "you're all alone," not "I'm all alone," or even "we're all alone."

On the other hand, in *The Big Time*, which employs the same notion of breakout for the few whom the Snakes and Spiders can recruit (they do not break out of themelves, however, and Illy eventually suggests that the recruiter is really the demon-daemon Art), we have not the simple paranoiac punch, but the gay, giddy, multileveled fabric of high art, of the "everybody and nobody," in which the Place, dancing with drama and histoy, is of course also revealed as the mind of Fritz Leiber and his Art (like "I" and "Borges").

Gather, Darkness! (1943) is one of the first and perhaps *the* classical novel of a future, post WWIII world dominated by an authoritarian, medieval-modeled church hierarchy whose inner-circle employs a secret scientific technology to keep the superstitious public and lower priesthood under control. The action is dramatic and colorful, the technology cunning and charming, the plot stunningly well-constructed. One idea that gives the work its classical balance is the logic of a revolution against such a hierarchy of white magic: the revolutionaries will play satanists, a hierarchy of *black* magic which will dismay, frighten, or win over people who are adjusted to think in magical, not scientific, ways. (The French historian, Jules Michelet, saw medieval satanism as the only available expression for the anti-feudal revolution—if the churchly hierarchy says that God wants all wealth and power to go to the temporal and religious lords, who is on the side of the poor peasants?, who is their spiritual resource?)

But, as I've suggested, when we get to *A Specter is Haunting Texas* (1968), we have a more multi-leveled, more comic and more realistic story of our post-WWIII future. Scully (Fritz, narrator, Death, Dark Art), actor from Circumluna, is dragged into the bent-back revolution against hormone-hiked, conquering Texans, who identify with LBJ and (no doubt) a certain war . . . And Scully knows that history is hardly ever a tale of technologically-inventive elites, coldly manipulating the credulous masses. You don't reason its craziness

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DREAMS MUST EXPLAIN THEMSELVES, by Ursula K. Le Guin.
Cover and illus. by Tim Kirk, 39pp., 5½" x 8½", paper, 2nd pr., $3.00. ISBN 0-916186-01-6.

The title essay appeared in the 10th anniversary issue of ALGOL, and speaks of writing, children's fantasy, and specifically the Earthsea trilogy. The volume also contains "The Rule of Names," an early story first published in 1964 and one of the first to feature the inhabitants of Earthsea; a map of Earthsea; the author's National Book Award acceptance speech; and an interview with the author by Jonathan Ward of CBS Television.

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EXPERIMENT PERILOUS: Three Essays on Science Fiction, by Marion Zimmer Bradley, Norman Spinrad, and Alfred Bester.
33pp., 5½" x 8½", paper, $2.50. ISBN 0-916186-02-4.

These three essays on SF, reprinted from the pages of ALGOL, touch on all aspects of modern science fiction. "Experiment Perilous: The Art and Science of Anguish in Science Fiction," by Marion Zimmer Bradley speaks of the author's growing knowledge of her craft and the changes SF has brought to her life; "The Bug Jack Barron Papers," by Norman Spinrad concentrates on the battle to write and get published this controversial novel, a turning point in the evolution of modern SF; "Writing and 'The Demolished Man'," by Alfred Bester traces the growth and development of this major SF work from idea to finished book, as well as Bester's ideas on the why and how of writing SF.

"If you don't have the back issues of ALGOL, buy the book" —Richard Lupoff; "Really excellent" —Khatru.

Use Order Form On Page **89**

Fritz Leiber, Sr., made images of himself in Shakespearean roles, just like Francis Legrande Sr. in "237 Talking Statues" by Fritz Leiber, Jr. This photo, from 1940, is notable in having a painting of Fritz Leiber, Jr.—father of Justin Leiber—on the wall behind his father.

out, you sing it, chant it, farce it out. ("It is death to be a poet.")

In *Conjure Wife* (1943) we have what Damon Knight insisted was the "necessarily-definitive" tale of witchcraft. The protagonist, Norman Saylor, teaches anthropology at a good small college. One day he discovers that his wife Tansy is practicing witchcraft. She reluctantly admits that she thinks she is protecting them with various devices; still more reluctantly she is persuaded to give her superstitions up, to discard her protectors. Naturally, strange and increasingly harmful events begin to multiply: disaster looms around them, taking Tansy's soul eventually. Norman's intelligence eventually forces him to give up skepticism and, eventually, to use symbolic logic in an attempt to derive the ur-formula that will return Tansy from hints and variations in magic books. Tansy was, of course, defending Norman from the witchcraft of the women faculty and faculty wives. All women are more or less witches, from mere superstition and folklore to blackest spell-casting, to complete the dubious symmetry. (Catch the English version of the novel on the late show under the title *Burn, Witch, Burn.*)

It is true that Fritz had had a brief teaching post at Occidental College and that Jonquil then, as always, had a fascination with witchcraft and had read much about it. On the other hand, Fritz taught drama and stagecraft. And Norman is the familiar netural protagonist of this period. His blockheadedness is no real confession of Fritz, and Fritz has never been converted to a belief in the supernatural. *Conjure Wife* is Fritz' first published novel and he did not return to the novel of magic until his latest *Our Lady of Darkness* (1977).

This latest novel plays upon a theme to which Borges has brought our attention, something that Thomas Pynchon's work typifies: the pollution of reality by dream—or dream by reality, for it is the trickery of mirrors and artistic representation. The protagonist of *Our Lady of Darkness* is a writer of horror stories, Franz Weston, who just happens to live at 811 Geary Street in San Francisco, and has a landlady and some friends who happen to have the same names and characters as Fritz Leiber of 811 Geary Street has happened to have. Similarly, the engine of horror derives from the activities of various people in the first decades of the century, some real, some part real, so cunningly intertwined that the reader cannot see the seams. And the final tip of the engine that most closely attacks Franz is just his "scholar's mistress," the pile of pulp novels and source books that share Franz' bed in that he lives in one room and often writes in bed. Thibaut de Castries, decades-dead author of *Megapolisomancy: A New Science of Cities,* who is the possible ultimate source of this attack says of another book of his that is originally aimed at (the real) Clark Ashton Smith, "Go out, my little book into the world, and lie in wait in stalls and lurk on shelves for the unwary purchaser. Go out, my little book, and break some necks!" ("It is death to harm a poet.")

As Fritz' art has developed it becomes ever more willing to play and joke, to fool with words and themes, to inject comic gaiety into the midst of tragedy. (My favorite in the pure comic vein is "Mysterious Doings in the Metropolitan Museum" (1974), a tale of insect political conventioneering.)

I have suggested that as Fritz' art developed he came to employ richer and more complicated forms, came to use himself and his artistic self-image in his art, came to play the mirror tricks of high art. But one might argue that this doesn't fit the Fafhrd-Gray Mouser stories with which Fritz began and which he has continued through his career. Surely, Fafhrd is a vision of Fritz himself, or so someone might object.

Well, I certainly have to admit that when I was a kid both my mother Jonquil and I called Fritz "Faf" or "Fafhrd" more than anything else. It is true that both Fafhrd and Fritz share impressive height and a taste for strong drink and songs. In 1934 Harry Fisher wrote Fritz a long letter in which he briefly mentioned a Gray Mouser who "walks with swagger 'mongst the bravos, though he's but the stature of a child," and a tall barbarian Fafhrd whose "wrist between gauntlet and mail was white as milk and thick as a heroe's ankle." Fritz continued with fragments and stories and on occasion they would call each other by these names.

But one is skeptical, particularly considering the shyness with which Fritz started and his admissions that he felt, initially, overawed by and prepared to learn from young Harry. After all, it's Harry that provided the initial description. Gray Mouser fits Harry's vision of himself as Loki-like trickster, skilled swordsman, wit and dabbler in dark lore, and footloose adventurer and gentleman thief, onliest companion of the "seven foot" barbarian Fafhrd. Given just this pairing of city cat cunning and barbarian bear, and a certain humility coupled with a sense of story, it seems natural that Fritz' first Fafhrd-Gray Mouser stories should have been written from the Mouser's viewpoint; and that many of these stories have cunning and feline Mouser save the honest, unsophisticated barbarian giant from the sort of ensorcelment or other exotic danger that that blockhead would walk into. You can't have the tall barbarian saving the tiny Mouser, for there is no balance of amusing inversion in that. Fafhrd is the natural straight man, the butt of the jest. And since sword & sorcery adventures are not read by swordsmen and rarely by confident, brawny brawlers, rather attracting bookish and brainy types who just fancy physical adventure, it is natural that the audience is attracted to Gray Mouser and his slipper victories over the big brawlers. (It belongs to the high comedy of art and life that when Fritz and Harry surfaced publically as Fafhrd and Gray Mouser at the TSR game convention recently Fritz should have felt uneasy until he realized that, as Gray Mouser, Harry was attracting more attention and dominating matters, with Fritz suffering the problem of being Fafhrd rather than the author of the whole world. This is a second minor variation of the theme, a complement to the telescope story.)

So I am inclined to think that Fritz wasn't Fafhrd from the beginning. Though Fafhrd eventually becomes more Fritz-like. Certainly, there are some revealing and confessional changes as the saga develops. The first tales are quest stories in which the twain are lured into some doomful quest, drawn and nearly overwhelmed by some distant and lonely horror. The atmosphere strives for a relatively uniform feeling of somber eeriness mounting to arcane and chilling climax. As the latter stories appear, Fritz has a much surer and broader sense of language and plot. Comedy and gaiety invade the saga, romance and drunken silliness appear, and grand Lankhmar becomes central with its motley of religions, beggars and thieves guilds, necromancers and decadent aristocrats, gates and streets, mysterious houses and musty passages, shops and taverns, gods and human-like animals. My favorite is "Lean Times in Lankhmar," in which the penniless and disaffected twain separate, Mouser hiring himself out to a protection racket enforcer covering the religions that move up the Street of the Gods as they attract a following and down as they lose it, and Fafhrd becoming an acolyte of Issek of the Jug, swearing off booze and swords. The confrontation that must occur as Issek of the Jug moves up to the successful part of the street is managed with such astonishing deftness, twist upon twist, that one finds oneself laughing "too much, too much," only to have yet another carefully-prepared rabbit pop out of the hat, and yet another after that. The story plays effortlessly with the inversions of high art.

Fritz (and reality) seep into the saga world. Fritz has some fairly somber morals to point out about hard drinking that point much more to Fritz than to the Fafhrd of the very first stories. And, as I remarked some pages back, various family figures appear. In the most recent novel *Rime Isle* (1977), the second half of the sixth volume, *Swords and Ice Magic,* a considerable further step is taken.

Fafhrd and Mouser are hired by two woman councillors of Rime Isle, an atheistic and practical fishing community which is thereby somewhat estranged from the Lankhmar world and on the rim to others. Fafhrd arrives with a ship and small band of well-trained berserkers, and Mouser with a crew of Mingols and a band of disciplined Lankhmar thieves. The story really began some time before when very faint versions of Loki and Odin appeared from another world and were gradually nurtured into somewhat more palpable existence by the councillors Afreyt and Cif, the gods Loki and Odin insisting that Rime Isle is threatened by hordes of Mingols, inspired by another deity. Gradually, as defenses are prepared, it becomes clear that tricky Loki really intends a sea disaster in which all sides are destroyed and, even more clearly, Odin wants to see as many participants as possible killed in a land battle, with the remainder hanged.

Young Fritz found the Bulfinch picture of the Norse gods attractive, particularly of the mysterious and wise Odin. More recent research has made it clear that Odin was the center of a death cult. Here on Rime Isle Odin insists that his followers wear hangman nooses and carry a gallows into battle. Fafhrd, apparently less affected by Odin's wiles, refuses to wear his noose around his neck but places it around his left wrist as a concession. At the last moment both Mouser, who is directing the sea forces, and Fafhrd, on land, throw off the bewitchments of trickery and death. Neither their own men and the Rime Islers, nor their similarly inspired opponents, are drawn into the grand doom that the gods intend. All part somewhat dazedly.

Except that the noose around Fafhrd's hand draws tight and that famous bravo, now responsible protector of a practical and atheistic community, has no left hand.

To my natural query, "Conan Doyle unsuccessfully killed off Sherlock Holmes but at least he didn't maim him," Fritz rather tersely replied that it just seemed to him that no one was really getting hurt in the story. Ah yes, old trickster, but what does Prospero say on that island when he adjures his powerful magic, remembering that he is traditionally regarded as Shakespeare's mouthpiece?—"I'll break my staff, bury it certain fathoms in the earth, and deeper than did ever plummet sound I'll drown my book."

Through history, the left hand has been the symbol of trickiness and death: we now know it as the hand of the right brain which may be full of visions but has not the words and reason of the left brain which controls the right (the writing) hand. That last point may even suggest that nature has a taste for the inversions of high art. Who knows what tales tell us?

Fritz Leiber assumes humility in writing or speaking of his own art. He will say that all he has ever wanted to do is tell a good story. His works,

Borges-Shakespeare style, conceal and jest with their structures. How am I to reply?

In the "Moriarty Gambit" Fritz makes a solid point in distinguishing the real Sherlock Holmes from the "thinking machine" carefully analyzed by Watson in that first great novel *A Study in Scarlet.* Watson, wondering what his newly-acquired roommate's profession is, lists what kinds of knowledge Holmes possesses. Watson's list, though Watson does not draw this inference, suggests that Holmes has systematically stocked his mind with what a detective might need, and, just as systematically, has *not* stocked it with irrelevant information (Watson is shocked that Holmes does not know that the earth orbits the sun). Fritz points out that as one reads the stories it becomes clear that Holmes knows almost everything there is to be known. That he should play expert chess, though Conan Doyle fails to mention it, is thus natural. Well-made characters have an integrity that gives them dimensions outside what their written stories tell us, and certainly outside or even against what their authors explicitly state about them. A professional writer writes about vocations, undertakings, locales that are familiar. If you know how hospitals work by all means set a story there. Dashiel Hammett had been a detective. Yet what is more familiar to a writer than writing, than himself?

In the punning play, paradox, and self-swallowing of high art there is important truth. But why not blunt truth? Or complicated truth straightforwardly presented? Bertrand Russell said that a philosopher-logician should be ever on the lookout for paradoxes, for they will be the best source for getting at the hidden structure of our language and thought.

One can say all this neuro-biologically. Art above all recreates and educates our cognitive abilities, sharpens ear and eye, tuning understanding and sensitivity. It serves something like the function of play among cats. Language is the human mind's oldest technology and most basic and extraordinary cognitive capacity. The kind of art that most sensitizes us to language—that is, to logic and meter, to writing and artistic form, to the interplay between language and reality—is the art that appeals to our oldest and most powerful and most central faculty, housed in our distinctively human left brain. It is a blend of artifact and neurology that has made us different from the other mammals. Fritz combines an awesome and precise command of language with a joyous willingness to measure it against every sort of verbal challenge. Fritz' tendency to distinguish the smallest literary favor with precision and imagination is par with his tendency to treat even the most fetid and undistinguished humans with a respectful and friendly manner.

One fundamental thesis I offer about Fritz Leiber is simple and compelling. The most concrete and revealing components of this phenomenon are a couple of bookshelves of written work and a man who now lives at 565 Geary Street in San Francisco, who of course is continuing the sorts of symbolic interactions that lead to more books on the shelf. The thesis I offer about Fritz Leiber is simple, because it so compactly explains the development of Fritz' life and work in a way that holds up as a simple commonsense account, but also in a striking way at other levels.

The tale is that of an extremely intelligent and talented young man, doubtless with a taste for dramatics without self-revelation, for a language and life wholly outside his century that Shakespeare amply provided. At the same time he was cripplingly shy, horribly self-conscious, with a sense of guilt and failure, a sense of being out-of-joint with self and world that bred dreams and fantasies. If strong enough, a sense that can result in madness, like a space-time-historical continuum so pressed by Snake and Spider activity that it can tell no tale of itself and must fission, when art and science cannot flex enough, having neither the intellectual creativity nor the courage to hold the reality together.

I must tell you that the damage that was written into Fritz' genes or, more likely, mad and murderous psychological effects of childhood are as real as vital statistics. Very clinically, this is someone who has had sleep-difficulties that are the most reliable indication of psychological trouble, throughout his entire life; who has ministered to himself with alcohol and barbiturates in a way that slides into equating making oneself happy/putting oneself to sleep, between making oneself completely unconscious of the external environment/making oneself more sensitive and more responsive to it. The story is one of agile intelligence, of ego and art, fighting a long term battle with self-destruction bred in the genes or the crazy chemistry of childhood.

The thesis is compelling because it derives from the works, makes sense of what Fritz has given his life to, and so makes sense of the giver.

This portrait sees Fritz as he is today and his work in that perspective. True. But we read books that way too. The end casts full illumination through the means, the earliest scene. Not that the big book of Fritz Leiber is complete. Fritz has more, much more, work in him. He still exhausts twenty-year-old fans by walking them around San Francisco. There is much brewing, stories capering seductively or raucously around his bed. Go, little stories, and fling his fingers on the typewriter keys. Fritz is an artist like the wild old Gully Jimson that Alec Guinness plays in *The Horse's Mouth,* whose houseboat runs the Thames tide into the Atlantic and transfiguration, while Gully measures gigantic ocean liners as potential canvases.

Go little stories, and change street numbers so the fans can't find him; fox the postal machines so his mail goes to Auckland, New Zealand, and viper the wires so that incoming calls move by spidery indirection from initial dialing to total confusion. Shake hailstones down large as spearmint blossoms if he dawdles in the streets or runs unnecessary errands. Sprinkle dust of Yeats and Poe, and toenail clippings of Robert Graves and Ingmar Bergman, in protective circles round his rooms. Go, little stories, and pull some strings.

Fritz Leiber is for the stars. ■

—Justin Leiber

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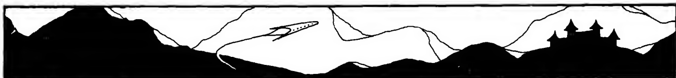

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INTERVIEW: Richard Lupoff
BY Jeffrey Elliot

STARSHIP: How did you find your way to writing science fiction?

LUPOFF: I always wanted to be a writer; "always" defined as ever since I was in high school. Before that I wanted to be a fireman or an aviator or whatever else little kids want to be. After high school, I went to college and majored in journalism. Then I spent the next couple of years in the army. It was peace-time, which meant it was a rather dull two years. At the time, though, I was psychologically quite young, and being in the army served as a half-way house between being a school kid and being out in the real world.

I got out of the army in 1958. At the time, a relatively minor Eisenhower recession was taking place. It was hard to find work. I wanted to work as a writer or editor. I knew I wanted to be a part of the literary world, but I didn't know quite what I wanted to do. Anyway, I was reading a lot of SF, but not writing any SF at that point. I went around banging at publishers' doors trying to get interviews for jobs. I wound up, as a result of an accidental meeting with an old school pal, getting an interview with a computer manufacturer, for a job as a technical writer. And I got the job. I proceeded to work in the computer industry for the next twelve years, writing a variety of things. During the last few years, I was writing and directing movies for IBM. My boss at the time was Fox B. Holden, an old-time pulp-hack SF writer, whose credits included *Planet*, *Thrilling Wonder*, *Astounding*, and various other magazines. He became very fond of me because he, clearly, had come to a fork in the road some years earlier, at which point he had to decide whether to write science fiction and put up with the financial exigencies of that life style, or take a straight job working for a large corporation with a paycheck every Friday. He chose the latter. I think years later he regretted it. And he could see himself in me, perhaps ten or fifteen years earlier. He would come to my office once in a while, close the door, and say, "Dick, you're the only guy around here who speaks my language. You write science fiction . . ." And he would talk about some of the problems he had as manager of the department. I always felt he identified with me as a younger avatar of himself. And while he

All photos by Dante Noto

never counseled me one way or the other, I always felt he was hoping that, if and when I came to the fork—because at that point I was trying to balance the two—I would take the other road from the one he had taken. And in 1970 I did. When I submitted my resignation, he went through all the exercises that the manager's manual required him to go through to talk me out of it. When we got to the end, he said, "There's no getting you to change your mind?" And I said, "no." He said, "Well, then, I can tell you I think you're doing the right thing." It was a very poignant moment.

STARSHIP: Were you ever worried that you might not be able to support yourself as a full-time writer?

LUPOFF: Yes, very much so. And the reality of it has been far worse and more difficult than I expected it to be. But I don't regret it. My wife Pat and I talked it over many times in earlier years. We both thought it would be better for me to get out of big business and go write books, but we were scared of the financial insecurity that was involved. Each time we would discuss the problem, one of us would say, "Yes, let's do it," and the other would chicken out. Finally, we got in phase and decided, "let's do it." And even at that, the decision was made a full year before I actually made the move. We decided in early 1969, and I submitted my resignation to IBM in May 1970. We wanted to be absolutely certain that we were both fully committed and had our eyes wide open; that we knew exactly what we were getting into. We also had the good fortune of having some financial resources to get us through this, because we were, by this stage of the game, not a couple of twenty year olds who could dwell in a garret, live on day-old wheat germ, wear tattered clothes, and get by on an income of close to zero. We did have three children to consider.

We had to have a place to live. We had to have money for food. We had to have means to pay our medical bills. Fortunately, I had been in the IBM employee stock purchase plan for a long time, which proved extremely helpful during this period. In addition, Pat's father had given her some stocks, and I received an inheritance from my father, who had died some years earlier. So we had a fairly solid financial underpinning for ourselves to get us through this transitional phase. It's been eight years now, and things are just now starting to come around to the point where we're going to be able to start saving again instead of having to supplement our present income by using up old savings, which is what we've been doing for all these years.

STARSHIP: What career expectations did you have when you made your decision? What scenario did you envision for yourself in terms of establishing yourself as an SF writer?

LUPOFF: I had it very neatly worked out, except that I was wrong. I thought that I could write about four novels a year, sell them for around $4,000 each, and earn approximately $16,000 a year. While that's far from rolling in lucre, that would have met our minimum requirements and kept us afloat. I discovered that the books were harder to sell than I expected them to be, the prices were poorer than I expected, and, in general, the business side of being a writer was much harder to cope with than I anticipated. I cried on my agent's shoulder a good deal and, on one occasion, he simply said, "Look, if you just want to sell a lot of books, then write a bunch of simple-minded little adventure stories. I can sell them as fast as you can write them, and that will be the way it works. Your work is somewhat distinctive and more ambi-

tious than simple little adventure stories. You're going to get nominated for literary prizes, and people will look at your work and really be interested. From an artistic viewpoint, I expect that you'll find this much more rewarding. But you're going to have a harder time earning a living if you go this route. If you stay with it, though, you'll probably make it one day." And it seems that he was right. But, boy, has it been hard. It's been sheer murder!

STARSHIP: What are the major problems that a new writer has in terms of maintaining financial solvency? What kinds of life style changes have you had to make? How is your standard of living different today than it was when you worked for IBM?

LUPOFF: My standard of living has changed in this sense: when I worked for IBM, and went to a lunch stand and had to make a decision between getting a hamburger or a cheeseburger, it was based on taste and appetite. After I left IBM, it became primarily an economic decision, because a cheeseburger cost a dime more. It literally reached the point where that dime became the controlling factor in my decision. Right now, things seem to have switched back to the point where I can decide whether I want a hamburger or a cheeseburger based on which I would rather have for lunch, rather than which I can afford.

STARSHIP: How difficult has it been to convince publishers to pay you what you think your talents warrant?

LUPOFF: First of all, I don't know what my talents warrant, because I don't know how much or how good I am. I'm not just being modest or fishing for compliments. If any writer thinks he can judge his own work, fine, let him, but I wouldn't want to undertake it. I can look at two of my books and say that I think this one is better than that one. But I can't really say that one book is *very* good and the other is only *good.* As far as dealing with publishers is concerned, the basic problem is this: starting with the assumption that my agent is right, that the work I do is somewhat offbeat and distinctive, there's a sort of standardized boilerplate statement that I hear from editors and publishers when I ask them, "What do you want?" Virtually all of them say the same thing—namely, "Well, what we want is something distinctive, something original. Do something that has never been done before. That's what we want! Our second choice, if you can't do that, is to do something that's been done before, but do it in so different a manner that it's virtually remade. The one thing we don't want is another book like the one we already have. After all, we already have that book." This is the official statement voiced by publishers. People on the creative side, editors and so on, really feel this way in their heart of hearts, but when they're making a hard-headed business judgment, the truth of the matter is 180 degrees out of phase with that. If space opera is big this season, they want space opera. If slimy-tentacled monsters are big this season, by God, they want slimy monsters and they better have tentacles. And if sex is big this season, give them sex. For whatever else, there's a very strong herd instinct. And if you're doing something unconventional, they don't know what to make of it, and they get scared and run away from it. For example, my book, *Sword of the Demon,* scared them off like you wouldn't believe. I could show you some of the rejection slips that came from hither and yon on that book. They range from, "I don't know what this book is about, and if you do, all I can say is, congratulations," to "If I ever see a manuscript like this again, I'm going to puke." Finally, one editor was willing to go out on a limb for that book. Vicky Schochet, who was my editor at Harper & Row at the time, said, "Well, I'll take a chance." She bought the book. Vicky left Harper & Row, though, before I delivered the manuscript. My new editor was a guy named M.S. Wyeth, Jr., who just also happened to be editor-in-chief of Harper & Row. Well, I got a letter from him asking to see the manuscript. After some delay in completing it, I sent it to him with considerable trepidation. And much to my surprise, I got back a virtual love letter. He said, "This is a superb fantasy. I love it." I couldn't believe it. I made xeroxes of the letter and sent them to everybody in the phone book. Well, the book came out. It got mixed reviews, but almost all of the reviews were extreme. The people who liked it, loved it, and the people who disliked it, hated it. There didn't seem to be anybody in-between. It was next-to-impossible to get a publisher for that book. I'm glad that Harper & Row decided to take it on. It was a very unconventional fantasy. After Harper & Row published it in hardback, they put it up for paperback auction. The same things started again. All the paperback houses began backing away from the book. They were all scared of it, despite the fact that the book paid for itself and then some. It was the uniqueness of the book that scared them off. Finally Zebra Books bid. Zebra's editor, Roberta Grossman, wanted the book, and wanted it badly. She was the only publisher who showed any faith in the book. Then, once Zebra had made an offer, Nancy Neiman at Avon put in a bid. They wound up in a little auction, and Avon got the book. Strangely, once the book was signed to Avon, everybody else woke up and started showing interest in it. I had inquiries from Berkley, Dell, and Pinnacle, and I had to tell them, "Sorry, too late, the book is signed." But it all worked out. Avon put in a *beautiful* package and it's been doing very nicely for them. Nancy Neiman told me recently that it looks like a long-term seller. We've also sold British and Japanese rights, so it will be around for a while! I might note that it was Vicky Schochet who saved the book from oblivion the first time around, and that Roberta Grossman and Nancy Neiman were the only editors to bid for the paperback. All women. I don't know whether that's significant or whether it's just happenstance, but I find it very intriguing.

STARSHIP: At what point in this process did you come to see yourself as a "professional" writer; someone who could sell books with some regularity and eventually make a decent living?

LUPOFF: In a sense, I learned that when I was fourteen years old. And in another sense, I'm still not sure that it's so. When I was in high school, our school had a pretty good athletic program. Most of the metropolitan papers had fairly decent coverage of the various games, but couldn't, obviously, send reporters to every high school event. As a result, they worked through the schools, employing faculty and students as "stringers" to cover the football games, track meets, and what not. They woul; then relay the stories to the newspaper by teletype machine. As a result, I was published on the *New York Times* sports page when I was fourteen years old. I didn't get a by-line, and the story was only an inch long, but, by God, it was my prose. They didn't just publish the score; they ran what I wrote. I was very pleased about that. I was even more pleased when they sent me a check for $1.25 or whatever they paid by the inch. So I knew I had what it took back then. I did it then. On

the other hand, as far as coping with the chanciness, the iffiness, I still get rejection slips. All the fiction I write nowadays, I sell, but not always on the first try. Again, sometimes the market for which you write a thing, or that you think you're writing it for, will turn it down, even though you feel it's brilliant. Other times, you'll send it to somebody else, in an off-the-wall kind of way, thinking they won't like it, and they'll snap it up. And that's equally as flabbergasting!

STARSHIP: Were there many times during this transitional period that you gave serious thought to giving up? Did you ever feel you'd made the wrong decision in going into writing on a full-time basis?

LUPOFF: No, not really. But there were times when I did other things for money, including going back to my ancient qualification as a sportswriter-journalist, as well as doing record reviews for *Ramparts* magazine, which was a fun experience. During this period, I did a lot of reviewing and media-oriented kind of stuff. I also washed dishes in restaurants and did whatever else I had to do to pick up a few extra bucks. Fortunately, Pat also worked, which meant additional income for the family. In some of our leaner times, her paycheck meant the difference between groceries on the table and no groceries on the table. Fortunately, we've never reached the point of no groceries on the table, but it has been that close.

STARSHIP: Did the rejection slips and the hard going ever cause you to doubt your own talent, whatever that talent might be?

LUPOFF: I experienced a phenomenon like that, but not exactly that. I could walk down to any bookstore and see some of the stuff that got published. When the science fiction best-seller list consisted of the latest *Thongor* book by Lin Carter or the latest bondage and sadist fantasy by John Norman or fifteen moronic *Star Trek* adaptations, then it was pretty hard for me to not know that what I was writing was not just better in degree, but was definitely superior to this kind of garbage. This I never had any doubt about. But that's not saying a lot. It's like saying, "I'm a nicer fellow than Hitler!" You still don't have to be exactly the world's sweetest guy. So I never had any doubts from that angle. But I had very serious doubts from a purely commercial point of view; that what I was peddling wasn't what the public was buying, by its nature, by the kind of book, rather than by the level of quality.

STARSHIP: Did you ever consider writing more of what the publishers wanted, of lowering your standards in order to sell books?

LUPOFF: Yes. And I did one such book. It's called *Sandworld,* and was published by Berkley a few years ago. It's a readable book. The paragraphs are made out of real sentences. But it's a completely trivial book. I didn't feel good about writing it when I wrote it and I don't feel particularly good about having written it now. But there it is. If I were going to do a piece of commercial hackwork today, I certainly wouldn't do what's commonly thought of as outright hackwork. I would tell my agent, "Hey, get me a screenplay to novelize or something like that where everybody involved understands what's going on." In that context, I would still give them a piece of honest, legitimate workmanship to the best of my ability, but everybody would understand what was going on and there wouldn't be any pretense involved. I will not write another book like *Sandworld* completely out of my own head, because I don't feel comfortable with it. After all, I could work in a gas station and make as much money as they would pay me for a book like that anyway.

STARSHIP: Did you ever think that perhaps you picked the wrong genre; that while you enjoyed SF a great deal, you might have been better off writing something else?

LUPOFF: I did think of that. In fact, in 1975, Michael Kurland and I attempted a different kind of novel in collaboration. I had been, the previous winter, to a Bob Dylan concert in the Oakland Coliseum. While I was sitting there, I just flashed on the notion, "What if one of these 17,000 people has a rifle and, for whatever reason, decides to assassinate Bob Dylan?" The idea took shape as a murder mystery in my mind. I didn't know anything about writing murder mysteries, so I approached Michael, who knows a fair amount about the genre. I talked the idea over with him and we decided that we would collaborate on a novel based on this notion. Well, we kicked the idea around. We decided to change the identity of the victim from a musician at a rock concert to a guru at a New Asian religious festival. The more we thought about the idea, the more intriguing it became. We started asking ourselves all kinds of questions, which culminated in a very good book proposal. We showed it to a couple of friends who were mystery writers, and they thought it was quite good. So we decided to let an agent market it for us. He also liked the book and thought he could sell it. Well, he sent it around, but couldn't find a home for it. Finally, we gave up after a score of rejections.

On the other hand, I finished a Robert E. Howard fragment last year, which was lots of fun. It's sort of gothic, lurid, and involves a pseudo Fu Manchu character in the underworld of London and Paris in the 1920s. It was a fun book to write. However, I wouldn't want to write whole novels like that, because that's not my forte.

STARSHIP: Did you receive much help or encouragement from any established SF writers who might have experienced similar problems?

LUPOFF: A little, but not much. Basically, when author talks to author, they either talk about restaurants or contracts, not about literature. I received some encouragement from other writers, but not a great deal. Bob Silverberg has always been helpful, and Harlan Ellison has said some nice things. But that's about it. I was worried, at one point, that I was rapidly working myself into the uncomfortable class of being a writer whose technique was either very good or very unusual, or some combination of the two, which makes that writer of great interest to co-professionals, but doesn't get through to the general public. I felt that I was becoming a writer's writer; that an ever-narrowing circle of poeple would like my works, like them more and more until, finally, I was writing books that were loved with hysterical fervor by no one at all. That's the end of the trail that I was walking on.

So about a year ago, I made a resolve that I was going to make my books less esoteric than they have been; that I would try very hard to make them as accessible as possible. I wanted an ever-increasing number of people to be able to read them with enjoyment, rather than a small coterie of devoted followers. I've been working at that very

seriously, asking myself the question, "Can I write books which are more open to the reader?" I'm trying hard to make my books easier to read. The last really esoteric book I wrote was *Sword of the Demon.* Any number of people have said to me, "Boy, is it a job getting through the first couple of scenes in that book. Once it gets rolling, I really enjoyed it. But it was tough getting in." Certainly, that wasn't my intent in writing the book, but that's the way it turned out. If this is what people who read the book, and enjoyed it, tell me, I

wonder how many people didn't read the book because they looked at the first couple of pages and decided to put it down. *Space War Blues* was published later, but written earlier. It's also a somewhat esoteric book. However, the book I'm working on now, *Circumpolar!,* will be a much easier book to read. It's written for sheer fun. It's designed to provide the reader with 250 pages of walloping enjoyment. That's the way I feel when I'm working on it, and I think that feeling is going to work its way through and affect the reader in the same way. Nobody is going to have to go back and read page one again to figure out what's going on. It's a very straightforward narration.

STARSHIP: Did you find yourself becoming increasingly jealous, increasingly envious of other SF writers who you knew were far less skilled than you were, but who were selling books with great success?

LUPOFF: I certainly did. It wasn't jealousy, in the sense of personal animosity toward John Norman or Lin Carter or Alan Dean Foster or anybody else who was making a lot of money and turning out a lot of books. But I was very upset over my own lack of commercial success. I was concerned that what I was writing was better, in a real sense, than books by these other authors. It irked me that I was writing what I thought was pretty good stuff, and having a hard time making it, while other writers were turning out books, like *Slave Girls of Gor,* or whatever the latest sado-masochistic monstrosity was at the time, and earning money hand over fist and selling hundreds of thousands of copies. And as I mentioned earlier, my agent's response was, "If you want to write potboiler adventure stories, I can sell them for you quickly and easily. If you want to do what you're doing, which is somewhat serious and distinctive work, you're going to have a harder time cracking the market."

STARSHIP: You indicated earlier that you're only now at the point where you can begin to see some light at the end of the tunnel. When did these favorable signs begin to appear and what leads you to believe that you're finally on the road to making it as an SF writer?

LUPOFF: The first two signs were the publication of *Sword of the Demon* and *The Triune Man.* Those were the first two novels of mine that experienced any kind of success, except a very narrow coterie kind of success. Those books were published in 1976 and 1977. I didn't make a great deal of money off those novels, but there was some indication that I was reaching a significant number of readers, instead of my three closest friends. More recently, I've been getting substantially greater advances for books, so that right at the moment my accounts receivable are considerably improved. Within a relatively short period of time, I should be making some very nice money for my work. We're just starting to get to the point where we can begin to live again and do all those things we've put off doing for so long, like fixing the roof or making minor repairs on the house. Gradually, reviewers and fans are starting to pay attention. That's a good feeling.

STARSHIP: In what ways has your work improved over this period? Can you see improvement in your craftsmanship?

LUPOFF: I can see improvement in several areas, but not necessarily in style, primarily because I don't read my own work. I pick it up, but the flaws are too obvious to me. It becomes a painful experience instead of a pleasant one. Where I think I *have* learned, though, is in some areas of technique, of which style, I suppose, is an element. But I think of style as the way in which you actually handle the language and construct your sentences. And I don't know how to do that anyway, except that if it's good, good; if it's bad, I'm sorry, but that's the best I could do. There are other areas, however, where I'm conscious of having learned something and applied it. I read Joe Gore's novel, *Hammett,* which taught me a lot. Joe is a very cinematic kind of writer. He uses a technique in that book for making transitions in scenes which I think is brilliant. Well, I picked up on it and used it in my own work. I hope it will help to improve my own flow and imagery. It's a way of shifting viewpoints in a multi-viewpoint narrative. Okay, that's one of the twenty zillion things I hope I've learned in the past decade. I've always had problems in

plotting and pacing, as opposed to writing paragraph after paragraph. I think I do those two things better now than I used to. But those are pretty subtle differentiations.

STARSHIP: Have you changed your attitudes about writing itself? Do you view the process differently today than when you began?

LUPOFF: Maybe a little, but not much. The only thing I've learned, I suppose, is the need to write in a more accessible manner, instead of laying out an obstacle course for the reader. I'm trying to make it easier for the reader now, not so much in terms of simplifying complex moral dilemmas, but in terms of simply getting through the prose. The prose shouldn't be a barrier between you and the reader. Rather, it should be a conduit between you and the reader. I don't know where I got the stupid and wrong-headed idea that the prose had to be a hurdle that the reader was required to jump before he could reach me. But if I ever had that idea, I sure hope I'm rid of it now. It's dead wrong. It's not my job to make things easier for the reader, in the sense of distorting reality, but I should make my *books* as easy to read as possible. That's really the essence of communication, isn't it?

STARSHIP: Which of your books give you the most pride?

LUPOFF: Can I fudge a little? Let me give you two books. It would either be *The Triune Man* or *Sword of the Demon.* I think the latter book works very well as an exotic rarefied fantasy, but it was a unique event for me as a writer. I don't expect I'll ever do anything like that again. I think it's a good book. I'm very happy to have people read it and form an opinion of me based on it. But it was a sidetrack, not a mainline example of my work. More in the mainline of my work is *The Triune Man,* which I think is a flawed success. It's basically a psychiatric novel cast in the form of a science fiction book, with certain tones of space opera to it. It has two science fiction elements in it: one is a kind of fantasy about science fiction as seen through a comic strip. The other is that there's some *real* science fiction in the book. The latter, I think, is unsuccessful. If I were to do the book over again, I would omit that part of it. It just doesn't belong in the book.

STARSHIP: What do you have in the typewriter right now? Does it represent any new direction(s) for you?

LUPOFF: I'm working on a new book, dealing with the 1920s. It's not SF per se, but it's related to science fiction. I don't know what name it will appear under, but my working title for it was *Marblehead,* mainly because so much of it takes place in that town in Massachusetts. Several people objected to that title and, besides, somebody just brought out a novel with the same name. So we'll have to scrub that title and devise another one, which I don't know at this time. I think it's a good book. It's certainly the solidest book I've ever written in this sense: there is a deliberate avoidance of stylistic flash and structural tricks. It's not written in a deliberately drab manner, but it's considerably different than any of my other books. Moreover, it's the solidest book in the sense that the characters are the most thoroughly thought through, first in my mind and, secondly, in the manuscript. Because it takes place in a real historical period, I was able to do very extensive research. In addition, the publisher gave me a much higher advance, which enabled me to spend more time planning and writing it. I have very high hopes for the book. I'm also playing around with the idea of putting together a couple of short story collections. The next book I'm actually going to sit down and write is the one I mentioned earlier, *Circumpolar!,* which is a parallel world novel placed in the same era as my historical novel. Beyond that, I have a contract for a three volume series of very ambitious space adventures, which will, I hope, avoid many of the excesses of traditional space opera books.

STARSHIP: When you're not writing, what kinds of things do you enjoy doing?

LUPOFF: I enjoy several things connected with writing—namely, reading, researching, reviewing, and editing. I also like music a lot. Several times in my life I've worked as an amateur musician. I haven't done much lately, because I've been involved in so many writing projects. I also enjoy spending time with my family. My nine-year-old son Tommy loves baseball, and I go to the ballpark with him fairly often. To me, watching a baseball game, at my age, is a little hard to take seriously. But going out there, with a nine-year-old kid who is really into it, is quite an experience. Lately, I've spent time with two people: one is my son, at the Oakland Coliseum watching the A's lose their 115th consecutive game by one run. When Mitchell Paige hits a home run, this nine-year-old boy feels incredible joy; not merely strong joy, but such pure joy that he radiates a pure white light that permeates my body, since I'm sitting next to him. His ecstasy is transmissible, and I feel it. This is a rare and precious

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experience. At the other extreme, about a week ago I met Isaac Bashevis Singer in Berkeley, where he was signing books at a local bookstore. I asked him to sign one for me, and we chatted for a few seconds. Here is an old man, victimized by age, who has achieved the same purity that a child can feel. If he's feeling joy, he radiates a pure white light. If he's angry, he radiates a pure red light. Well, so does my son. Somehow, those of us who are neither children nor old people, who are caught up in the middle of our lives and the 101 things which occupy our attention, have lost that capacity to feel and react with the pure white light of joy or the pure red light of anger. When I experience that sensation, as a result of being with my kid or talking to Isaac Singer, I take on every tint on the spectrum. When that happens, you come to realize what's really important. It's then that I miss the purity of a child or an old man. So one of the things that I like doing when I'm not working is to take my son to a baseball game. I don't give a damn about the baseball game, but I give a damn about my kid; the experience of being there with him and sharing it together. I want to take full advantage of what I can get out of our relationship while there's still time to do it.

STARSHIP: These last several years have brought you a good deal of disappointment and frustration. Obviously, though, there's something about being a writer that makes you want to continue. What is that special hold that writing has over you?

LUPOFF: I suppose there's a certain ego gratification involved. We all like to be in the spotlight now and then. Being a writer gives you some of that. However, that in itself should not be your primary motivation. I can't tell you that I have any grand passion for writing. It's just something I like doing. There seems to be a universal human need to create art. If you study all of the past and present human societies which have graced the earth, you will see that every one of them took pride in creating art. People have always felt the need to make things for other than utilitarian purposes; to make things that were pretty. I don't know why God made us that way, but He did. And that's the way we are. I like to make music, but I'm not very good at it. I like to sing, but I'm not very good at that, either. But I can write stories that are good enough, at least in the judgment of others, to warrant being bought and read. And that's my way of creating pretty things. It's just that simple. ■

—Dr. Jeffrey Elliot

EDITORIAL
Continued from page 6.

painting in other directions. I think you'll find his column fascinating, as Vincent continues to discover that the Linotype machine is heavier than the sable brush, even if both do fall at the same speed on the Moon.

Derek Carter continues to tell almost All about the things that have made Canada a strange place. Derek tells me that in the near future he will become a snow-back, as Ginjer Buchanan would say, emigrating to the warm and sunny shores of Chicago, Illinois. Once free of surveillance by minions of Trudeau—Pierre, not Gary—he will finally be free to tell us the Real Stories behind the news, stories hushed up as too funny and/or strange to be believed. Although Derek has not yet left Canada, I think I can safely state that once he does the full stories behind the Fanfair slush-fund; the reason Gordon R. Dickson's fantasy novel, *Spooks in Scarlet,* was banned in Ottawa; the mysterious deliveries of Jim Beam to Mike Glicksohn; the real reason why Saskatchewan is so flat; and other issues will be exposed to the light of day. Until you do leave, Derek, I hope this paragraph doesn't upset whoever is reading your mail, too much . . .

Robert Stewart, whose "Filmedia" heading moves toward a final formalization, presents us with news from Public Television, an institution on which "The Talking Horse from Mars" will *not* appear, thank Ghod. Did anyone ever catch "The Ugly Little Boy," as done by the National Film Board of Canada? The least I can say about Public TV is that they mean well; the most I can say is that when they succeed, they succeed gloriously. Masterpiece Theatre's "Lily" currently absorbs part of my Sunday evenings; "Pennies from Heaven" captured a good share of my Thursday evenings and now that it's over, I can only say that these British people certainly are Strange . . .

Frederik Pohl talks about numbers in "Gosh!" the latest Pohlemic to appear in these pages. Coincidences are sometimes not so coincidental, Mr. Pohl points out, and then goes on from there. Reminds me of the curious patterns of numbers which sometimes form as I do my accounts . . .

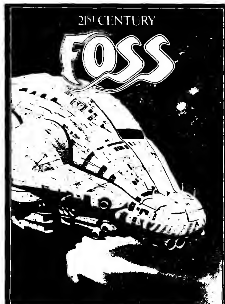
Justin Leiber's lead article is about his father, one Fritz Leiber. It is very hard, in my opinion, to get closer to one of the most distinguished, honored, and *good* writers in SF than through being born into his company. Justin Leiber, now a resident philosopher at the University of Houston, philosophizes about his father and, like the alchemists of old, shows us how Fritz Leiber has converted the dross of ordinary life into the spun gold of his stories, a difficult task made easy by one of the greats of modern science fantasy.

It is possible, yea, even as these words are committed unto paper, that further wonders of words may appear in this issue. Or, as the wanton Won Ton says, Maybe Not. Depends on space considerations and other things.

THINGS TO COME: Many wondrous events will unfold in the future. Ask me not what they are, my children, for they shall unfold even as we speak, I to you, via strange black squiggles printed on this amalgam of woodpulp and chemicals. (Trans: I'm not sure what's going into next issue, he said, as you read these words printed on this paper.) Suffice it to say that I hope to have a segment of the life of the Good Doctor Asimov to present to you next issue. The cover will be by Vincent DiFate. Richard Lupoff, Frederik Pohl, Vincent DiFate and Bhob Stewart will all reappear, doing clever tricks of mind and word, to amuse, amaze, and astound you. And some of you, by writing glowingly intelligent letters of comment, will appear in these very pages, there to appear in set type before your peers, loved ones, and enemies alike. Remember, deadline for missives is June 20th or thereabouts. See you next issue. ■

—Andrew Porter, Editor/Publisher

From Big O, the folks who brought you Views



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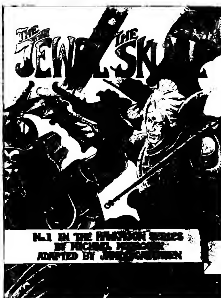

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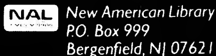

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The Realities of Philip K. Dick

RICHARD LUPOFF

The importance of Philip K. Dick is increasingly recognized, and will almost certainly continue to grow in recognition through the 1980s. Dick is a classic example of late recognition. Not of "late blooming," for his work has been distinctive, striking, powerful and incisive from the start. This is not to say that his later works fail to show growth over the earlier ones. On the contrary. His novels of recent years—*Flow my Tears, the Policeman Said* (1974) and most notably *A Scanner Darkly* (1977)—are clearly superior works. The latter in particular exhibits Dick's talent for sensitive characterization, startling rendition of social milieu, dizzying reorientations and pessimistic portraiture of a distorted but still recognizable reality; all of this punctuated by the author's astonishing and deadly interjections of black humor.

For many years Dick labored in relative obscurity. His earliest days marred, perhaps, by his own prolificity which caused him to be labelled (inaccurately) as a hack. In recollection of those days, Dick recently stated, "I had had a lot of stories published. In 1953 I published 27 stories and almost as many the next year. In June of '53 I had seven stories on the stands simultaneously."[1]

His very first sale had been to Anthony Boucher, then co-editor with J. Francis McComas of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction.* The story was "Roog," which appeared in the February 1953 issue of the magazine. Dick's first published story, however, in distinction to his first sold, was "Beyond Lies the Wub," in *Planet Stories* for July 1952. This was followed in print by "The Skull," *Worlds of If,* September 1952.

Within three years of his first publication, Dick had published the better part of 100 stories in almost every science fiction magazine extant at the time. "But no American publisher approached me to do a collection. This was before I did any novels. And Rich and Cowan in England approached me with the idea of putting out a collection of stories.

"They were incredibly primitive. I sent them several fantasies that had been published in *F&SF.* And because the fantasies dealt with children, Rich and Cowan said they were stories for children. So I suppose the audience for Agatha Christie's mysteries should be axe murderers. My original idea for the collection included more of the *F&SF* fantasies ... but Rich and Cowan rejected all those. The ones that were picked were substantially science fiction.

"I made the selection, by and large. Every story that they looked at was one that I submitted to them rather than one they found on their own. But they continually kept ejecting stories and I kept sending more, so it took three or four separate batches of stories before they agreed on the contents. And the contents were quite satisfactory to me at the time."[2]

Regarding these same stories, Dick offered a somewhat different assessment in later years. "These do represent the earliest stories of my career, and at the time they definitely seemed to me to be the best stories that I had published.

"I feel that they are very minor works now. Looking back on them there is very little there of substance compared to my later stuff."[3]

But despite the author's later dismissal of his early works, they are great interest to the reader, indicating the point of departure for Dick's later works and demonstrating in prototypal form such persistent concerns as:

- The treachery and danger implicit in reliance upon machinery. In "Colony" a microscope strangles its user; an automobile literally eats its driver (and in an early display of Dick's black humor comments, "Glub").
- The question of establishing identity and of distinguishing between human and robot or android beings. In "Impostor" a man is accused of being a robot impersonating himself, and struggles desperately to prove his identity until he himself comes to doubt it.
- The mixture of Eastern mystical philosophy and Western scientific speculation, the interplay, conflict, and possible dialectical synthesis of these, as later developed in Dick's first major success, the novel *The Man in the High Castle* (1962). In "The Turning Wheel" a probability scanning device is used to predict the next incarnation of a bureaucrat—on another planet.
- The destructive power of obsessive love. In "Upon the Dull Earth" a man's unwillingness to accept the death of a loved one leads to universal disaster.

All of these themes can be traced in later and more developed works of Dick. Their presence in these early stories provides an illumination of his grasp of the themes in an earlier form.

To obtain a clear perspective on his early stories it will be useful to pursue Philip K. Dick's own views of himself, his surroundings, and the literary field of his choice. Fortunately there are available two autobiographical sketches by Dick published in 1953. These will be followed by a reminiscent view of the same era, as given during the November 1977 interview.

In the February 1953 issue of *Imagination,* Dick published an autobiography as one of a series of features titled "Introducing the Author." This is its text:

This article appeared originally in slightly different form as the introduction to the Gregg Press edition of *A Handful of Darkness* by Philip K. Dick, copyright 1978 by Richard A. Lupoff

"Once, when I was very young, I came across a magazine directly below the comic books called *Stirring Science Stories.*[4] I bought it, finally, and carried it home, reading it along the way. Here were ideas, vital and imaginative. Men moving across the universe, down into sub-atomic particles, into time; there was no limit. One society, one given environment was transcended. Stf was Faustian; it carried a person up and beyond.

"I was twelve years old, then. But I saw in stf the same thing I see now: a medium in which the full play of human imagination can operate, ordered, of course, by reason and consistent development. Over the years stf has grown, matured toward greater social awareness and responsibility.

"I became interested in writing stf when I saw it emerge from the ray gun stage into studies of man in various types and complexities of society.

"I enjoy writing stf; it is essentially communication between myself and others as interested as I in knowing where present forces are taking us. My wife and my cat *Magnificat,* are a little worried about my preoccupation with stf. Like most readers I have files and stacks of magazines, boxes of notes and data, parts of unfinished stories, a huge desk full of related material in various stages. The neighbors say I seem to "read and write a lot." But I think we will see our devotion pay off. We may yet live to be present when the public libraries begin to carry the stf magazines, and someday, perhaps, even the school libraries."

In the September-October 1953 issue of *Fantastic,* Dick published this brief note:

"Appeared on terra just twenty-three years ago, in Chicago, Ill. Very cold, rainy day. Moved quickly to Berkeley, California to get back in the sun. Grew up slowly over the years, listening to Bach, reading dusty second hand fantasy magazines, writing little sinister stories. Married a girl anthropology student from the University[5] and bought a house and a cat. Have finally arrived as a writer. Droves of small boys, all *aficionados* of science fiction, greet me on the street. Ah, Fame!"

A certain wry ambivalence toward the science fiction fan population is visible in the *Fantastic* autobiography; this ambivalence was not apparent in the *Imagination* autobiography. In the 1977 Sonoma interview, a far more negative reaction to the *aficionados* is apparent, its expression arising as a side-issue to Dick's enumeration of his own reading experiences and education as a writer:

"After going to Cal I was working part-time in a music store. I finally got to the point where I was manager of the record department and I would work half a day and then write the other half day. I made my first sale to Tony Boucher at *F&SF* in November of '51. I attended a writing course that he gave. I submitted 13 different stories simultaneously. I figured I stood a chance of selling one, perhaps, of the 13. Which is exactly what I did, and I had to revise it considerably for Tony . . .[6]

"There's no substitute for good prose models. I like the stories of Maupassant very much. And the short stories of James T. Farrell had a tremendous influence on me. In the novel form, the French realists—Flaubert and Stendahl and Balzac and Proust. And the Russians, Turgenev and Dostoievsky, and some of the playwrites like Chekhov, for example."

In response to the question, Did he not then grow up on the works of science fiction pulp authors like E.E. Smith, Dick said:

"I did that too, but the culture in Berkeley, the milieu in Berkeley in the late '40s, required you to have a really thorough grounding in the approved classics. If you hadn't read something like *Tom Jones, Moll Flanders, Ulysses,* you were just dead as far as being a guest anywhere. If you went to a party and you hadn't read Dos Passos' *USA* . . .

"I had read plenty of science fiction but the pressure of the milieu—you have to bear in mind that in the late '40s and early '50s, science fiction was so looked down upon that it would have been tantamount to suicide in a group of people to come forward and say, 'Boy, did I read a marvelous story recently!'

"And then they say, 'Well, what was it?'

"And then you say, 'It was *The Weapon Shops of Isher* by A.E. van Vogt.'

"I mean, they just would have pelted you with half grapefruits and coffee grounds from the garbage, if they could have deciphered who you meant anyway. They just wouldn't have known the name.

"I wasn't faking it that I enjoyed things like *War and Peace.* I did read *War and Peace* all the way through and it was truly exciting. I really loved it.

"Of course, there was a kind of fandom, there was the Little Men's Science Fiction, Marching and Chowder Society and I knew the people in it. But they were all real weird freaks. They were unpalatable to me because they did not read the great literature. There wasn't anybody that read both. You could either be in with a group of freaks who had read Heinlein, Padgett and van Vogt, and nothing else, or you could be in with the people who had read Dos Passos and Melville and Proust. But you could never get the two together, and I chose the company of those who were reading the great literature because I liked them better as people. The early fans were just trolls and whackos. They were terribly ignorant and weird people.

"So I just secretly read science fiction, and then I would write it, and people in Berkeley would say, 'But are you doing anything serious?' And that used to make me really mad. Then I would all of a sudden drop my posing and I would just get furious and I would say, 'My science fiction is *very* serious!' —if I said anything at all. I just got so mad I could hardly talk."

Philip K. Dick wrote a special foreword for his later collection *The Preserving Machine.* Ironically, the foreword did not appear in that book, but instead in a scholarly journal.[7] In it, Dick draws an intriguing distinction between the short story and the novel:

"A short story may deal with a murder; a novel, with the murderer, and his actions stem from a psyche which, if the writer knows his craft, he had previously presented. The difference, therefore, between a novel and short story is not length . . .

"There is one restriction in a novel not found in short stories: the requirement that the protagonist be liked enough or familiar enough to the reader so that, whatever the protagonist does, the reader would also do, under the same circumstances . . . or, in the case of escapist fiction, would like to do. In a story it is not necessary to create such a reader identification character because (one) there is not enough room for such background material in a short story and (two) since the emphasis is on the deed, not the doer, it really does not matter—within reasonable limits of course—*who* in a story commits the murder. In a story, you learn about the characters from what they do; in a novel it is the other way around: you have your characters and they do something idiosyncratic, emanation from their unique natures. So it can be said that the events in a novel are unique—not found in other writings; but the same events occur over and over again in stories, until, at last, a sort of code language is built up between the reader and the author. . . ."

While this assessment may have been formulated after the fact—by 1969 Dick had almost entirely abandoned the writing of short stories to concentrate his efforts on novels and occasional essays—it casts light upon his earliest works, including those in *A Handful of Darkness.* There are no memorable characters in these stories; rather their strength lies in the striking events (and/or situations) depicted.

Three of these stories—"The Preserving Machine," "The Little Movement," and "Expendable"—were originally sold to Dick's mentor and sponsor, Anthony Boucher, and appeared in Boucher's

magazine. It was Boucher's practice to write lengthy (or relatively lengthy) introductions to stories in his magazine, rather than the brief blurbs of most pulps. His comments on Dick's stories are of particular interest.

For "The Preserving Machine" he said:

"In November of 1951 Philip K. Dick sold his first story (to *F&SF*, we may add proudly), and within a very few months thereafter he had established himself as one of the most prolific new professionals in the field. By now he has appeared in almost every science fiction publication—and what's more surprising, in each case with stories exactly suited to the editorial tastes and needs of that particular publication. The editors of *Whizzing Star Patrol* and of the *Quaint Quality Quarterly* are in complete agreement upon Mr. Dick as a singularly satisfactory contributor. Joining with them, we consider this latest Dick precisely *our* kind of story: gently witty, observant and pointed, with a striking new idea attractively blending science and fantasy."[8]

For "The Little Movement" Boucher said:

"It's a healthy fact that the science-fantasy field is constantly producing new authors with freshly and individual attitudes. Besides the stories of the Old Masters, and quite on a level with them, you've been seeing in the past year or two the works of Kris Neville, Chad Oliver, Mildred Clingerman, Zenna Henderson, J.T. M'Intosh—new writers of a stature to guarantee the future high quality of the field. One of the most striking of these, in our opinion, is Philip K. Dick, who made his debut only a few months ago. In 'The Little Movement,' the first of his many contributions to *F&SF*, Mr. Dick combines a startling idea (which no introduction should even hint at) with a modern simplicity and directness of writing guaranteed to produce nightmares which no Gothic elaboration could rival."[9]

For "Expendable," Boucher said:

"Philip Dick is at his best when dredging up the *wrongness* that lies just below the placid exterior of our everyday living. And, as he marshals his array of terrifying facts he makes it very clear that their wrongness is in our eyes alone. The overall picture of our existence makes excellent sense . . . to those interested parties whose primary concern is not with man."[10, 11]

It is obvious that Boucher held Dick in high esteem. That the feeling was reciprocated is indicated by the coda of Dick's *Preserving Machine* foreword:

"Tony Boucher—what is the field going to do without him? It was his encouragement that got me to try submitting my stories; I had never imagined that they might sell. Consider this collection as dedicated to Tony and everything he represented. We shall never see another of his like. *Te amo*, Tony. Forever."

In fact those three stories are all works of merit, although not all equally so. "The Preserving Machine" is a fantasy (as are all of the three) and reflects Dick's concern for and knowledge of classical music. There are references to Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Wagner, Bach and Stravinsky. This was written during the period when Dick worked in a record store. The story is a most amusing conceit—the conversion of a Mozart quintet to a bird, a Beethoven composition to a beetle, and so on—but is not much more than that, an amusing conceit.

"The Little Movement," despite Boucher's enthusiastic endorsement, is not really so original or striking an idea. The child's fantasy of his toys as alive and either benevolent or malevolent must be a nearly universal one. But the story epitomizes a notion of Dick's. In the Sonoma interview, he expressed it thusly:

"I ran into a lot of opposition on my fantasies because my early fantasy stories were essentially psychological stories. They were heavily into anxieties such as animals or children would feel, in which the thing that was feared actually came into existence and was treated objectively. And I just stopped writing those because people would say,

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'Well, there's really no such thing as ———' The sentences would begin that way.

"So finally I just gave up and wrote straight science fiction. I abandoned the fantasy format because what I meant by a fantasy was evidently not what other people meant by fantasy. My idea of a fantasy was where the archetypal elements become objectified and you have an exteriorization of what are inner contents.

"And I remember, I had a term I used. *Inner Projection Stories.* Stories where internal psychological contents were projected onto the outer world and became three-dimensional and real and concrete. And Scott (Meredith), my agent, wrote me incredibly long letters saying that there was no such thing. There was the inner world of dreams and fantasies and the unconscious, and there was the objective outer world and the two never mixed.

"So I gave up. But then later when I had established myself more securely in the field I began to go and do it in such books as *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch.* I reverted to what I wanted to do and had the nightmare inner content objectified in the outer world so I slowly began to reintroduce those elements into my writing. . . ."

"Now we have the collective unconscious of a number of people being projected and forming a *tulpa* object. I've read some interesting material on that—Jung was a *major* influence on me."

Of these three stories, "Expendable" may well be the most striking and suggestive of Dick's later themes. As in Machen's *The Terror* (1917) we see a plot by the humble creatures of the earth to destroy Man. But Dick elaborates the idea by setting up two competing forces of beasts (actually, insects), one inimical to Man, the other friendly.

Further, where Machen uses the notion to build a story of bafflement and fear, Dick makes "Expendable" a wry exercise *a la* Benet or Collier. And the ending is most typically Dickian: the protagonist, about to be devoured by malevolent insects, is resigned, diffident, even apologetic. And the whole exercise is astonishingly *funny*!

"Impostor" was the only story that Philip Dick ever sold to John Wood Campbell, Jr., the many-years editor of *Astounding/Analog* magazine and high *doyen* of science fiction. Campbell's opinion of Dick was apparently none too high, nor Dick's of Campbell, as expressed in the Sonoma interview:

"Campbell just called my stories nuts. He said they were crazy. He bought one story, 'The Impostor,' but he told me that psi had to be a premise. Psi is a necessary premise for a science fiction story. And I had a very strong prejudice against psionics in a science fiction story. I thought it was a form of the occult and should not be allowed to invade science fiction. I've changed my mind since. But at that time I thought of it like witchcraft, as superstition. (But now) I think the powers actually exist. I think they're real."

Although only two of the stories in *A Handful of Darkness* were published in magazines edited by H.L. Gold—"Colony" in *Galaxy Science Fiction* for June 1953 and "Upon the Dull Earth" for *Beyond Fantasy Fiction* #9, 1954—these were only two of a larger number purchased by Gold. In the Sonoma interview Dick said:

"Horace Gold and I wrote back and forth quite a bit. I later had a terrible fight—it was in '54—with Horace Gold. Because Gold would change parts of your story and add whole new scenes and new characters without telling you and publish them, and you would suddenly discover that you had collaborated with Horace Gold. I just got to the point where I couldn't stand it any more, and I told him that I would not submit to him as long as he was going to take out scenes and put in other scenes. And I did not resubmit to *Galaxy* until he ceased to be editor.

"That was my main market at the time, so I took a tremendous financial

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risk in doing that. But then I was going into novels. That was one of the reasons why I *had* to go into the novel form. And then I started hasseling with Donald Wollheim so I didn't gain a thing."

The two "Gold" stories in *A Handful of Darkness* are probably the most significant in the book. As Boucher had pointed out, the early Dick was a protean author, capable of providing any editor with the kind of story required for a given periodical. Gold's concerns were wry satire, social relevance, and wit. These characteristics, along with a sometimes solipsistic questioning of the nature of reality and our epistemological grasp of reality, have marked all of Dick's major successes.

The extent to which Gold positively influenced Dick, as against that to which their interests and outlooks merely coincided, is conjectural, but the similarities are not.

The actual scientific—or pseudo-scientific—theme of "Colony" is far from original with Dick. It had been treated, with minor variations, by Isaac Asimov ("Misbegotten Missionary," *Galaxy*, November 1950), John W. Campbell ("Who Goes There?", *Astounding*, August 1938), and Donald A. Wollheim ("Mimic," *Avon Fantasy Reader* #3, 1947). What makes Dick's treatment distinctive is the paranoia-inspiring (or paranoia-inspired!) imagery of the towel attacking its user, the gloves killing their wearer, the floor eating the feet that stand upon it, and finally the escapeship devouring all of its passengers! If our most trusted artifacts are ready to gobble us up at any moment, what ease can we find in the world?

"Upon the Dull Earth" is a far more sombre tale than "Colony." It deals with profound questions of morality, couched in a bizarre mixture of traditional Christian belief and pure Arthur Conan Doyle type spiritualism. Yet even in this very serious, frightening, and depressing story there are present light Dickian touches of the commonplace and concrete. Thus, Miss Everett's steel-rimmed eyeglasses, and the brand-named Silex coffee maker. Such touches were typical of Gold's magazines, and were and still are typical of Dick's fiction.

Two more fantasies are included. "The Cookie Lady" (from *Fantasy Fiction* for June 1953, edited by Lester del Rey) is a fairly routine supernatural horror story; a vampire tale, in effect, in which the vampire steals her victim's youth rather than his blood. But while the story appears slight on first reading, further consideration reveals a poignancy and moral ambiguity, provoking a sympathy for the vampire equal to—perhaps greater than—one's sympathy for her victim. And "The Builder" (from *Amazing Stories*, December-January, 1953-54) is a decidedly slight gimmick story of the sort typically written by beginners.

Despite this slightness of the story, Dick speaks well of Howard Browne, his editor at *Amazing*.

"Howard Browne was a lot of help to me. He was a very good editor. He defined the kind of story that he felt I could best write, and he was quite correct."

Four of the remaining stories can be regarded as minor efforts typical of the science fiction magazines of the day. "Planet for Transients" (*Fantastic Universe*) projects a radioactive earth of the future, in which mutations are the norm and "normal" man is the alien. "The Impossible Planet" (*Imagination*) is thematically related to "Planet for Transients," taking place in the more distant future, by which time the earth is a semi-legendary ruin. (American readers will be amused by the footnote added for the Rich and Cowan edition, explaining the meaning of *E Pluribus Unum* on American coins.)

"Prominent Author" (*If*) and "The Indefatigable Frog" (*Fantastic Story Magazine*) are two more gimmick stories, one dealing with a circularity in time, the other with Zeno's Paradox. Both are readable and amusing, but trivial. And "Progeny" (*If*) is a not-very-successful tearjerker founded upon the obvious difference in attitudes between generations.

Much more of interest is found in "Exhibit Piece" and "The Turning Wheel." The former story (*If*, August 1954) is one of Dick's earliest treatments of the problems of solipsism and the nature of reality. Specifically, his hero divides his life between a "real" future, and a museum exhibit of 1950s culture—and in time loses the ability to discern reality from construct:

"Look, Grunberg. Either this is an exhibit on R level of the History Agency, or I'm a middle-class businessman with an escape fantasy."

Was Lao-tze a philosopher who dreamed he was a butterfly, or a butterfly who dreamed he was a philosopher?

The use of precisely this sort of questioning is of course a thoroughly familiar Dickian strategy, occurring over and over in virtually all of his successful works including *Ubik*, *The Three Stigmata* and many others, and climaxing in the final resolution of *A Scanner Darkly*.

Finally, "The Turning Wheel" (*Science Fiction Stories* #2, 1954, Robert W. Lowndes, editor) is one of the most dense and rewarding of all Dick's stories. In it he projects an odd future, both beautiful and ugly; a realignment of the races (Indian/Mongolian/Bantu/Caucasian), an interesting caste system with Bards at the apex and "Techno" at the bottom; a few jokes tossed in for good measure (note the farmer's daughter and the travelling salesman); and even a dig at L. Ron Hubbard ("Elron Hu"), who by 1954 had abandoned his own career as a science fiction writer in order to promote Dianetics and Scientology.

It was the interplay of Eastern and Western philosophies that, coupled with Dick's profound moral concerns, human sensitivities, and obsession with the multiple aspects of reality (or the aspects of multiple realities) that led him to *The Man in the High Castle* and his first significant recognition as a writer of importance. ■

—Richard A. Lupoff

NOTES

1. Interview with Philip K. Dick, conducted by Richard A. Lupoff at Sonoma, California, November 27, 1977. The interview was tape-recorded and all quotations are transcribed from the tape. Paragraphing and punctuation provided by the interviewer.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. *Stirring Science Stories* was one of two pulp science fiction magazines edited by Donald A. Wollheim between February 1941, and March 1942. The second of the pair was *Cosmic Stories*. *Stirring* was the more interesting of the two, being divided internally into two "magazines," *Stirring Science Fiction* and *Stirring Fantasy Fiction*—thus anticipating the Ace Double Book format invented by Wollheim a decade later. Although *Stirring* and *Cosmic* operated on almost non-existent budgets, Wollheim filled them with stories of astonishing quality, largely by calling upon his fellow members of the Futurians, a New York organization of science fiction enthusiasts and political activists. Thus he was able to run early works by Cyril Kornbluth, James Blish, Isaac Asimov, Frederik Pohl, Damon Knight, and himself.
5. Dick attended the University of California at Berkeley in 1950, enrolling as a philosophy major, but shortly dropped out.
6. The only other member of Boucher's class to achieve notable success was Ron Goulart, a prolific author noted for his amusingly zany but essentially interchangeable novels and short stories.
7. *Science-Fiction Studies*, March 1975. Reprinted in *Science-Fiction Studies*, Gregg Press, 1976.
8. *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, June 1953.
9. *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, November 1952.
10. *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, July 1953.
11. Although the *F&SF* blurbs are attributed to Anthony Boucher (pseudonym of William Anthony Parker White), there is a slight possibility that some of them may have been written by Boucher's co-editor, J. Francis McComas, or by Boucher and McComas in collaboration. Boucher is deceased. McComas is unable, due to poor health, to answer questions on the matter. Brief interviews with Boucher's widow and McComas's former wife (conducted in Berkeley and Oakland respectively, both in December 1977) failed to determine authorship of the blurbs. However, in view of Dick's having been a student of Boucher's, and of his submitting stories to the magazine through Boucher rather than McComas, it seems very likely that Boucher was indeed the author of the blurbs for Dick's stories.

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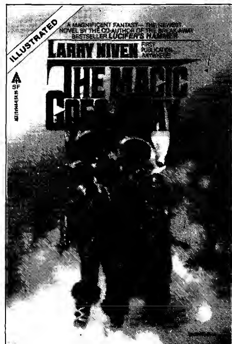
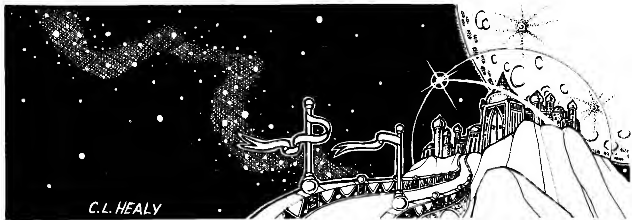


ON WORKING METHOD



Robert Sheckley

The subject of my talk today is Working Method. I believe that many of you here either are writing science fiction, or are secretly plotting to. Back when I was a fan and an aspiring writer, I wanted to know, how do professional writers actually do their job? How do they develop their ideas, plot their stories, overcome their difficulties? Now, twenty-five years later, I know.

Professional writers differ greatly in their approaches to writing. For a lucky few, it is simple: you get an idea, which in turn suggests a plot and characters. With that much in hand, you go to a typewriter and bash out a story. When it is finished, a few hours later, you correct the grammar and spelling, and check to make sure your hero's name remains the same throughout. If you insist upon perfection, you then type out the whole thing again, this time taking out the dangling participles. Otherwise, you're finished.

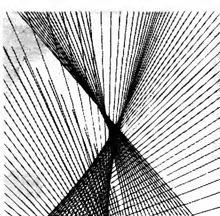
That's more or less how I felt in the beginning of my career. Plotting was simple: you gave your hero a serious problem. You gave him a limited amount of time in which to solve it, and serious consequences if he failed to do so. You started your story in the middle of an action, flashing back briefly to set forth the over-all situation. You cut off all easy possibilities of solving the problem. The hero tries this and that. But all his efforts are in vain, and only serve to get him into deeper trouble Soon the time-limit is approaching and he still hasn't defeated the villain, rescued the girl, or learned the secret of the alien civilization. He is at the end of his rope, on the verge of utter defeat. Then, at the last possible moment, you get him out of trouble. How does this come about? In a flash of insight, your hero solves his problem by some unexpected but logical means, some way that was inherent in the situation but overlooked until now. Done properly, your solution makes the reader say, "Of course! Why didn't I think of that?" And then you swiftly bring the story to a conclusion, and that's all there is to it.

This simpleminded approach saw me through many stories. But inevitably, sophistication set in, and I began to experience difficulties. I became self-conscious, dissatisfied with what I could do. I began to view writing as a problem, and to look for ways of solving that problem.

I looked to my colleagues, and saw that they had many different ways of writing stories. Lester del Rey, for example, claimed that he wrote out his stories in his head, word for word and sentence for sentence, before putting anything down on paper. His method involved quite a long incubation period, of course: months or even years would be devoted to mental composition. When he was ready to transcribe onto paper, only then would Lester go to his office. Lester's office was about the size of a broomcloset, though not so pretty. He had constructed it in the middle of his living room. You opened the door, edged in, and sat down at a miniature desk. An overhead light came on and the door closed behind you automatically. A typewriter unfolded from the wall into your lap, locking you in place. Clean paper, pencils, cigarettes and ashtray were close at hand. There was a circulation fan to keep you from suffocating. It was very much like being in a sarcophagus, but with the disadvantage that you were not dead.

Phillip Klass, better known as William Tenn, had many different methods back in those days, with which he tried to cope with a blockage as tenacious and enveloping as a love-stricken boa constrictor. Phil and I discussed our writing problems at great length. Once we came up with a method adapted for two writers. Some of you might care to try this. It consisted of us renting a studio and equipping it with a desk, typewriter, and heavy oak chair. The chair was further equipped with a chain

A speech given at the 1978 British SF Convention; reprinted from *Vector* 89.



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and padlock. When it was, say, Phil's turn to write, I would chain him to the chair, leaving his arms free to type, of course. I would then leave him there, despite his piteous pleas and entreaties, until he had produced a certain, previously agreed-upon amount of wordage. At which point I would release him and take his place.

We never did do that one, probably because of the difficulty of finding a chair strong enough to restrain a writer determined to get away from his work. We did actually try something else, however. We would meet at a diner in Sheridan Square at the end of the working day. There we would show each other the pages we had done. If either of us failed to fulfill our quota on any given day, he would pay the other ten dollars.

It seemed simple and foolproof, but we soon ran into difficulties. Neither of us was willing to actually let the other read our unfinished copy, since the other might laugh. We got round that by presenting our pages upside down, hastily. But since the copy was upside down, there was no way of telling if we had actually written new copy that day, or were showing pages from ten years ago. It became a matter of individual honor for each of us to present new copy that the other could not read. We did this for about a week, then spontaneously and joyously went back to our former practice of talking about writing.

As the years passed, my own blockage became wider, deeper and blacker. I knew what my trouble was, however. My trouble was my wife. As soon as I did something about her, everything would be okay. Two divorces later, I knew it was not my wife. The trouble was New York. How could I possibly work in such a place? What I needed was sunshine, a sparkling sea, olive trees and solitude. So I moved to the Spanish island of Ibiza. There I rented a 300-year old farmhouse on a hill, overlooking the sea. It had no electricity, but it did have four different rooms I could use for my office. First I tried to work in the beautiful, bright upstairs room. No good: I couldn't get any work done because I spent all my time looking out the window admiring the view. So I moved downstairs. Here there was no problem of a distracting view. My two rooms had only one narrow window, with bars over it in case of attack by pirates. These rooms had been used to store potatoes. They were cold and dark. There was nothing to distract my attention. Unfortunately I couldn't work here either—my paraffin lamp gave off too much smoke.

At last I saw what the trouble was. The trouble was working indoors. Henceforth I would work outdoors, like it was meant to be. So I set up on the beach. But I couldn't work there because it was too hot, and sand got into my typewriter. I tried composing under a shady tree, but the flies drove me away. I tried working in a cafe, but the waiters made too much noise. So I came to London and decided that my problem was self-discipline. I began to search in earnest for ways and means of doing by artifice what once I had done naturally. Here, in no particular order, are a few of the methods I have tried.

When I am blocked, I tend, very naturally, not to write. But the less I write, the less I feel capable of writing. The sense of constriction and oppression increases as my output dwindles away, and I begin to dread writing anything at all. How to break this vicious cycle? It can only be done by writing. I need to practice my trade regularly if I am to maintain any facility at it. I need to produce a flow of words. But since I *am* blocked, how am I to get that flow?

To solve this problem, at one point I set myself to type 5000 words a day. Type, not write. Wordage was my only requirement. It didn't matter what I actually wrote. It could be anything at all, even gibberish, even lists of disconnected words, even my name over and over again. The content did not matter. All that mattered was producing daily wordage in quantity.

Perhaps that sounds simple. I assure you it was not. The first day went well enough. By the second, I had exhausted my available stock of banalities. I would find myself writing something like this:

Ah yes, here we are at last, getting near the bottom of the page. One more sentence, just a few more words . . . that's it, go, baby, go, do those words . . . Ah, page done. That's page 19, and now we are at the top of page 20—the last page for the day—or night, since it is now 3:30 in the bloody morning and I have been at this for what feels like a hundred years. But only one page to go, the last, and then I can put this insane nonsense aside and go do something else, anything else, anything in the world except this. This, this, this. Christ, still three-quarters of a page to go. Oh words, where are you now that I need you? Come quickly to my fingers and release me from this horror, horror, horror . . . O God, I am losing my mind, mind, mind . . . But wait, is it possible, yes, here it is, the end of the page coming up, O welcome kindly end of page and now I am finished, finished, finished.

After a few days of this, I realized something. It slowly dawned on me that I was working very hard, and I wasn't even getting paid for it. I saw that since I was writing 5000 words a day anyhow—and since I was getting tired of

typing my own name over and over—why not write a story? And I did just that. I sat down and wrote a story. And it was easy! My God, I had the master key to writing at last! I wrote another story. This one was not so easy, but it was not so tough either. So there I was with two entire stories written, and each of them had only taken me about a day. I thought proudly of those stories for the rest of the year, and for a year or so afterwards. I didn't ever actually write anything else in that way, but I always knew that I could. I can heartily recommend this method. It is a true master key. Someday I shall do it again, when I'm feeling really desperate. But in the meantime, I'm still looking for an easier method.

And anyhow, wordage isn't the only thing. Writing a story can be a strange and fearsome business. You want so badly to get it right. You try so hard, and judge yourself so severely, that you succeed in confusing yourself. Perhaps you write thousands of words, but you are dissatisfied with them. It's all chaos and you can't seem to find the handle. That was my next problem. Not wordage, but an unwillingness, a fear, of actually producing a story.

My solution, typically enough, was to avoid the problem. Since there was no way of writing a story without getting into a state of utter despair, I decided I would not write a story. I would write, instead, a *simulation* of a story.

My simulations are the same length as a story, and they are made up of narration, dialogue, exposition, etc., just like a proper story. The difference is this: in a true story, the words you choose are very important. In a simulation, the actual words are of no importance whatsoever. In the simulation, it doesn't matter if my images are banal and my dialogue leaden. After all, it isn't a story. My simulation is only something *like* a story, but without the beauty, precision, humor and pathos that a real story must have.

A simulation is a mere formal exercise rather than a piece of creation.

As you can see, you need a certain gift for self-deception to do this sort of thing. The few times I have kidded myself into doing this, I have discovered a curious fact. Except for a few rough bits here and there, my simulation is very much like any other story I have ever written.

The fact is, I can only write as I write, not much better or worse, no matter how hard I try. In fact, trying too hard has a deteriorating effect upon my performance. The whole idea of simulation is to work rapidly and with a certain lightness of touch, as one would do a watercolor rather than an oil painting. This method can work. But there are two obstructive thoughts I always have to watch out for when I do one. The first is "Hell, this is going badly, I'd better chuck it in and begin again." The other is, "Hey, this is going well, I'd better tighten up and make it really good." Both these judgments are counter-productive.

Sometimes writing is not the problem, thinking is the problem. Often you will have various ideas which must be considered from various angles before you can begin writing. There are critical decisions that must be taken, alternatives which need to be considered, various bits of data to be juggled, fit into place, discarded or altered. These problems are elusive and difficult to look at. They refuse to solidify. You make some notes, or go for a long walk, or discuss it with your wife. Nothing seems to help much. It's all vague and unclear; you have too many things to think about at the same time, and no means of arranging your data. At times like this, it can be very helpful to make a *diagram*.

Here is the sort of diagram which I find useful. You put down a key word in the center of a sheet of paper, and draw a circle around it. Then you draw lines from that center, and write, as succinctly as possible, the various considerations associated with that idea. When you have finished, you have produced a diagram of your present knowledge on the subject. The entire

A LOOK AT THE NEW SF AND FANTASY FROM DELL

MILLENNIAL WOMEN
Tales for Tomorrow
Edited by Virginia Kidd
A selection of seven SF pieces—featuring *The Eye of the Heron*, a new full-length novel by National Book Award-winner Ursula K. LeGuin!
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Illustration from MILLENNIAL WOMEN

situation can be taken in at a glance, enabling you to see what you have and, equally important, what you don't have. Hookups between different parts of the diagram will suggest themselves. Important areas can be enclosed or connected. Different colors can be used for emphasis. New data can be easily added. Areas of specific pertinence can be taken off and made the basis of a new diagram.

Diagrams are really a lot of fun. At first I made mine with a plain fountain pen. Then I switched to colored pentels. For greater efficiency, I worked out a list of color-coded symbols. This took a little time, but it was well worth it. Next I experimented with different kinds of lettering for greater clarity. My diagrams grew larger and more complex, and I switched to larger sheets of paper. After that I got into colored inks. The commercial brands weren't quite right, so I began to mix my own. The system still lacked a certain something. It was getting too mechanical and lifeless. So I began to illustrate my diagrams, first with little sketches, then with line and wash drawings, and then with watercolors. I lacked the technical skill for these, so I started looking round for a good art course. Unfortunately, I had to drop the whole thing and get some work done. Still, it was not a complete waste. When a market opens up for diagrams, I'll be all set.

I don't think that all confusion and anxiety can be eliminated from writing. Ideas frequently have to develop in a semi-conscious state until something clicks into place. But often, at least in my case, that gestation period is allowed to continue too long, to the detriment of the later stages of the work. You reach a point where the idea is more or less developed, but there is still something wrong, and you don't know what it is. It sits there, a soggy dark mass in your mind, a vague unpleasantness that will not allow you to continue. What to do then?

There is a ridiculously simple method that I came across to handle this very point. It consists of asking yourself questions. Isn't that obvious? Yet I never thought of it until recently. A typical session might go like this:

"Well, what exactly is wrong?"

"The story stinks, that's what's wrong."

"But how, precisely, does it stink?"

"It moves too slowly, for one thing."

"So how could you speed it up?"

"I don't know."

"Of course you know. Name a way in which you could speed it up."

"Hmmm . . . Well, I suppose I could take out the two thousand word description of a sunset on Mars."

"Would that solve the problem?"

"No. My characters stink, too."

"In what way?"

"They just sit around wishing they were somewhere else."

"What could you do about that?"

"Give them something to do, I suppose."

"Like what?"

"I don't know . . . wait—I got it! They can look for an alien civilization!"

This method words well. But it does take a certain degree of concentration. That's the only tough part about it. Sometimes I can't even get my questions into focus. At such times, my internal dialogue is apt to go like this:

"Well, Bob, how's the lad?"

"I'm fine, thanks. How about you?"

"Oh, I'm fine."

"That's nice."

"Yes, it is, isn't it?"

"Yes."

Long pause. Then:

"Was there some problem you wanted to discuss with me?"

"Problem? Oh, yes. It's this story."

"What story?"

"The one I've been trying to write for the last three months."

"Oh, *that* story."

"Yes."

"You mean the story with the two thousand word description of the Martian sunset?"

"That's the one."

"You got any ideas?"

"About what?"

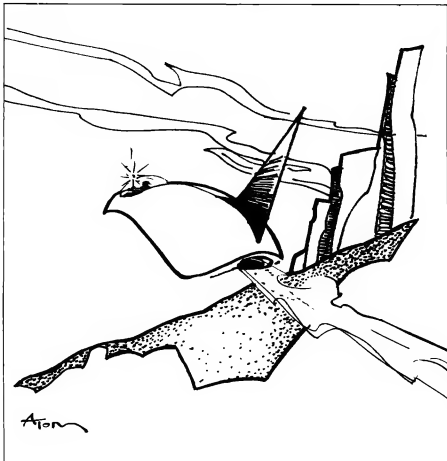
"The story, dum dum. How can I fix it?"

"Well . . . you could always expand the description of that sunset."

And so it goes—you win some and you lose some.

In conclusion let me say—for those of you who are writers, I hope you have enjoyed this excursion through the pitfalls of our profession. For those of you who are thinking of becoming writers—you have been warned. Thank you. ■

—Robert Sheckley



JUNE 1979 **$1.00**

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SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE

NEBULA AWARD NOMINEES . . . AND WINNERS!▲

Novel:

▷DREAMSNAKE, Vonda McIntyre (Houghton Mifflin).
STRANGERS, Gardner Dozois (Berkley/Putnam).
THE FADED SUN: KESRITH, C.J. Cherryh (SF Book Club/DAW).
KALKI, Gore Vidal (Random House).
BLIND VOICES, Tom Reamy (Berkley/Putnam).
No Award.

Novella:

▷THE PERSISTENCE OF VISION, John Varley (F&SF, March 78).
SEVEN AMERICAN NIGHTS, Gene Wolfe (Orbit 20, ed. by Damon Knight, Harper & Row).
No Award.

Novelette:

▷A GLOW OF CANDLES, A UNICORN'S EYE, Charles L. Grant (Graven Images, ed. by Edward L. Ferman & Barry Malzberg. Thomas Nelson).
DEVIL YOU DON'T KNOW, Dean Ing (Analog, January 78).
MIKAL'S SONGBIRD, Orson Scott Card (Analog, May 78).
No Award.

Short Story:

▷STONE, Edward Bryant (F&SF, February 78).
A QUIET REVOLUTION FOR DEATH, Jack Dann (New Dimensions 8, ed. by Robert Silverberg, Harper & Row).
CASSANDRA, C.J. Cherryh (F&SF, October 78).
No Award.

Two hundred fifty gathered in New York April 21 to hear Nebula and SFWA results. President Jack Williamson, running unopposed, garnered 155 votes. Bob Vardeman was elected Vice President over encumbent Marion Zimmer Bradley by 81 votes to 78; Dave Bischoff was re-elected Secretary with 151 votes. Jack Chalker defeated Orson Scott Card for Treasurer by 92 to 60, and David Gerrold bested Karl Hansen, 45 to 18 for Western Regional Director, replacing Robert Silverberg. The Grand Master Nebula was awarded to L. Sprague de Camp. SFWA presented Certificates of Merit to Jerry Pournelle, Tom Monteleone and Andrew Offutt, and a special President's Award to Siegel and Schuster, accepted by Julius Schwartz. Festivities were brilliantly emceed by Norman Spinrad, and Bob Guccione gave a strange speech.

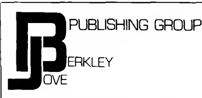
JOVE BOOKS SOLD TO MCA

Jove Books, the paperback division of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, has been sold by HBJ to MCA. Jove's operations will be coordinated with Berkley Books, also owned by MCA. Jove will cease to be a market for SF after an interim period while releases are coordinated with those of Berkley. Berkley, whose SF program is run by John Silbersack and Victoria Schochet, will go through a selection process to choose which SF titles bought by Jove and not yet published will be published under the Berkley imprint. Berkley will use the same process on Jove backlist titles; as new printings are ordered, cover and interior publishing information will list either Berkley or Jove as the publisher.

The immediate concern, according to Victoria Schochet, is those Jove titles which are near reverting publishing rights to their authors. These titles will receive first priority in the selection process.

Bill Grose, formerly Editor-In-Chief of Dell Books, has moved to Jove as the new Publisher. He is being replaced by Linda Grey, formerly Senior Editor at Dell.

Jove Books and Berkley Books were combined after the purchase to form BJ Publishing Group. Despite early reports that Jove Books would stay at 757 Third Avenue, home of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, subsequent actions included dismissal of a large number of Jove employees at the end of March. Offices of Jove then moved to 200 Madison Avenue, headquarters of Berkley/ Putnam. As the dust settled, plans have firmed: direct sales to bookstores of both



lines will be handled by one sales staff. Wholesale operations will continue to be serviced by Kable News for Berkley and ICD for Jove; production and subsidiary rights for the two lines will be unified immediately, while order processing, fulfillment and other business and accounting functions will be univied over the course of the coming year.

The BJ publishing Group is restructuring operations to become like other publishing companies with more than a single line, for instance New American Library. NAL's various lines—Signet, Mentor, Plume, etc.—are designed to complement rather than compete with each other. After the settling down period, Berkley will be the only mass market paperback SF line in the company. Jove will cease to be a market for, or publisher of, SF. Where this leaves Windhover Books, the trade paperback line, is not clear. Windhover has suspended publication of new titles at this time, according to sources at the company.

DEL REY BOOKS TO PUBLISH THREE BY FREDERIK POHL

Frederik Pohl has signed a three book contract with Del Rey Books. The first book, tentatively titled *The Stone of Madness,* consists of three novellas—"Mars Mask," "The Cool War," and "Like Unto a Locust." The second book in the contract, and possibly the first into print, is entitled *Beyond the Blue.* Pohl says that this was originally the title of *Gateway. Beyond the Blue* is a sequel to *Gateway,* and is two thirds done, with the first half in final form. Pohl says the idea for the end of the book came to him on the way to attend this year's Lunacon, and that his column in the Summer issue of STARSHIP is "partly about it."

PLAYBOY PRESS EXPANDS SF PROGRAM

Playboy Press will expand its publishing program in September, upon completion of a switch from Pocket Books distribution to ICD. The reason for the switch is that in recent months, as the Playboy Press line expanded, it came into more and more conflict with the Pocket Books line. September will mark the start of a ten title per month publishing program, and including SF every month. Ironically, inaugurating the line will be three books by Richard C. Meredith, including *At the Narrow Passage,* to be published in September, followed by *No Brother, No Friend* in October and *Vestiges of Time* in November. All three titles will have covers by Tom Barr. The October Playboy Press lead title will be Philip Jose Farmer's *Image of the Beast,* which will feature that title plus *Blown,* originally published by Essex House, in one volume. The book will not be labelled as SF.

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT WARNS HARLEQUIN AGAINST PURCHASE OF PINNACLE

Harlequin Books of Toronto has been warned against acquiring Pinnacle Books of Los Angeles by the U.S. Department of Justice, which says it will lodge an antitrust complaint if the proposed merger deal goes through.

Harlequin is a Canadian firm, 50% of which is owned by Torstar, a holding company which also owns the daily *Toronto Star.* Both Harlequin and Pinnacle are mass market paperback distributors in the US. According to the Justice Department, Harlequin com-

mands an 8.2% share of available rack space in the US, while Pinnacle holds 3%. A combination of the two is unacceptable to the Justice Department, which said that further significant concentration in the mass market paperback business will not be tolerated.

Harlequin, of course, was the publisher of Laser SF Books, which according to editor Roger Elwood, made money, but not enough to suit Harlequin, which concentrates on romantic and romantic suspense books. Laser Books was killed off several years ago. Some Laser titles have since been reprinted by other publishers.

Pinnacle has published SF under the Futorian label, also with Roger Elwood as editor. Elwood was replaced by Robert Silverberg, who quit after Pinnacle rejected all the titles he proposed to acquire. The Futorian line has since been discontinued. Pinnacle's current SF publishing centers on the Dr. Who books, which are being reprinted from their original British publication.

S.F. CHRONICLE TO PUBLISH MONTHLY

Science Fiction Chronicle will begin monthly publication later this summer. Retail price of the magazine will be $1.00. It will be distributed by F&SF Book Company of Staten Island, distributors of STARSHIP: The Magazine About Science Fiction, also published by Andrew Porter. SFC will feature comprehensive coverage of SF news, but rather than simple coverage of news stories, SFC will supplement news with analysis of stories, investigative reporting such as the Galaxy story in this issue, and background information available to a news gathering organization with deep roots in the New York publishing scene.

Andrew Porter, publisher of SFC, brings considerable editorial experience to the post of publisher. He has wide experience with a number of publications, including *Fantasy & Science Fiction*, where for eight years he was assistant editor; he has also worked on consumer and trade magazines covering many fields, including *Boating Industry*, *Toy & Hobby World*, *Modern Floor Coverings*, *Electro-Procurement*, and *Rudder*. Additionally, from 1966 to 1968 he was editor and publisher of *S.F. Weekly*, a weekly newszine covering the SF field.

Larry Carmody, editor of SFC, is a full-time writer/reporter for *Newsday*, the second largest daily afternoon newspaper in the US. In addition, he has a weekly SF radio program over WBAU-FM on Long Island, and is a frequent contributor to a wide range of magazines, with an emphasis on sports writing.

Contributing editors include Jack Williamson, president of the SFWA; Chris Steinbrunner, who will cover Film and TV news, is a producer with WOR-TV in New York, and co-author with Otto Penzler of *The Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection*. He is also an officer of the Mystery Writers of America. Jim Freund, who will cover Spoken Word and Radio news, was formerly associated with *Galaxy SF* (in the good old days) and ran an SF program over WBAI-FM in New York. Finally, Ross Chamberlain, though known as an SF artist, earns his living as a trade magazine editor at Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

SFC invites you to take advantage of its Charter Subscription offer elsewhere in this issue. SFC will be mailed First Class Mail—by airmail overseas—to all subscribers. We know you want the news while it's still new, and second class mail, though considerably cheaper than first, still rates second class service unless you've got the clout of *Time Magazine*.

Finally, we welcome news and clippings. Send them to the address on page one. We also hope to hear your opinions of this, our second major issue.

ISAAC ASIMOV FETED IN NEW YORK

The publication of Isaac Asimov's 200th books—*In Memory Yet Green* from Doubleday, and *Opus 200* from Houghton Mifflin—was celebrated at a reception/party/event March first in New York City. More than 200 people crowded into the third floor studio at the City University Graduate Center in midtown Manhattan to munch hors d'oeuvres, talk publishing, and ask Isaac impertinent and strange questions. Many SF people attended including George Scithers of *IASFM*, Lin Carter, Nancy Neiman of Avon Books, Sharon Jarvis of Playboy Press, Pat LoBrutto of Doubleday, George O. Smith, Norman Spinrad, and others. In addition, genuine celebrities like Walter Sullivan of the *Times*, Casper Citron, talk-show host, and Stanley Asimov, brother of The Good Doctor were present.

EARTHLIGHT GALLERY OPENS IN BOSTON

Earthlight Gallery, Inc. specializing in fantasy and science fiction art, sculpture and jewelry opens at 249 Newbury Street, Boston in May. Earthlight is interested in looking at original art, sculpture and quality prints. The gallery will be responsible for advertising, public relations, promotion, display and sale of the work. Earthlight will cover insurance of artwork while in the possession of the gallery. Artists submitting work to the gallery should provide a brief resume, including past shows and a description of the medium in which they work.

Ellen Franklin, owner of Earthlight Gallery, has been active in marketing and public relations for the past six years, including small business and arts management. Science fiction activities include management of Boskone 13, the Iguanacon masquerade, the past two Boskone art shows, and exhibit manager for Noreascon II. Active in the arts community in Boston, Ellen has worked with the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs and the Greater Boston Convention and Tourist Bureau to promote artistic events in the city of Boston. For further information write or call Ellen at the Earthlight Gallery, 249 Newbury St., Boston MA 02116, (617) 266-8617.

WORLD SF ORGANIZED IN IRELAND

World SF is a new professionally oriented group operating out of Ireland. Harry Harrison is the chairman of World SF, with Sam Lundwall as secretary/treasurer. Annual dues are $11.00. The organization is open to anyone with a professional interest in SF—writers, artists, editors, publishers, etc. Reproduced here is the constitution and by-laws of World SF:

I. The name of this organization shall be WORLD SF.

II. The purpose of this organization shall be to afford a means of communication among all persons and institutions with a professional interest in science fiction, throughout the world.

III. Individual membership shall be open to any person anywhere with a professional affiliation to science fiction, including (but not limited to) writers, publishers, editors, critics, historians, librarians, curators, teachers, agents, artists, translators, producers or directors of film or television.

IV. Individual membership may not be denied to any person qualified under Paragraph III by reason of nationality, political affiliation, race, sex or religion, nor may membership be withdrawn from any person for any reason other than failure to pay dues.

V. Group membership shall be open to any publishing company, producing organization, library, school, writers' union or other professional organization, provided only that some part of its activity shall be devoted to the general areas described in Paragraph III. Member groups shall have no voting rights per se, but each such member group may designate three individuals who will have the right to attend meetings and cast votes on the same basis as individual members. A person designated to cast a vote for a member group may not also vote as an individual member.

VI. There shall be nine elected officers of WORLD SF: A President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and six Trustees, to be elected at each annual World General Meeting to serve until the next. Collectively, they shall comprise the Board of Governors, which shall be empowered to conduct the affairs of World SF between World SF General Meetings. No two Trustees shall be residents of the same country.

VII. Dues and other fees shall be fixed by the Board of Governors in such amounts as they shall deem proper for each of the categories of membership, and shall be paid in such fashion as they may direct consistent with the constraint imposed by currency regulations. In addition, the Board of Governors shall take such measures as are necessary to insure that World SF does not knowingly contravene the laws of countries from which members come.

VIII. The final authority on all questions before World SF shall be the World General Meeting, as provided in Paragraph X herein and provided that at least 19 members are present, except that no decision may be taken which contravenes any provision of this constitution and by-laws. An agenda for the business meeting shall be prepared and distributed to all members not less than thirty days before each meeting.

IX. Amendments to this constitution and by-laws may be made by majority vote of any World General Meeting, provided that all members of World SF shall be notified by mail of any such proposed amendments not less than thirty days before said meeting.

X. All voting as to amendments to this constitution and by-laws and as to the election of officers shall take place by individual ballots cast at the World General Meeting, provided that members who cannot be present shall be permitted to cast absentee ballots by mail or to designate a proxy. On all other questions, voting shall be limited to members present, provided that any decision may be referred to a mail ballot on request of one quarter of the members present.

XI. World SF shall publish a directory of all members, and copies shall be furnished to all members without charge.

XII. World SF shall publish a periodical, in such form and at such intervals as the Board

DOUBLEDAY & COMPANY

ENGINE SUMMER
JOHN CROWLEY

$7.95; General Publishing—Fiction
LC 78-62601
ISBN 0-385-12831-2

John Crowley burst onto the science fiction scene only recently with *The Deep*, which was praised as "extraordinary" (Ursula LeGuin) and "one of the best new novels of the year" (*Locus* and Lin Carter). After seeing Crowley's second novel *Beasts*, Kirkus said: "He should become a major name in the field." Now he returns with his third book ENGINE SUMMER: the story of one man's quest for sainthood which leads him to search into the far past into the age-long catastrophes and cataclysms that have made his world.

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CHRIS LAMPTON

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The despotic ruler of the barren planet Aerie has located an alternate universe and bargained with its inhabitants—a race of electromagnetic beings known as the Zzyri—for an unlimited supply of energy. But there is a high price to pay. The Zzyri demand in return a living sacrifice: the lives of the N'qith, the benevolent native race of Aerir...

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On the distant planet Delyafam, the Kimassu Lady's duties are those of a police chief. She has learned to deal with the visitors from Earth, but she shares the common Deylene contempt for the Earthlings. Their cultures are so different, that Kimassu is hard put to make her ruling council understand the dangers . . . This is a fascinating, often moving story of complete alienness, as seen from both sides.

TIN WOODMAN
by DENNIS R. BAILEY and DAVID F. BISCHOFF

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Mora is a young woman with telepathic powers who functions as a "ship-lady" on a space cruiser. She uses her powers to help those in need—a position some unscrupulous crew members sometimes take advantage of. She is also supposed to use her telepathy whenever an alien situation is encountered, but when an apparent alien artifact is discovered, Mora's powers are not strong enough . . .

UNIVERSE 9
Edited by TERRY CARR

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An award-winning anthology of original stories chosen by the well-known and respected editor and writer, Terry Carr. The volume is designed to be a showcase of talent and includes established authors as well as newcomers to the field.

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GENE LANCOUR

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Adopted at Dublin, June 26, 1978
Respectfully submitted by
Elizabeth Anne Hull, (outgoing) Executive Secretary (Amerika)

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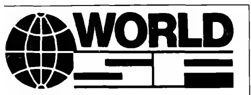

JITTLOV SIGNS FILM PACT WITH STARLOG

Mike Jittlov, of Science Fiction Consultants, has sealed a distribution pact with *Starlog/ Future Film Prod.* and Planet Pictures Corp. for distribution of his SF and fantasy films: *Time Tripper, The Interview, Swing Shift,* and *Animato.* The shorts will constitute a major portion of an upcoming package of award-winning SF films.

Jittlov, a Hollywood-based director, has been producing commercials and special effects shorts for eight years. His latest work was spotlighted on the recent Walt Disney TV Special, "Mickey's 50th," for which he directed, starred, and animated over 1000 toys and laser effects for the "Collector," "Office," and "Psychiatrist" sequences.

SEARLES REPLACES BROWN AS IASFM BOOK REVIEWER

Baird Searles has been named to be the regular SF book reviewer for *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine.* He will replace Charles N. Brown with the May issue.

Searles has done reviews for various New York City newspapers and magazines, and also did reviews over WBAI-FM during the three-year run of *Of Unicorns and Universes* in the late 1960's-early 1970's. Searles is the current film reviewer for *F&SF,* a post he will retain. Searles is also one of the owners of the SF Shop in Manhattan.

Reportedly, the reason for the change at *IASFM* has to do with deadlines.

WHISPERS CONTINUES EVOLUTION

The August issue of *Whispers* will feature a full color wraparound cover by Steve Fabian. The issue, which emphasizes Fritz Leiber, features a 14,000 word original novelette by Leiber entitled "The Button Molder." *Whispers* recently went to typeset interiors and perfect binding.

UPDATE ON THE GALAXY SITUATION

SFC's stop-press—"Galaxy Sale Pending? "—is already out of date. Plans for sale to *Starlog* are definitely off. *Starlog* has, in fact, announced in their March issue that they plan a fiction magazine, but reliable sources say these plans have been indefinitely postponed, due to two factors. First, they are starting up two magazines, *Fantastica* and *Cinemagic,* which will take a considerable amount of time, energy and capital, and second, they're reluctant to do a magazine which would require editorial skills they do not possess in-house. They are very reluctant to let any aspects of their publishing ventures be handled outside their own organization.

Meanwhile, *SFC* has learned that the suburban Boston based *Elm Corporation* has purchased UPD's loan position with a bank. *Galaxy*'s owners took out loans initially to secure working capital for the UPD organization, and the sale of some of their more profitable properties—*Ski Business, Family Handyman, Golf Digest*—was precipitated by the falling due of various notes. The Elm Corporation specializes in buying loan positions of companies in precarious financial straits, in hopes of turning them around or selling them, in both cases hoping to make a profit from a tight financial situation.

Sources told *SFC* that the Elm Corporation would set up a payout of all past-due accounts, and would broaden the base of the magazine, with Hank Stine remaining as editor.

The Elm Corporation states they will decide what to do with UPD sometime between the end of March and the end of April.

ELM CORPORATION SENDS LETTER TO CONTRIBUTORS

THE ELM CORPORATION

TWO SUNLIFE EXECUTIVE PARK, SUITE 1-5 WELLESLEY HILLS, MASS. 02181
PHONE 617-237-5810

April 1, 1979

TO: GALAXY MAGAZINE WRITERS, ARTISTS AND OTHER EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS

Recently this company assumed a substantial financial position in Universal Publishing and Distributing Corporation and its subsidiaries, one of which publishes Galaxy Magazine. Our plan is to work with Universal and assist it in honoring its financial obligations. As senior secured creditor and lien holder, we have resolved many of Universal's debts.

Much has been accomplished, all of it on an individual creditor basis and, quite frankly, at a very sharply discounted basis. However, Arnold Abramson, president of Universal, made it a condition of the agreement with us that all the writers, artists and other editorial contributors to Galaxy Magazine were to be paid in full. Mr. Abramson insisted that he had a deep commitment to individual writers and their association and that we must honor that commitment. We finally agreed on the condition that payments to writers et al would be made over a period of time.

We are outlining below the schedule by which we plan to pay all such obligations. The amount due you is shown on the bottom of this letter so you can quickly determine how long it will take to pay you out in full. If the amount shown does not agree with your records, please contact Universal directly in order to resolve your record and theirs. Until such time as Universal advises us differently, we will regard the amount due you as shown herein, but we recognize always the possibility of an error in fact or calculation.

Also, should there be any individual hardship situation, we will make every effort to cooperate. In those circumstances please contact Arnold Abramson directly.

The schedule for payments is as follows:

Amount Due	Payout Period
Under $100.00 (approx.)	3 months
$100.00 to $300.00	12 months
$300.00 or more	24 months

The first payment is included with this letter, and subsequent payments will be made monthly.

Now as to our plans for the magazine. In an effort to broaden its editorial base and appeal, Galaxy will publish on a bi-monthly frequency with a new editorial format commencing with the June issue. The editor is Henry (Hank) Stine, who will operate from his office in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His address is 2661 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, La. 70806. Hank Stine's first issue will be May/June. Payment for material for the new Galaxy is now being made on acceptance. Acceptance is regarded by Mr. Stine as the date Galaxy goes to press.

We have been advised by Universal that with few exceptions, the writers, artists and other editorial contributors to Galaxy have been extraordinarily cooperative and patient with respect to Galaxy's problems and that cooperation is directly related to this offer. We join Universal in thanking you for that kind of attitude.

Sincerely,

THE ELM CORPORATION

S. John Loscocco
President

AMOUNT DUE YOU: $ ________

CHECK ENCLOSED FOR: $ ________

ED EARL REPP DIES

Ed Earl Repp died February 19, 1979, at the age of 78. Repp was one of the most prolific writers of the SF pulp era. Dick Lupoff, who talked to him late in 1978, writes, "In the course of the interview, he mentioned how he got involved with writing fiction. I.e., in his work as a motion picture publicist, he met a number of novelists whose books had become films.

"He met Edgar Rice Burroughs publicizing a Tarzan movie. Burroughs took a shine to him, suggested that he try writing fiction, and specifically recommended science fiction, because 'that's where the money is.' Repp also met Zane Grey, and had an almost identical experience with him, except that Grey recommended westerns—'that's where the money is.'

"According to the Day and Metcalf indexes, Repp sold something like 55 stories to the science fiction magazines. As far as I know, only one of them is currently in print: "Kleon of the Golden Sun" in the Zebra Books paperback of the FPCI anthology *Science and Sorcery* edited by Garret Ford. . . . Repp's two SF collections, *The Radium Pool* and *The Stellar Missiles,* are still available from FPCI also, I think.

"But most of his writing was in westerns. He showed me bound volumes of western pulp magazines where he filled entire issues under a variety of by-lines, as well as an impressive row of books under the names Ed Earl Repp and Peter Field. His last important writing, he said, was half a dozen screenplays for the old *Lone Ranger* TV series, although he continued to turn out occasional short pieces of non-fiction (Western Americana) right up to the time of his death."

—Richard Lupoff

MY LIFE by Ed Earl Repp

I had no special training except newspaper work, publicity and theatrical advertising.

Two years of high school during which my English teacher—Miss Clements—bless her—declared I would never be able to write my own name. She was right.

For training all I had was much deep reading of the type of copy I wanted to write and—feature writing for the *L.A. Examiner* and *L.A. Times* and *Daily News.*

I went on scientific expeditions into the desert and into many digs with Mark Raymond Harrington, noted archaeologist, and on some paleontological searches with groups from Cal-Tech, for story material and experience, resulting in features for the press.

Via the press route I learned what makes a story and how it is constructed—*how when where who* and all the details. You write a story with a sympathetic character in fiction. In news you write the truth without the fictional dramatization and flourish. You stay in a straight line and if you get off it your reader is lost. No sale.

My career evidently was decided for me by an accident and the encouragement of my doctor—the famous Bonesetter Reese of Ohio who corrected my multiple-fractured right arm and saved it from amputation. Since the damage left me out of manual labor or such trades existing today, I had to take up a desk job as a bookkeeper or writer. I always wanted the latter and chose it.

The opportunity came as a press agent for various movie stars and Warner Bros. studios, the old one on Sunset Blvd. There I met such folks as Bryan Foy, Walt Disney, Jack Warner,

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With an introduction by Isaac Asimov, and 25,000 words of critical and appreciative material by Robert Silverberg, Joe Patrouch, Ted White, Lee Hoffman, and David Gerrold, whose "7,000 more words about Harlan Ellison" appears here for the first time, plus another 30,000 words of critical writing by Harlan himself, this is an absolutely indispensable book for every lover and/or hater of Harlan Ellison, his fiction, and his ideas. The book features a new and complete nonfiction checklist by Harlan's official bibliographer, Leslie Kay Swigart.

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Hal Wallis et cetera. I handled publicity for such people as Al Jolson in the first sound picture and John Barrymore in *The Sea Beast.* I learned more story construction and how to write screenplays. Jolson was in *The Jazz Singer.*

When later I was a western novelist, about ten years later—Warner Bros. producer Bryan Foy bought six of my western books for star Dick Foran and employed me to write the scripts. So began my motion picture writing career.

Going back to the 1920's, I wrote science fiction and was fortunate to sell my first one to Hugo Gernsback who in return gave me a deal for 24 similar stories per year for *Amazing Stories, Amazing Detective* and his other publications. That was in 1929 and I did my work in a bedroom as I still do today covering western history which I like since it is so much like my original love of feature writing for newspapers. I enjoyed the personal action of press work, the slam-bang makeup of the editorial rooms in preparing to publish a newspaper.

Along with science fiction, I wrote westerns and adventure stories, sometimes doing a novelette in a day and a night without pause except to eat, for such publishers as Dell, Street and Smith, Popular and most all of the rest of the pulps under my own and several pen names such as Brad Buckner, John Cody, Peter Field, etc.

Whoever said writing was a lazy man's job, is without knowledge or savvy. You work on a yarn, you sweat blood over it and almost die of uncertainty if it will sell or not. It's a great life if—! ! ! ! !

I have not done any science fiction since back in the 1940's and have no desire to do so at present.

Honestly your space and time could go to a more deserving writer who is now active in serious work. I have no desire for publicity. Have had my day and grant this interview only as a favor to Richard Lupoff a modern, present day science fiction author.

At 78 I have had a couple of heart bumps along with a lung problem diagnosed as emphysema resulting from years of cigarette smoking. I am supposed to walk lightly and keep my powder dry.

I am flattered by your attention and this interview and I intend to do just as the doctor ordered—take it easy and avoid excitement.

Thanks. ■

Ed Earl Repp

RICHARD C. MEREDITH DEAD AT 41

Richard C. Meredith died unexpectedly of a stroke March 8th, 1979. Meredith had sold three novels to Playboy Press, with the first to appear in September. Through Russ Galen, Meredith's agent at Scott Meredith Literary Agency, we let Meredith himself speak to us. Forty-one is a terribly young age to terminate a life.

RICHARD C. MEREDITH AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH; AUGUST 6, 1975

I was born on the 21st of October, 1937, in Alderson, a small town in the southeastern part of West Virginia, the first child of Joseph and LaVon Meredith.

My parents moved around a bit as the Second World War approached and opened (for this country) with the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, though late in 1942 or early in 1943 (I'm not certain exactly when), they settled in St. Albans, W. Va., a small town not far from Charleston, the capital, and the chemical industries of the Kanawha Valley, which were then gearing up for the war effort. My father, a pipefitter by trade, was employed by one of the chemical plants working toward the perfection of "synthetic rubber" to replace the real thing, the sources of which had largely fallen under Japanese control.

My family lived there until 1956, during which time I completed high school and a year of college and my sister Sandra was born. It was also during this time, beginning with *Superman* and *Planet Stories* comic books, and from them moving to the old pulp magazines such as *Amazing, Fantastic, Famous Fantastic Mysteries, Super-Science Tales* and the like, that a portion of myself, of my "soul," if you wish, became firmly committed to science fiction. I fell in love with Heinlein's juveniles and bought my first copy of John W. Campbell's *Astounding* in July of 1950—I still have that copy and a copy of virtually every other issue published until after Campbell's death. Somewhere along in there I made my first, disastrous attempts at writing, and would probably have been better off to follow the advice of some of my first rejection slips and given the whole thing up then and there.

In school I decided to become an astronomer and aimed myself toward that goal until I hit on the rocky shoals of mathematics, for which I have very little ability—though *I* do think myself a human being, despite Heinlein's statements to the contrary.

In 1956, due to worsening economic conditions in West Virginia (the term "Appalachia" had not yet become a household word, but soon would), my parents decided to move to Pensacola, Florida, where there were greater employment and financial opportunities for people following my father's trade.

I soon followed them, though not long after arriving in northwest Florida and becoming disillusioned with the employment opportunities for the young and untrained, I decided to join the U.S. Army and learn a trade for myself.

(In this period also began a short, unhappy marriage with my high school sweetheart, which at this time I'd just as soon not go into. Suffice it to say that after a while our marriage, as do so many among the very young, ended in divorce.)

While in the Army I received extensive training in microwave radio theory and practice, and for the rest of my hitch instructed microwave radio theory and later aircraft navigation and communication theory (the electronics end of it).

Following my release from the service, I returned to Pensacola, and for a time attended Pensacola Junior College, sold my first stories to some of the "male oriented" magazines that sprang up in *Playboy*'s wake.

In 1961 I was recalled to active duty during the "Berlin Crisis" and served with, of all things, a Mississippi National Guard helicopter rescue unit which was attached to the Medical Corps. We saw no action—thank God!

After my second and final release from the Army, I returned to Pensacola again, went to work for Grice Electronics, Inc., a wholesale/retail electronics firm, where I eventually became advertising manager, and met a girl from Alabama named Joy Gates. Joy and I were married and began having children—it was after the birth of our first, Kira Chimene, that I seriously began to write and began selling short fiction to the science fiction magazines.

As time went by Joy and I became the parents of twin boys, Jefferson Conan and Derek Carlton, and then another boy, Rand Calvin.

In 1969, Ballantine Books published my first and second novels, *The Sky Is Filled with Ships* and *We All Died at Breakaway Station* (the best thing I have had in print to date, I believe), which had appeared in serial form in *Amazing* the year before.

By the beginning of 1970, dissatisfied with life in general, I went back to school, completing work at Pensacola Junior College and beginning work at the University of West Florida, supporting myself and my family with free-lance writing, free-lance art-and-graphic design (for along the line I had also studied art and had a fair command of pencil and pen) and with the G.I. Bill.

By 1972, however, the pinch was getting to us, so I dropped out of school only 15 quarter hours away from being awarded a degree in English, and went to work for the *Press-Gazette*, a weekly and later semi-weekly newspaper published in Milton, Fla., a small town near Pensacola. Although my title there was "production supervisor," I was responsible for editorial page cartoons, a regular "human interest" column and graphic design, as well as supervising the overall production of the newspaper. It was during this period that I perfected(?) the editorial cartoon style for which I have received a number of commendations.

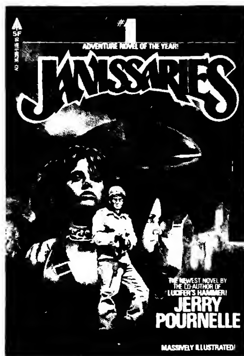
In 1973 G.P. Putnam's Sons published my first hardcover novel, *At the Narrow Passage*, later reprinted in paperback by Berkley, while I began work on its sequel, *No Brother, No Friend* (to be published in hardcover by Doubleday) and *Run, Come See Jerusalem* (to be published by Ballantine).

In the fall of 1974 I was forced to undergo spinal surgery and was unable to work until January 1975. During my convalescent period I continued to write spasmodically and designed a small volume of poetry (including some of my own) and art (which I executed) on erotic themes. The volume was later published at my own expense, but wasn't a commercial success.

In January I was able to work full-time once more, and helped to found a new weekly newspaper in Milton, Fla., the *Santa Rosa Free Press*, and served there as editor (as well as writer, cartoonist, photographer and graphic designer).

I found it necessary to leave the *Free Press* when conflicts arose between myself and the publisher over the "nature and meaning" of

JANISSARIES



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Ace Science Fiction

the newspaper, feeling that restrictions and demands were being placed on the newspaper that would prevent its further growth and would ultimately turn it into nothing more than a "shopper," not a newspaper.

The accidental drowning of my nine-year-old son Jeff on the first of July, 1975, combined with the other factors just mentioned, convinced me to take a "sabbatical," as it were, to take a short trip back to the hills of West Virginia, to complete a revised version of *No Brother, No Friend,* under contract with Doubleday, and to get on with some other plans of my own . . . such as a revision of *Run, Come See Jerusalem* for Ballantine, the writing of a conclusion for the trilogy begun with *At the Narrow Passage* and *No Brother, No Friend,* to be titled *The Vestiges of Time* and perhaps complete a couple of other novels I began but never completed.

Some other things I might mention are:

I have done considerable graphic design/commercial art for employers mentioned above and on a free-lance basis for various Pensacola-based advertising agencies and printers.

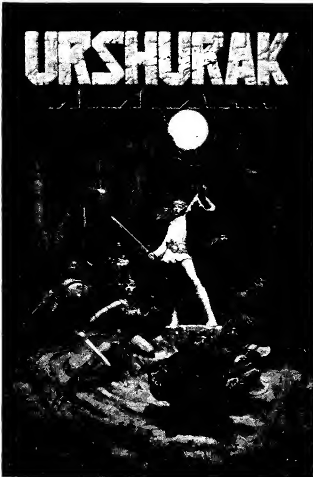
I helped to develop with WSRE-TV, Pensacola, Fla. PBS, a half-hour TV show based on one of my short stories for presentation to middle grade school students on in-school, closed-circuit TV.

I covered the Apollo 11 launch (the first Moon landing) for *Galaxy* magazine and the *Pensacola News-Journal,* and subsequently appeared on radio and TV in middle and northwest Florida.

During the period of the middle 1960's through 1970 I displayed and sold at various shows a number of oil paintings and pen-and-ink drawings.

My interests include, of course, writing and drawing. Much of my spare-time reading is still in the science fiction and hard science areas. I am also something of a history buff, my current area of interest being post-Roman Britain and the Arthurian legends.

While Joy and my three children and I are living in Milton, Fla., with a poodle puppy named Belladonna, a cat with no name, two gerbils and an uncertain number of fish, we are now considering moving back to Pensacola where I will probably devote myself to free-lance writing, art and graphic design . ■



The cover of URSHURAK, a large format illustrated novel by the Brothers Hildebrandt and Jerry Nichols, to be published by Bantam Books in the fall.

BALROG AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

BEST NOVELIST — Tom Reamy for his *Blind Voices,* a novel also nominated for a Hugo award. Runners up are Stephen King for *The Stand* and Stephen R. Donaldson for the *Thomas Covenant Trilogy,* tied for second place. Third place goes to Anne McCaffrey for *The White Dragon.*

BEST SHORT FICTION — Patricia Cadigan for her "Death from Exposure." Runners up are Harlan Ellison's "Jeffty is Five," second place; and Karl Edward Wagner's "Undertow," third place.

BEST COLLECTION/ANTHOLOGY — Phyllis Eisenstein's *Born to Exile.* Runners up are Stephen King's *Night Shift* and Harlan Ellison's *Strange Wine,* tied for second place; and *J.R.R. Tolkien Soundbook,* a recording by Caedmon, third.

BEST POET — Ray Bradbury, first place. Runners up are Warren Zevon, second; and Ursula Le Guin, third.

BEST ARTIST — Tim Kirk, first place. Runners up are Stephen Fabian, second; and Robert Hass, third.

BEST AMATEUR PUBLICATION — *Shayol,* edited by Patricia Cadigan and Arnold Fenner.

BEST PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATION — *Age of Dreams* by Alicia Austin, published by Donald M. Grant.

OUTSTANDING AMATEUR ACHIEVEMENT — Paul C. Allen for his *Fantasy Newsletter* and "Of Swords and Sorcery," a scholarly bibliography and synopsis of fantasy literature.

OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT — Donald M. Grant, publisher and J.R.R. Tolkien.

The special writers and artists' panel Balrog presentation went to Andre Norton for her "lifetime of contributions to the field and for presenting so much reading enjoyment to so many," said Catherine de Camp, speaking for the panel. A second award was presented to Jonathan Bacon for his work with Fool-Con and for his magazine *Fantasy Crossroads.*

AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS

Hyland House will publish Lee Harding's *Displaced Person* in July. The title of the book was changed in the Harper & Row edition because another book with a similar title was published at the same time in the US. Norstrilia Press will publish *Moon in the Ground* by Keith Antill, which won the Dame Mary Gilmore Prize. Norstrilia previously published two very successful collections, *The Altered I,* edited by Lee Harding, and *View from the Edge,* edited by George Turner. An anthology of Australian SF, *Transmutations,* will be co-published later this year by Norstrilia Press and Outback Press. *The Man Who Loved Morlocks* by David J. Lake will be published early in 1980 by Quartet Books. The book is a "sequel" to Wells' *The Time Machine.* Stephen Campbell, whose artwork appeared in the late lamented *Australian SF Review,* will do the dustjacket plus 12 interior illustrations. News reprinted from *Australian SF News,* edited by Mervyn Binns.

OMNI PURCHASE ORDER HAS CONTROVERSIAL CLAUSE

The Purchase Order routinely submitted by *Omni* to authors and artists has a clause calling the contribution a "work for hire." If contributors sign and return this paper, all rights, whether or not they are specifically assigned to *Omni,* legally become the property of *Omni.* Authors and artists doing business with *Omni* are advised to read their contracts very carefully and replace references to "work for hire" with other words. Consult your agent, SFWA, or ASFA before signing.

STARLOG TO PUBLISH SF YEARBOOK & POLL

Starlog will publish an annual SF Yearbook (a popular title already used by at least one publisher) in the summer. Compiled by David Truesdale and edited by David Gerrold, contents will cover all areas of SF publishing, conventions, film, TV, fan activities, etc.

The poll, published in the March issue of *Starlog* (to enter you must buy a copy of the magazine; no reproductions are allowed) contains some interesting topics and questions. Magazines read include *Time, Newsweek, Life, Locus, Mad, Starship, DC/Marvel Comics,* and *Analog*; questions include "How would you rate the Hugo Awards/Nebulas for reliability? " and "Are there any subjects that you feel SF writers should not write about? "

From my experience, the average *Starlog* reader is somewhere in their teens and monumentally uninterested in written SF. To find out results, you must buy a copy of the

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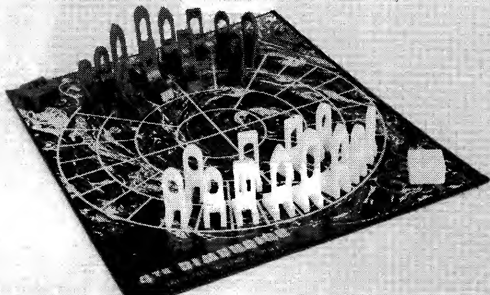

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DREAMS MUST EXPLAIN THEMSELVES, by Ursula K. Le Guin.
Cover and illus. by Tim Kirk, 39pp., 5½" x 8½", paper, 2nd pr., $3.00. ISBN 0-916186-01-6.

The title essay appeared in the 10th anniversary issue of ALGOL, and speaks of writing, children's fantasy, and specifically the Earthsea trilogy. The volume also contains "The Rule of Names," an early story first published in 1964 and one of the first to feature the inhabitants of Earthsea; a map of Earthsea; the author's National Book Award acceptance speech; and an interview with the author by Jonathan Ward of CBS Television.

"A brilliant essay" —Fantasaie; "The reader gets a pleasant feeling of being present at creation" — SFReview Monthly; "If you are lucky enough to know the work of Ursula K. Le Guin, you will enjoy this book" —Boise Statesman; "Anyone interested in writing will find a wealth of knowledge here" —Delap's F&SF Review; "Recommended"—Locus.

EXPERIMENT PERILOUS: Three Essays on Science Fiction, by Marion Zimmer Bradley, Norman Spinrad, and Alfred Bester.
33pp., 5½" x 8½", paper, $2.50. ISBN 0-916186-02-4.

These three essays on SF, reprinted from the pages of ALGOL, touch on all aspects of modern science fiction. "Experiment Perilous: The Art and Science of Anguish in Science Fiction," by Marion Zimmer Bradley speaks of the author's growing knowledge of her craft and the changes SF has brought to her life; "The Bug Jack Barron Papers," by Norman Spinrad concentrates on the battle to write and get published this controversial novel, a turning point in the evolution of modern SF; "Writing and 'The Demolished Man'," by Alfred Bester traces the growth and development of this major SF work from idea to finished book, as well as Bester's ideas on the why and how of writing SF.

"If you don't have the back issues of ALGOL, buy the book" —Richard Lupoff; "Really excellent" —Khatru.

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P.O. Box 4175,
New York NY 10017

book, which will appear next summer. They should be fascinating. AIP.

SFWA ELECTS WRONG OFFICER (OOPS!)

In 1978 SFWA elected a new eastern regional director, Charles L. Grant. Unfortunately, the organization has recently discovered that the term of the *western* director, Robert Silverberg, was the one that expired. Silverberg's post should have been up for renewal, not Tom Purdom's, who was Eastern Director at the time. Silverberg remains in his post.

SFWA officials point out that none of the more than 500 members and officers of the organization caught the error.

SF ARTIST BRIAN LEWIS DIES

British professional Brian Lewis, who did many covers for *New Worlds, Science Fiction Adventures* and *Science Fantasy* in the 1950's and 1960's, died December 4th, 1978. He was buried December 7th. No other details are available.

ALPHA SF NEW SWEDISH MAGAZINE

Alpha Science Fiction is a new Swedish SF magazine to premiere in August of this year. Published by Kindbergs Forlag AB, the magazine will be edited by John-Henri Holmberg, with Per Insulander, John Ågren and K. Kindberg sitting on the editorial board.

Payment for fiction to be translated from English is set at one cent/word, with a minimum payment of $50.00 for stories of 5,000 words and under. The first issue will feature stories by Poul Anderson, Sturgeon, Le Guin and others, plus reviews, nonfiction pieces and editorials.

STAR WARS MONEY BUYS PUBLISHING HOUSE

Meredith Kurtz, wife of Gary Kurtz, producer of *Star Wars*, has bought Celestial Arts Publishing from its present owners. Celestial Arts specializes in trade paperbacks on subjects including self-help and healing, feminist issues, psychology, poetry, etc. Mrs. Kurtz plans no immediate changes in the company, and no mention of publishing SF in the future.

SFWA Report

When I began watching, the typical SF critic was a bright high-school sophomore using the fine-print letter-columns in the back pages of *Amazing* to list and defend his choices from Verne and Wells and Burroughs and Merritt. Now, fifty years later, selection of the best has become a major industry. We have yearly books of the best. We have the Nebulas and the Hugos and the Jupiter Awards and the Campbell Awards. We have new generations of more scholarly critics writing for academic fanzines and turning out textbooks and bibliographies and critical editions.

In a way, all this is wonderful. Ego-lifting for writers trapped so long in the old ghetto and elated now to find university libraries scrambling to collect their working papers. Even more wonderful for professors caught in the publish-or-perish trap and delighted now to get promotion and tenure by studying the likes of Tarzan and Superman instead of searching for something new to say about some well-forgotten sixteenth century poet.

The rub comes when we discover that these academic experts are seldom any better agreed than the high-school letter-writers were. What they produce is sometimes enlightening, but too often trivial, uninformed, unreadably pedantic, or dictated by partisan dogma, and generally tending toward violent disagreement with other prestigious opinion. Even in SFWA, we aren't agreed on how the Nebula winners should be selected, or in fact that we should select any Nebula winners at all.

Fretting over such disagreements, I like to imagine a parallel between science and art—assuming for an instant that science fiction is a sort of art. Both scientist and artist are working to discover or create and share systems or illusions of order that will help us make comfortable responses to a universe of apparently uncaring chaos. The scientist finds or makes an intellectual order; he shares a way of understanding. The artist shapes an aesthetic order; he shares a way of feeling.

At either task, some are clearly "better" than others: they are more successful in communicating systems or visions of order found more valuable by more people. Relative excellence is harder to judge in art than in science, because of a difference in language. The scientist seeks objective truth stated in the universal language of math. Offering more subjective statements, the artist has no universal language. He must use some limited dialect, known only to some limited cultural group—for example, those who have learned the language of Jorge Luis Borges. When linguists compare dialects, they insist that none is better than another, that each is best for the needs of its speakers in their own culture.

All this, I hope, can help explain our multiplicity of "bests." Though critics can be useful, I think they need criticism as much as artists do. I have no quarrel with the Nebulas or the Hugos or other efforts to find and crown the best, because I think achievement should be recognized and rewarded. Yet, except maybe in the case of Shakespeare, I look for no unanimity about the best.

Each inhabiting our different microculture, each speaking our own individual idiolect, we can never fully understand one another. Though we each tend to grow up with a powerful conviction that our own native culture is superior, such ethnocentric attitudes are out of fashion now. One fan's best will always be another's boredom. ■

—Jack Williamson

VERNON STERNBERG DIES

Vernon Sternberg, founder and director of the Southern Illinois University Press, died of a heart attack after shoveling snow February 26th. Among the titles published by SIU Press were *Two Planets* by Kurd Lasswitz and *The World of Fanzines* by Fredric Wertham. The Press plans a memorial publishing program in science fiction in Sternberg's honor.

REPORT FROM THE LIN CARTER FICTION FACTORY

Lin Carter has a novel forthcoming from DAW entitled *Journey to the Underground World* which is the beginning of a new five book series. Zebra Books will do *Tara of the Twilight*, the first of two heroic sexual fantasies. The first book has something for everyone: lesbianism, masturbation, voyeurism, 16 year old heroines, children of all sexes; Carter says the book does not, however, contain an endorsement from John Norman. Carter is editing a series of Fantasies for Zebra to be called "Lin Carter Fantasy Selections." The series will include material he was not able to do at Ballantine, including weird fiction and some SF. Early titles will include a book by Algernon Blackwood; also *Phra the Phoenician*. The series will do books by Bloch, Long, Kuttner, Lumley, Campbell, etc.

Carter will be editing a revived *Weird Tales*, as a twice yearly paperback from Zebra Books. Unpublished manuscripts by David H. Keller, Henry Kuttner, Robert E. Howard, Hannes Bok and others will be in the revived magazine. Carter is busy duplicating the typefaces used in *WT* story titles for the new volumes, to bring a touch of the old days of glory to life again. They will also use old department headings, etc.

SF BOOK CLUB RELEASES

June: *The Book of Morgaine* by C.J. Cherryh, a 3-in-1 omnibus volume published by DAW Books. Club price $4.50. *Brother to Demons, Brother to Gods* by Jack Williamson, published by Bobbs-Merrill. Club Price $2.50. Alternates: *In Memory Yet Green* by Isaac Asimov, published by Doubleday. Club price $8.00. *The Stand* by Stephen King, published by Doubleday. Club price $5.00.

July: *Titan* by John Varley, published by Berkley/Putnam. Club price $3.00. *Leviathan's Deep* by Jayge Carr, published by Doubleday. Club price $2.50. Alternates: *Three Novels of the Future* (*The Time Machine, The Invisible Man, War of the Worlds*) by H.G. Wells, published by Doubleday. Club price: $4.50. *The Palace: An Historical Horror Novel* by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, published by Doubleday. Club price $3.00. *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* by Jack Finney. Club price $3.00.

August: *Best SF of the Year Number Eight*, edited by Terry Carr, published by Del Rey Books. Club price $3.50. *Han Solo at Star's End* by Brian Daley, published by Del Rey Books. Club price $2.50. Alternates: *The Hour of the Dragon, The People of the Black Circle,* and *Red Nails,* all published by Berkley/Putnam. Club prices $5.00 each, or all three for $13.00

September: *Jem* by Frederik Pohl, published by St. Martin's Press. Club price $3.50. *Masters of Everon* by Gordon R. Dickson, published by Ace. Club price $2.50. Alternates: *A Middle-Earth Album* by Joan Wyatt, published by Simon & Schuster. Club Price $11.00. *Alien* by Alan Dean Foster, published by Warner. Club price $3.50. *Painted Devils* by Robert Aickman, published by Scribner's. Club price $3.00.

NASA DEVELOPS COST/ENERGY EFFICIENT BATTERY

Nasa announces the development of REDOX, a reduction oxidation battery. The batteries can be produced for one third the cost of the conventional lead battery, do not deteriorate through use, and have a useful life of 20 to 30 years. They are expected to provide an immediate benefit as electrical storage resources for solar, wind, and other electrical generation systems. Large scale use of the batteries will enable power companies to store thousands of kilowatt hours of energy for use later during periods of maximum power consumption. Power can be stored indefinitely.

MEDIA NOTES

Film Magicke, Inc., has optioned *The Sword of Shannara* for filming . . . Frank Herbert is converting *Dune*, which has sold more than ten million copies since publication in 1965, into a screenplay. Picture rights have been bought by Famous Film Productions with Dino De Laurentis as producer. Herbert will receive $1,000,000 plus a percentage of the film . . . 640 units of the Canadian production of *The Shape of Things to Come* were offered for sale by CFI Investments, Ottawa, Canada. Each unit cost $5000.00 for a total offering of $3,200,000. Ownership included an offer

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from

to participate in future earnings opportunities, and as an added incentive, information that the $5000.00 is tax deductible—but only for Canadians . . . . . . *Ursharack*, a heavily illustrated novel by the brothers Hildebrandt, has reportedly sold to Bantam for $100,000. Because the novel was originally done as a series of storyboards, Gary Kurtz has picked up an option on film rights . . . . . Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson, co-authors of the *Illuminatus* Trilogy, have signed with Michael Liebert, Gunther Weil and Ben Zitron for dramatic rights. The $30,000 option price is based on a final film sale price of $150,000. If done for the stage, it would first be a musical, followed by a movie . . . Allan Dundees, author of *Work Hard and You'll Be Rewarded,* appeared on the Tom Snyder show recently talking about, among other things, the sexual innuendoes of Star Wars and Star Trek .

NEWSNOTES: PEOPLE AND PUBLISHING

Karole Riipa, formerly promotion director at Ace Books, joined Berkley/Jove Books as promotion director of Jove at the beginning of April . . . Pat LoBrutto, SF editor at Doubleday, celebrated the birth of a daughter, Jennifer Rose, on Sunday, March 11th . . . *F&SF* will serialize Robert Silverberg's new novel, *Lord Valentine's Castle,* beginning with the November issue. The serialization will run four issues, with only one section of the novel cut out . . . Heavy Metal Books will publish *Alien: The Illustrated Story,* a comicbook version of the upcoming film, in May. They will also do *The Book of Alien,* a behind-the-scenes account of the production of the film, at the same time. Both titles will receive extensive promotion . . . Ariel Books has moved from Kansas City to 845 Third Avenue, New York NY 10022. Ariel, now distributed by Random House, is seeking a new distributor because of conflicts with the Del Rey Books trade paperback line, which is moving in much the same direction . . . Big O Publishing have taken over distribution of Dragon's Dream Books from A&W. Big O distributes titles including Roger Dean's *Views, The Jewel in the Skull* drawn by Jim Cawthorn, and *21st Century Foss* . . . Margaret Richardson is the new director of advertising, publicity and promotion at Pinnacle Books. She replaces Linda Brown, who left the company in February. Richardson has been publicity director at Pinnacle for the last year . . . Warner Books will launch a trade paperback line of SF with *Meanwhile* by Max Handley, a $5.95 title with 12 interior illustrations. The April title was backed by national print advertising and store displays . . . Veronica Mixon, Pat LoBrutto's assistant at Doubleday, did an article on Octavia Butler for *Essence* . . . Farrar, Straus & Giroux will publish Madeleine L'Engle's trilogy, *A Wrinkle in Time, A Wind in the Door* and *A Swiftly Tilting Planet* in a boxed set with new jackets by the Dillons in the fall . . . Ursula K. Le Guin will have a new children's book, *Lesser Webster,* illustrated by James Brunsman, published this fall by Atheneum . . . Dell will reprint Jack Williamson's *Darker Than You Think* in July. The book was recently optioned for a feature film . . . *Master of Hawks,* the long-awaited fantasy by Linda Bushyager, will appear in July from Dell, who have already contracted for her next book, *The Spellstone of Shaltus* . . . PDA Enterprises has published *The Human Termites* by David H. Keller. Volumes 3 and 4 in the complete library of David H. Keller titles will be *Tales of Cornwall,* which will contain 5 previously unpublished stories, and *Taine of San Francisco,* which will feature 2 previously unpublished stories . . . Barbara Norville, who

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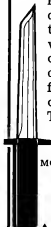
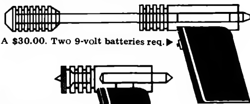
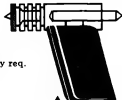




MODEL A $30.00. Two 9-volt batteries req.



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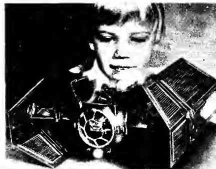


Darth Vader TIE Fighter

Die cast vehicles

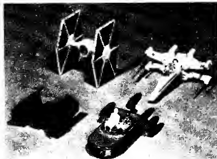
Boba Fett Bounty Hunter

Kenner Products will introduce 25 new *Star Wars* toys in 1979. Kenner's line of *Star Wars* material has consistently topped toy best seller lists, and the manufacturer expects the toy line to have a 25 year lifetime. To meet demand for toys during 1978, Kenner added three additional production lines to make a total of four turning out products.

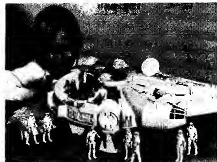
One of the new SW action figures is Boba Fett, a bounty hunter first introduced in the November 1978 TV special. The only way consumers can get one of these until June is to send four proof of purchase seals from *other* SW action figures to: Boba Fett Offer, 1 Industrial Drive, Maple Plain MN 55348.

The total and variety of new *Star Wars* toys is staggering. They include: play environments—SF's answer to doll houses—for the Millenium Falcon, a Droid Factory, a Land of the Jawas, the Creature Cantina (or Bar Scene, as denizens of SF conventions know it); three new droids; four figures from the Cantina sequence; a new Luke Skywalker figure, dressed to pilot his X-Wing fighter; Boba Fett; a vinyl carrying case/display stand for 24 SW action figures; four large action figures: a Stormtrooper, a Jawa, Boba Fett, and Ben "Obi-Wan" Kenobi.

New models joining the diecast line are: a Darth Vader TIE Fighter, the Millenium Fighter, the Imperial Cruiser, and the Y-Wing Fighter. Three larger vehicles being introduced are the Darth Vader TIE Fighter, the Millenium Falcon, and the Imperial Troop Transport. Finally, a radio controlled Jawa Sandcrawler will be added to the line.



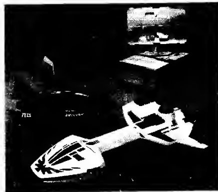
Still more die cast vehicles

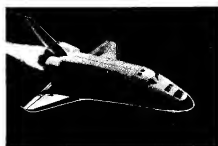


Millerium Falcon play environment

Cantina play environment

Milton-Bradley introduces *Star Bird Avenger* and *Star Bird Intruder.* These hand-held spacecraft have computer controlled sound and light effects. They rise with a whine; at cruising altitude the whine levels off; in descent they make a decelerating sound. Sounds depend on the angle at which the toy is held. When electronically controlled lasers strike reflective surfaces, they activate three loud whoops; the models can also duel with each other. A reflective target is included with each which will deactivate the firing mechanism when hit, or a mirror can be used. Both require a nine volt battery, not included. Approximate retail price of each is $24.00





Revell, Inc., which brought me many happy days of modelling fun more than a few years ago, is introducing a 1/72 scale model of the Space Shuttle "Enterprise" in May. The model, which measures over 19" long, features a lift-off cockpit roof, removable payload, detailed cargo bay interior, opening cargo bay doors, authentic NASA markings and an astronaut figure.

Park Plastics' *Aliens* is what's called a rack toy—it's mounted on a card and the entire package is designed to hang from a metal display, or a rack with many other toys displayed at the same time. I test-played *Zoder,* who has movable arms and fires a spinning disk from his chest. When wound up enough, the disk soared majestically across my living room and foyer, coming to rest in the kitchen. If you fire the toy vertically, it hovers for a few seconds against the ceiling. Park Plastics also makes alien-looking water guns, which will get test-used when the weather turns warmer.

Eon Products has been having great

success with *Cosmic Encounter*, a board game for four players. Each player becomes an alien with a special power, trying to out-wit and out-bluff the others. To quote Harlan Ellison, "Evenings spent with *Cosmic Encounter* are quality time well-spent. It is a teeth-gritting, mind-croggling, marvelously demanding exercise in 'what if' that fulfills my need for periodic doses of power drunkenness." The basic game retails for $10.00, and expansion sets are now available at $4.00 each.

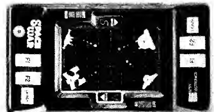
Western Publishing is expanding its Whitman jigsaw puzzle line with *Tolkien Mini Puzzles*, which measure 10" x 13" and feature scenes from the Bakshi movie, which your editor saw and didn't like. There are six different scenes available. *UFO Shape Puzzles* are for younger UFO freaks. The 48 pieces interlock to make a nonrectangular puzzle in the shape of whatever UFO is being pictured.

Monogram Models produces a large number of plastic model kits. New releases include a Visible B-17, which shows the fascinating guts of this aircraft—and which has nothing to do with SF—as well as a model of the Enterprise Space Shuttle. This model is obviously from a slightly variant universe from that of Revell's model, in that it's 20" long, has very slightly different features, and has an extandable workarm.

For some reason, an entire class of ships has almost never been reproduced as models: I refer to steel warships post 1870 and pre 1914. Monogram, which has six models of World War I airplanes, has models of 17 1940's+ warships, 6 pre-Civil War ships, and nothing in between.

Returning to the future, Monogram is introducing a model of the Cylon Base Star, 11" in diameter, to complement the two Battlestar Galactica models they now sell—an 11" Cylon Raider, and an 11" Colonial Viper. Both present models shoot small projectiles. Monogram will also introduce a model of the Battlestar Galactica itself, over 21" long.

Entex Industries introduces *Electronic Space War*, which pits you against 3 "AA" batteries (not included) and several dollars worth of electronic circuits. LED indicators and electronic sound effects keep track of the action, which includes launching battle cruisers, attack fighters, and laser torpedoes. First player to destroy opponent's base ship wins. Digital readout shows the number of enemy fighters destroyed. This looks considerably easier to play than Entex's pocket *Electronic Baseball Game*. Ever been beaten by a machine you hold in your hand?



TSR Hobbies makes *Dungeons and Dragons*, a very popular game with many spin-offs. TSR now introduces an improved basic game set, which consists of a large instruction and rules book, set of five polyhedra dice, and a game scenario, all boxed in full color. Suggested retail price is $9.95.

The latest *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* game scenario is the *Tomb of Horrors*. This game has the standard dungeon setting with deadly traps and fearsome monsters, but the moderator can now show players pictures of the various rooms, monsters, etc., that they will encounter during the game. TSR says this is a first in the fantasy gaming field. Suggested retail price is $5.49.

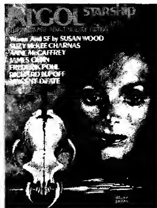
TSR has broadened its hold on the fantasy game field with *Gamma World*. This game places participants on a post-nuclear-war Earth filled with radiation and human, animal and plant mutations. Each player assumes a game "persona" and adventures in this fantasy worls. (At least, we hope it's only fantasy.) *Gamma World* comes with a large, two color map, extensive instruction and rules booklet, specially prepared lists of creatures and treasures, and polyhedra dice. Suggested retail price is $9.95.

Avalon-Hill, who are very big in non-SF wargaming, have introduced an SF game based on and called *Robert Heinlein's Starship Troopers*. Avalon-Hill has gone to great pains to reproduce the feel of the book, as well as the SFnal devices involved, such as heavy weapons beams, retrieval boats, underground arachnid tunneling, etc. Suggested retail price is $10.00.

left Bobbs-Merrill when the publishing of fiction was eliminated, has established Barbara Norville Books, in association with Richard Gallen. The firm will create and package 50 suspense novels per year . . . T.H. White's *The Book of Merlyn* has 900,000 copies in print . . . Frank Herbert's *The Dosadi Experiment* has 513,000 copies in print after another trip to the presses . . . *In Memory Yet Green* by Isaac Asimov has 17,000 copies in print after going back to press . . . Howard Koch, coauthor with Orson Welles of "The War of the Worlds" radio script will have his memoirs published by HBJ in July. *As Time Goes By: Memoirs of a Writer* will cost $11.00 . . . Page Cuddy, formerly VP and Asst. Publisher at Simon & Schuster, has joined Avon Books as senior editor. Before S&S she was editor-in-chief at Berkley . . . Anne McCaffrey will tour the US beginning the end of April, culminating at the American Booksellers Association convention in Los Angeles at the end of May. She will hit 18 cities before the end of the tour or total collapse, whichever happens sooner . . . Davis Publications has suspended publication of Dale Books, which offered extraordinary discounts to booksellers but were not returnable. Forty-four unpublished manuscripts, including some SF, will be auctioned

by Writers House Agency in New York . . . The article "Power Play" by Frederik Pohl in a recent *Omni* is the basis for a chapter in a nonfiction book about the future. Pohl says he will finish the book "real soon now . . ." . . . Hal Clement has signed a contract with Ace Books for a new novel, tentatively titled *The Nitrogen Fix*. Clement declined to specify whether or not it will be an SF Drug Novel . . . Clement is doing an article on the Jupiter fly-by for *Omni* . . . Berkley has bought a package of books by John Wyndham including an unpublished novel, *Web*, written shortly before his death. Other titles include *The Secret People*, *The Outward Urge*, *Stowaway to Mars*, *Chocky*, and some short story collections. The books will start appearing early in 1980 . . . *Future* magazine changed its title to *Future Life* because the JayCees already publish a magazine called *Future*, and they objected to the confusion in titles . . . Emily Ferman, daughter of *F&SF* publisher Ed Ferman, won second prize in a short story contest sponsored by her school in Connecticut. . . . Fred Pohl's new novel, *Jem*, will appear from St. Martin's Press in April. The book has already sold to Bantam, the SF Book Club, and is a Literary Guild alternate selection . . . Frank Herbert and William Ransom will make a national publicity tour for *The Jesus Incident*, a Berkley/Putnam book in May . . . Stephen Donaldson's *Illearth War* now has 328,000 copies in print . . . Susan Palermo, New York fan, will play bass with the punk rock band *Cheap Perfume*, performing March 5th at CBGB's, a club at 315 Bowery, New York City . . . KiwiCon, the first national SF convention in many years, will be held Labor Day weekend in Auckland, New Zealand. For information, write: *Noumenon*, Brian Thurogood, Wilma Rd., Ostend, Waiheke Island, Hauraki Gulf, New Zealand . . . CBS is reportedly looking for buyers for its Popular Library imprint, to ward off FTC charges that acquisition of Fawcett paperback and magazine publishing divisions gives it too large a share of the publishing industry . . . *Whispers Two*, edited by Stuart David Schiff, will be released by Doubleday in August . . . If you have ordered merchandise from T-K Graphics and received neither merchandise nor a refund, we would like to hear from you. Enclose all pertinent information, including copies of cancelled checks, etc. . . Berkley Books will do three original paperback anthologies per year. *The Science Fiction Book* will be co-edited by Victoria Schochet and John Silbersack . . . The first Progress Report of the 1980 World SF Convention, Noreascon Two, is in the mails or already delivered. The convention currently has 1479 members, of whom 389 are supporting, the rest attending memberships. Current membership rates are $8 for supporting membership, $20 for attending. Write: Noreascon 2, P.O. Box 46, MIT Branch P.O., Cambridge MA 02139 . . . Denver, Los Angeles and Seattle are bidding for the 1981 World SF Convention . . . *Mikal's Songbird*, by Orson Scott Card, a shorter version of which is up for a Nebula, has been bought by Dell . . . Houghton Mifflin will publish *The Inklings: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams and their friends* in March. The 320 page book will cost $10.95 and include 27 photos . . . Andrew Porter is looking for people interested in helping him at his booth at the American Booksellers Association convention in Los Angeles over Memorial Day Weekend in Los Angeles. Write him at P.O.

PROFITMAKER



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Jul. 13-15. DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING 2. La Guardia Sheraton, Queens, NY. GoH: Marion Zimmer Bradley. Registration: $10 to 7/1, then $15. Write: Armida Council, P.O. Box 355, Brooklyn NY 11219.

Jul. 20-22. CONEBULUS III. Thruway Hilton, Syracuse NY. Registration: $6 to 7/1, then $10. Write: Conebulus 3 c/o Carol Gobeyn, 619 Stolp Ave., Syracuse NY 13207.

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Sep. 29-Oct. 1. MOSCON 1. Best Western University Inn, Moscow ID. GoH: Verna Smith Trestrail, Alex Schomburg. Fan GoH: Jessica Salmonson. Registration: $6 to 9/3, then $10. Write: Beth Finkbiner, P.O. Box 9141, Moscow ID 83843.

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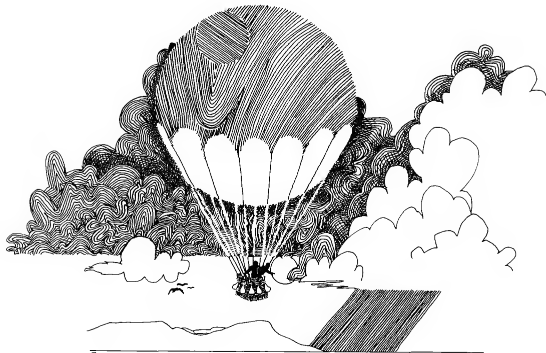

SANDRA MIESEL

"Randall Garrett has an incredible ability to make a story about anything," says Gordon R. Dickson. "You could ask him to write about a swashbuckling bookkeeper and he'd do it." Although *Too Many Magicians* boasts no actuarial swashbucklers, it is a showcase for Garrett's storytelling virtuosity. This agreeable blend of classic mystery, cold war suspense, alternate history, and rationalized magic was nominated for the Hugo Award in 1967.

Garrett began his career in 1952 writing action-adventure tales for the science fiction magazines. "Robert Randall," his pseudonymous collaboration with Robert Silverberg, was voted Most Promising New Author at the World SF Convention in 1956. This was followed by another collaboration with Laurence M. Janifer as "Mark Phillips." Their Queen's Own Secret Police series involved espionage, psionics, and a madwoman convinced she is Queen Elizabeth I. It was but an additional step to mix spies, mystery, alternate history and magic for the Lord Darcy series, his most popular works. These stories introduce the concept of forensic magic, Garrett's special contribution to the repertoire of SF.

All the adventures of tall, blond Lord Darcy and his associate short, stubby Master Sean O Lochlainn are entertaining murder mysteries lightened with puns, wordplays, and comic relief. Working together, the Chief Investigator and Chief Forensic Sorcerer for the Duchy of Normandy solve perplexing cases and foil enemy agents in "The Eyes Have It" (a psychopathic killer and the message imprinted on the victim's eyes), "A Case of Identity" (murder by the use of doubles and a curse that proves to be an enemy hoax), "The Muddle of the Woad" (human sacrifice by a subversive neo-pagan cult), "A Stretch of the Imagination" (finding hidden documents by retracing the deceased's last steps), "Sixteen Keys" (premature aging in an enchanted room), and "The Ipcress Phial" (a stolen secret weapon and an infatuation spell).

Too Many Magicians is the most ambitious of the lot because it presents the most elaborate puzzle—murder in a locked hotel room at a magicians' convention. Was it committed by cunning or black magic? (The same

This article originally appeared in slightly different form as the introduction to *Too Many Magicians*, published by G.K. Hall.
Copyright © 1978 by Sandra Miesel.

question arises in John Dickson Carr's locked room mystery *The Burning Court.* At first the crime seems to involve witchcraft, then is proven to have natural causes, and finally is revealed as a feat of sorcery after all.) Garrett complicates his plot with spies, professional jealousies, scandal, extortion, and romance.

To a slight extent Lord Darcy and Master Sean are parodies of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson as indicated by Darcy's uncanny intuitive talent and mock-serious references to matters like "the curious habits of the one-armed tinker at the Michaelmas Fair" and "the odd affair of Lady Overleigh's solid gold chamber pot." (Chapter 4) Even more obviously Garrett pokes fun at Rex Stout's detective Nero Wolfe in the person of Lord Darcy's cousin, the fat, reclusive, plant-loving Marquis de London. (Wolfe has been thought by some to be Holmes' illegitimate son.) Likewise, de London's wisecracking, flirtatious assistant Lord Bontriomphe is Wolfe's legman Archie Goodwin and Chief Master-at-Arms Henley Grayme is Wolfe's antagonist Lt. Kramer. The murder victim, Sir James Zwinge (called "Zed"), is an older and staider James Bond and Sir Lyon Gandolphus Gray, head of the Sorcerers' Guild looks suspiciously like wizard Gandalf the Gray from *The Lord of the Rings* with a bow to L(yon) Sprague de Camp. Sir Thomas Leseaux, theorist of magic, is SF writer Thomas Waters, author of *The Probability Pad* and Sir Edward Elmer, Sir Lyon's predecessor as Guildmaster, is E.E. Smith, creator of the Skylark and Lensman SF series.

It appears that many, perhaps all, the characters in *Too Many Magicians* are literary figures in disguise. The book is a web of private jokes and allusions. (This also seems to be true of the rest of the Lord Darcy series. For instance, "The Ipcress Phial" puns the title of Len Deighton's suspense novel and has characters out of the television series *Sarge* and the comic song "Olga Petrovska the Beautiful Spy.") Garrett's friends have returned the favor on occasion. *The Unicorn Girl* by Michael Kurland features a sequence in Lord Darcy's universe, Waters' *Probability Pad* has Holmes and Watson refer to a "Bishop Garrett," and *The Byworlder* by Poul Anderson includes a minor character named Randall Hightower.

Too Many Magicians gains additional interest by occurring in an alternate universe, a device not unknown in the conventional mystery field (John Dickson Carr's *Fire, Burn* and Peter Dickinson's *King and Joker*). As practiced in SF, the perennially popular alternate history genre assumes that time branches at each historical nexus point and extrapolates the consequences of altering significant events. For instance, Ward Moore answers the question "What if the South had won the Civil War?" with *Bring the Jubilee.* The results can be humorous (L. Sprague de Camp's "Wheels of If") or romantic (Poul Anderson's tales of the Old Phoenix Inn such as *A Midsummer's Tempest*), adventurous (A. Bertram Chandler's Rim stories and H. Beam Piper's Paratime series), or dramatic (Philip K. Dick's *Man in the High Castle*). In these and most examples of the genre, persons transfer from one historical continuum to another but the characters in *Too Many Magicians* stay on one timeline throughout, entirely unaware of other possibilities. Garrett's alternate version of 1966 is simply treated like any other alien environment in SF.

Garrett makes Richard the Lionhearted the pivotal figure in Western history. He postulates that Richard did not die at the seige of Châluz in 1199, ruled wisely afterwards, and bequeathed the Anglo-French Empire intact to his nephew Arthur of Brittany rather than to his brother John Lackland. "Good King Arthur" and his descendants maintained their vast French holdings, successfully exploited the Laws of Magic discovered around 1300, and so thoroughly confounded the Holy Roman Emperors that the Slavs were spared the *Drang nach Osten* and flourished. Handsome, golden-haired Plantagenets are still reigning over the West's most powerful nation in the 1960's. The present monarch is John IV, "by the Grace of God, King of England, Ireland, Scotland, and France; Emperor of the Romans and Germans; Premier Chief of the Moqtessumid Clan, Son of the Sun; Count of Anjou and Maine; . . . Lord and Protector of the Western Continents of New England and New France; Defender of the Faith." ("The Ipcress Phial") The only threat to his serene realm comes from the expansionist totalitarian Kingdom of Poland's spies, saboteurs, and plots.

Garrett's scenario appeals to those who cherish the traditional glamorous image of Coeur de Lion and a romanticized view of the Plantagenet dynasty. The prevalence of these attitudes made the Lord Darcy stories exceptionally popular with the readers of *Analog,* the magazine in which they first appeared. Unfortunately, history à la Thomas Costain will not bear close examination.

First of all, Richard was scarcely the paragon of chivalric perfection storybooks and Robin Hood ballads would have us believe. Contrary to cherished stereotype, Richard was a worthless king—cruel, capricious, callous. He despised England, finding it merely a convenient source of revenue for foreign projects. It is difficult to accept a radical improvement in his character after 1199 since earlier hardships on crusade and in prison had matured him only slightly. Garrett has, in effect, "printed the legend."

Although Arthur of Brittany was more vacuous than vicious, nothing known of him suggests he would have become an admirable ruler had he lived longer. Arthur's prospective father-in-law, wily King Philip Augustus of France, would have despoiled him of the Plantagenets' French lands as easily as he did King John in our world. (Garrett's purpose would have been better achieved by ending Philip's life prematurely rather than by prolonging Richard's.)

Garrett distorts medieval politics as much as he does personalities. He calculates the international repercussions of his premises either wrongly (Germany and Spain) or not at all (Sicily). More significantly, he annuls the laws of history and genetics. The longest-lived European royal house, the French Capetians lasted four centuries. No recorded empire persisted in undisturbed splendor for 800 years. For a single dynasty to rule that long and breed true to type besides strains all credibility. Queen Elizabeth II and thousands of other direct descendants of the Plantagenets now living bear no particular resemblance to their medieval ancestors. Yet Garrett's twentieth century Duke of Cumberland "though only remotely related to the Royal Family, had the typically Plantagenet vigor, handsomeness, and longevity." Such statements cannot be taken seriously.

The Anglo-French Empire shows no signs of having endured any of the social, political, intellectual, or religious upheavals that hook the past eight centuries of our history. Somehow there was no economic dislocation after the discovery of the New World nor from urbanization and development. Neither has there been an Anglican schism or a Reformation. Any medieval kings as powerful as Garrett's Plantagenets would have inevitably collided with the medieval papacy. (The real Plantagenets did so on occasion.) The religious unity of medieval Christendom would have been shattered at some point no matter who was ruling where because the Reformation was more than a clash of personalities. Contrary to what Old Catholic Garrett asserts, problems were unavoidable whether or not Rome ever claimed infallibility.

Garrett's idealism about medieval times makes one wonder if perhaps he did not read John Walsh's *Thirteenth, Greatest of Centuries* at too impressionable an age. Or else, being Lord Randall of Hightower in the Society for Creative Anachronism,* he created an SCA

* The Society for Creative Anachronism is a national organization dedicated to studying

member's wish-fulfillment world.

But if one can suspend disbelief in Garrett's historical assumptions, one can enjoy the neatness with which he sketches his conclusions. In addition to describing the nexus explicitly, he inserts allusions to past persons and events which did not exist in our world, switches royal residences, changes the specifications of weapons and the denominations of coins, spells some names in hybrid Anglo-French form, and modifies some social customs. The Church as the official regulatory agency for magic is a reasonable outgrowth of her legal perogatives in the Middle Ages. Heraldry is appropriately prominent, giving the author an excuse to demonstrate the expertise he once exercised in the SCA College of Heralds. Medieval concepts like sacred kingship and the hierarchical structure of society still exist—mellowed to our Victorian standards—in Garrett's version of the twentieth century. The touch most reminiscent of the Middle Ages is the pity shown the unmasked murderer: he is treated as a sinner rather than a monster. The medieval flavor of the Lord Darcy stories was intensified far beyond the actual content of the text by John Schoenherr's superb illustrations which accompanied most of their magazine appearances.

Given the lightness of these stories, one wonders if any of this was really intended to be taken seriously. Perhaps the fanciful historical framework is merely an elaborate joke. Perhaps Garrett was simply having fun with the prejudices of his audience and of his editor, John W. Campbell, Jr.

In the last analysis, Garrett's setting is far less important than the cleverly rationalized magic he deploys in it. Garrett's alternate universe where magic works places his Lord Darcy stories in the excellent company of L. Sprague de Camp's and Fletcher Pratt's Harold Shea stories, Robert A. Heinlein's "Magic, Incorporated," Poul Anderson's *Three Hearts and Three Lions* and *Operation Chaos,* Avram Davidson's *Phoenix and the Mirror,* Gordon R. Dickson's *Dragon and the George,* Fletcher Pratt's *Blue Star,* and Andre Norton's *Witch World* series.

All these stories present magic as an orderly array of knowledge, a rational set of techniques, entirely comparable in effectiveness to natural science as we know it. Garrett organizes the operational and moral principles of the Art with true scholastic precision and places more emphasis than usual on the ethics of magic. Sin depends on the content and purpose of acts, therefore he defines black magic as a "matter of symbolism and intent." Thus, *Too Many Magicians* handles this major plot element as a self-corroding vice without wallowing in lurid occult horrors..

Not only is magic a serious calling, it is a commonplace part of everyday life, something taken for granted as casually as electricity is in ours. Spells solve crimes and catch spies as readily as they heal injuries, preserve food, or operate children's toys. The ingenuity and plausibility of these spells is one of the most attractive features of the Lord Darcy stories.

However, one may question whether the medieval discovery of magic could have completely forestalled the development of science as Garrett's setting requires. (His St. Hilary Robert was formulating the Laws of Magic when our Roger Bacon was laying the foundations of modern science.) By the time of the postulated magical breakthrough, the Middle Ages already possessed all the intellectual raw materials from which science would eventually be built. Surely, science might have lingered on through the centuries as an esoteric discipline the way astrology, witchcraft, and other occult practices have in our world. (Purely empirical technology, including potboiling chemistry exists in the Anglo-French Empire but how did this suffice to produce their railway trains?) Would not magicians show some curiosity about science as scientists do about psi powers and folk medicine? A folk medicine survival of science—the curative powers of mold—is dismissed as a dangerous superstition in one story. There is nothing in the fabric of Garrett's continuum to forbid the functioning of scientific laws as is the case in *The Incomplete Enchanter* by L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt.

Yet when Garrett's premises are accepted, his magicians make convincing counterparts to our scientists. Garrett was originally trained as a chemist so his descriptions of professional aspirations and rivalries, the delight in shoptalk, the gulf between theoreticians and working practitioners are drawn from life. Master Sean and Sir James trying to publish the same discovery at the beginning of *Too Many Magicians* face a predicament common in scientific work. Garrett's Triennial Sorcerers' Convention resembles a national meeting of the American Chemical Society or other scientific organization. (By contrast, L. Sprague de Camp turns a gathering of sorcerers into a parody of the World Science Fiction Convention in *The Goblin Tower.*)

In conclusion, the believability of Garrett's sorcerers and their spells and the novelty of the mysteries they encounter more than compensates for the deficiencies of his historical thinking and makes *Too Many Magicians* a brisk, amusing hybrid of science fiction and mystery. ■

—Sandra Miesel

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and reliving the Middle Ages as the members "wish they had been."

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SKETCHES: VINCENT DIFATE

THE DARK SIDE OF TOMORROW: ANOTHER LOOK AT SURREALISM IN SCIENCE FICTION ART

Once again I reach a juncture in the evolution of "Sketches." I began here, several years ago, to set down a history of science fiction art, but put that aside to deal with matters which were not quite so "esoteric." I thought I might perhaps tell the story of how cover paintings evolve, and in so doing, begin to speak with my own voice. Yet, quite recently, a young colleague of mine told me that my comments on composition are too incomprehensible for the average reader. I trust that *Starship*'s readers are far from average, yet I must concede that composition is a most complex part of picture making. The process of creating an illustrative work is quite involved and might have little meaning for those of you who have no special interest in art. Still, I believe something of this sort *must* be done and it must be done here, in "Sketches." I realize that my colleague's criticism was well intentioned and I will make an effort to keep this column within the grasp of those of you who have faithfully stuck by me during this long and difficult period of development.

But the voice I hear when I re-read these columns is still not quite my own. I've told you nothing of the pain or the hardships of the artist's life, nor have I told you of the great joy and exhilaration one feels when his art is appreciated or when he makes that enormous quantum leap in his personal evolution and finally manages to set down in paint the image which has so long lingered in his mind, just beyond his reach. There is pain and occasional joy and one thing more, fear. I suspect all creative people are a bit intimidated by the certain knowledge that even when we're "up" the high must someday end. When asked what it's like to work at my profession I often refer to the man who operates a drill press. No matter how he feels about his state or the progress of his life, he stands at the press and stamps out one hole much like another, all day long. But those of us who create things, who write or paint or in another way reach inside ourselves to bring a small part of our personal vision into plain view for others to see and scrutinize and judge: we give the world something of ourselves which is not easy to explain, or to give. No doubt our friend with the drill press has his problems too, for life is not such a simple thing after all, but it's not quite the same.

Look at the life's work of any writer, artist, poet, actor; even the least discriminating of us will be able to acknowledge a preference for some aspect of that work over another. Often the preferences are judgments based wholly on subjective criteria. I like red more than blue, thus I prefer the red painting over the blue one. Yet, even the best of us will show some variation in consistency in our lifetimes, especially if there has been artistic growth. What I'm trying to say, I suppose, is that all of us fail at one time or another. Certainly we do not set out deliberately to do so, but extenuating circumstances can bend the heartiest of us. And to make matters worse, our own failures always seem so much worse than those of others.

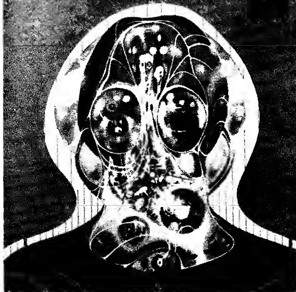
Each painting for me is an all-consuming effort to maintain my self-esteem; each failure, like a ghost, determined to haunt me forever. And when I ask myself why I subject myself to it all, I reach the same unalterable conclusion that I'm simply incompetent to do anything else.

And so it was with an acknowledged degree of incompetence, or if I can spare myself the harshness of that truth, inexperience, that I set out to write "Sketches." I do not pretend to be a writer—although, if I could be anything other than what I am, a writer is what I would most want to be—yet I find myself in this position and my lack of skill is very much in evidence. I tried very hard to tell you what I could, within the limitations of this column, about composition and now I find myself straining at the leash to proceed and am powerless to do so. The next step is to talk about color, but without the facility of internal color reproduction, I'm afraid too many of the basic concepts would be beyond my skill to reasonably explain. Andy Porter tells me that there is a possibility, however slight, that we may be able to make some provisions for the limited usage of internal color, but until that time, let's pretend I never brought the matter up in the first place.

From now on there will be no game plan for "Sketches." It will be an open-ended, free-wheeling endeavor with but one common thread holding it together; it will be about *images in SF* and all that that phrase encompasses and implies.

So, for the time being, let's get back to our history . . .

I was born at a most formative point in the history of our civilization, just three months after the end of the Second World War. The war was brought to its conclusion with the detonation of two nuclear devices, and for all intents and purposes, this event marked the beginning of the Atomic Age. It was a period of great anxiety and the ghost of that fear still lingers with us into the present. Two years later, in 1947, a businessman named Kenneth Arnold saw and described nine disc-shaped objects which seemed to be moving in formation in the skies over Mt. Rainier, Washington, and though men have seen such objects for centuries, the Arnold sighting was to be the first in a modern cycle of UFO reports which continues to this day. Add to that the popular use of television, the wide scale application of automation and the computer, the Cold War, the nuclear arms race and the "race for space," and you have the makings of a most trying and anxious period in human development. The post-war



The mannequin form still endures as a major element in Powers' approach to SF illustration, as demonstrated by this cover painting for Simak's *All Flesh Is Grass.*

epoch was a time filled with uncertainty about the virtues of scientific and technological growth. It was a time of great concern about our ability to control the unknown forces which had suddenly sprung up about us.

For the first time in its brief but eventful history, science fiction illustration moved to the forefront of a new order of thinking about the course of progress. Certainly authors as far back as Wells had expressed a cynicism about the coming scientific age, as had they also centuries before in the days of Hieronymus Bosch, yet the time when SF writers would join together in an organized crusade to alert the world to the potential dangers of the science-dominated future, was still more than two decades off. In the mainstream of world culture, surrealism was no longer a fresh idea and artists by the early 1950's were eagerly exploring the new frontiers of abstract art. But to the field of science fiction illustration, save for the early efforts of Hannes Bok and Virgil Finlay during the thirties and forties, the application of surreal images to futural picture-making was a veritable revolution. For a time at least, surrealism was a minor marketing phenomenon as well.

This change in packaging strategy began slowly in the paperback field, which, by the mid-50's, had become a major staple of the American consumer. The artist leading the way for this new and uneasy melding of images and ideas was Richard Powers, whom we have discussed at some length before [ALGOL No. 29 and No. 30]. To apply common aesthetic values to his work is of little relevance. It is unsettling, iconoclastic, flamboyant, often irreverent and, on rare occasions, even decorative. Like Frank R. Paul, who leads the vanguard of the "gadget" mentality, Powers' work is more sustenance for the brain, rather than for the eye. He is an artist in the truest sense for his pioneering efforts in a commercial market, which is ordinarily bound by highly figurative aesthetic values.

Many artists were to pick up on Powers' lead and carry the surrealist approach into new and exciting directions. Paul Lehr was one illustrator who managed to duplicate the mood qualities of surrealism on a more decorative and representational level. Born in 1930 and raised in Armonk, New York, Lehr graduated from Wittenberg University and later attended Pratt Institute where he studied under the revered American artist and illustrator, Stanley Meltzoff. Meltzoff, while not widely known as a science fiction artist, created an early and profound influence on the genre with his remarkable cover paintings for Signet's series of books by Robert A. Heinlein; most notably, *The Puppet Masters, The Green Hills of Earth, Tomorrow, The Stars,* and *Revolt in 2100.* Meltzoff was Lehr's first recognizable influence and that influence can be clearly seen in his covers for *The Door Into Summer* (also by Heinlein), *The Deep Range* (Arthur C. Clarke) and *No Place on Earth* (Louis Charbonneau). By the early '60's, however, Lehr was demonstrating a growing independence

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Alien Monsters Invade The World!

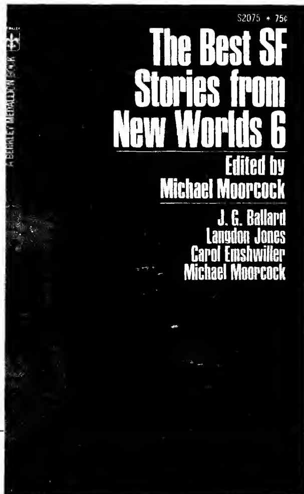
Stanley Meltzoff's cover paintings for *The Puppet Masters* and other Heinlein works are now classics of SF art. They were a formative influence in the development of both John Schoenherr and Paul Lehr.

from Meltzoff's lead. The most remarkable characteristic of Lehr's new direction was the feeling of otherworldliness conveyed by the use of highly saturated backgrounds with accents of analogous hues to create a unified color scheme. The human mind is quite responsive to color because of associations with objects and conditions which exist in nature. Yellow, generally thought to be a warm and cheerful color, is associated with the sun and with playful summertime activities, whereas blue, the color of water, sky, or of shadows on the snow, is regarded as cool in nature and is often associated with night. Violet is thought to be mysterious; red to be exciting and violent in character. By regulating the relationships of color identity, brightness and degrees of lightness or darkness, the artist can create a broad range of moods. Lehr is a master at this sort of color manipulation and fills his eerie, atmospheric landscapes with a feeling of cosmic wonder. Add to this Lehr's unique vocabulary of futural images, the shadow figures, the domes and spires and flowing ramps, and you have the makings of a most unique and personal vision. His uniquely paranoid attitude toward technology is what gives his work its distinctive surrealistic flavor. Often his machines are endowed with everwatchful eyes, gnashing insectile mandibles, or are depicted grinding cities into dust.

Another artist greatly influenced by both Powers and Meltzoff, is John Schoenherr, who also attended Pratt at the same time as Paul Lehr. Though Schoenherr has turned his attention in recent years to the field of wildlife painting, he was, for a period of almost a decade, a major contributor and innovative force in SF art. His colors, or more precisely, his color values, are at the heart of what makes his work so highly appealing. Although his colors are more earthbound than either Lehr's or Powers', he has a tendency to keep within the middle value range and to contrast large, dramatically back-lighted forms against vague and mysterious twilight backgrounds. Born in 1935, Schoenherr spent his youth in New York City and studied at the Art Students League, the Frank Reilly School and at Pratt Institute before beginning his career in the late 1950's. He won the Hugo award in 1965 for best professional artist and in 1967, for all practical purposes, ceased his activities in the science fiction field on any regular basis. His most notable images, of course, are his aliens and even his machines and spaceships bear a vague resemblance to otters, whales and other living forms [Interview, ALGOL No. 32].

The surrealist influence was popping up everywhere and by the mid-60's had become a regular fixture in the works of Jack Gaughan, George Ziel, Brian Lewis, Eddie Jones and even in the works of such highly figurative artists as Ed Emshwiller, Kelly Freas, Josh Kirby, John Richards and Stanley Pitt. By the latter part of the decade, the broad academic acceptance of SF realized by the formation of courses and clubs on college campuses throughout the United States, was causing publishers to take notice and to speculate on the size of the genre's growing audience. Until then, most SF was targeted for a late-adolescent, predominantly male audience. But now that the academics had shown some serious critical interest in the genre, it was time to reassess packaging strategies. Also at that time, perhaps as a result of this new interest, many authors began to write stories which stressed style over content. Often these stories were frank and irreverent and very much in contrast with accepted moral standards. As a result of an unusually lucid marketing brainstorm, this new sub-division of SF was given the label of "New Wave" and since it shared certain common attitudes with the surrealist art movement of some decades earlier, its new image would use

Paul Lehr's vision of the machine in man's future is a most unnerving one. This, combined with his skillful use of color to convey mood and his visual vocabulary, make his work a landmark in SF/surrealistic art.



Despite the common influences, for nearly a decade Schoenherr produced his own unique brand of SF art, with a subtle but substantial surrealistic flavor. Middle value backgrounds and strong, dramatic back-lighting were main factors in its appeal.

Don Ivan Punchatz both angered and delighted SF readers with his unusual cover treatments for Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy and other important SF works of the late 1960's. His approach was largely culled from the works of Dali, Magritte, and other figurative surrealists.

the small but growing trend toward surrealism which had slowly infiltrated the field of illustration. It was a marriage made in heaven, if not at the cash register, for the result was a rather swift commercial failure. By the first few years of the 1970's, SF was thrust into a minor recession and some publishers suspended their SF lines entirely. Despite its ultimate failure to make money, both "New Wave" literature and the art which packaged it, were quite an artistic success. During the brief period of surrealist dominated SF art, enormous expansion was made on the basic foundations established by Powers, Lehr and the others. Some artists, seeking to stay within the boundaries of figurative art, derived their ideas from the European surrealists such as Dali, Magritte, Delvaux and Man Ray.

One of the first of the newer artists to attract attention was Don Ivan Punchatz, a Texas based artist who today is considered to be one of this country's major graphic illustrators. His SF works are most directly extrapolated from the paintings of the late Rene Magritte and stirred considerable comment, both favorable and otherwise, during the late 1960's when they first appeared. Most notable of these were the covers for Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy for Avon Books and Ellison's *Dangerous Visions* for Berkley. His images, though at the time primitive in feeling, were executed with great sophistication and elegance. His palette, most often bone-chillingly cool, generates the same penumbral mood which characterizes the works of all of the other SF/surrealist artists we've thus far discussed. What Punchatz achieved during his brief tenure in the SF field, was to elevate the level of cover art to that of the literature contained within. For a fleeting moment, the garish, cluttered covers which long dominated the science fiction racks, gave way to a more sophisticated vision of the genre. And although that vision proved ultimately to be the kiss of death, it is a kiss that will be long remembered.

In times to come we will continue with our brief survey of SF/surrealistic art and will take in the works of Robert Foster, Alan Magee, Gervasio Gallardo, Gene Szafran, Nick Aristovulous, Stanislaw Fernandes and others. Or then again, Maybe Not . . . ■

—Vincent DiFate

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Frederik POHL

POHLEMIC: GOSH!

What I am writing at this particular time (when I am not writing columns for Andy Porter) is a new novel called *Beyond the Blue*. I have a thrifty soul, or an ecologically conscientious one, and so when I make carbon copies of a work in progress the carbons go onto the backs of used sheets of paper. Yesterday, as I was preparing to write Page 168 of the new one, I noticed a coincidence. The carbon sheet, from quite a different (and already published) novel, was also Page 168.

That's a concidence. It isn't a very interesting one. Uninteresting coincidences with numbers happen all the time. But there is a class of coincidental numbers which I call "gosh" numbers which are more interesting, because sometimes they look as though they are not coincidences but part of some larger pattern . . . so that when you perceive that the same number turns out to measure two quite different quantities, you say "Gosh." And since gosh numbers play a part in *Beyond the Blue*, I have been spending some time with them.

Here are a handful of gosh numbers, to give you some examples:

−40°
0.5°
137
2025
10^{39}
10^{60}

If you want to take a second or two to figure out why any of these numbers are interesting, go ahead. . . . Okay? Well, here's what they are. −40° is the temperature which is the same in both the Fahrenheit and Celsius scales. Gosh. Not a very impressed gosh, maybe, because that's fairly trivial; if you have two different scales measuring the same thing, it is fairly likely that at some point they will coincide. 0.5° is more interesting. That is the angular diameter of both the Sun and the Moon as seen from Earth. Gosh! How strange that they should be the same—but how convenient; because otherwise we would miss having eclipses. (Martin Gardner tells me that one of his correspondents says this coincidence is a proof for the existence of God.) 137 is Eddington's fine structure constant, which is worth a lot of goshes, because it seems to have a lot to do with different aspects of nuclear physics. (It is also written as its reciprocal, 1/137, and Arthur Clarke points out that if you express the fraction as a decimal it comes out as a recurring palindrome, meaning that it reads the same backward and forward, indefinitely. Gosh!) As for 2025 . . . well, if you square each of the integers, from one to nine, and then add up the squares, the total is 2025. But also if you add the same integers, and then cube their sum, you get the same 2025. Gosh! That one looks as though it ought to *mean* something. But what? That's a true gosh number, because if you are a number theorist it makes you want to try to find some *reason* for the coincidence. And a lot of number theorists have—tried, I mean; if there is a reason, no one has yet found it. 10^{60} measures how big a star can be. Actually it has to do with the number of particles in a star, which is why it is called the stellar baryon number. Why should all stars have to be the same mass? But they are, within an order of magnitude or so, anyway. Smaller, they don't radiate. Larger, they blow up. Gosh.

That's the beauty of gosh numbers. Sometimes they do mean something, as 137 and 10^{60} appear to. Sometimes they probably, or even certainly, don't. And the last number on the list, 10^{39}, may (or may not!) mean an awful lot.

In fact, that particular number is the very core of the entire cosmological theory of Nobel laureate P.A.M. Dirac, which may be as revolutionary and consequential as relativity.

Or, on the other hand, may not.

Dirac is the man who predicted the existence of the positron, and of anti-particles in general. That's what he got his Nobel for in 1933, and that work remains perfectly solid today. Among other things, it led directly to the invention of the positronic robot, and thus of Isaac Asimov.

In the course of his nuclear researches, Dirac became aware that the electromagnetic force acting within an atom was a lot stronger than the gravitational force—10^{39} times as strong, in fact. Turning his eyes to larger subjects, he began to think of the age of the universe. You could calculate that from Hubble's Constant—that is, you could backtrack the galaxies as they exploded away from each other and deduce a time when they had all started from the same point. The best guess at that time was that the universe might be eight or ten billion years old, but a "year," after all, is a pretty parochial unit of time, and Dirac looked for a universal one. He decided to count in terms of multiples of the length of time it took light to travel the radius of an electron. How many of those units had elapsed since the Big Bang?

Why, about 10^{39}. (Gosh.)

With that coincidence in mind, Dirac looked around for others and found quite a few that clustered around 10^{39}—or 10^{78}, which is its square—and from them he constructed his "Large Numbers Hypothesis." When you find that many coincidences, said Dirac, the coincidence can't be a coincidence. There has to be some *reason* why all those numbers are the same.

What could that reason be? No idea, he said. Lacking any causal notion, he could not call what he had in mind a theory, but only a hypothesis. But it had certain consequences. Even without a theory, you could look to see if those consequences were happening. And if they were, then you could start worrying about an explanatory theory.

Do you see the implications to the hypothesis that the same number can express both the age of the universe and

the force of gravity?

That's right. If one goes up, the other has to go up too. If the universe gets older, the force of gravity must get weaker, at least relative to electromagnetism.

That's a pretty revolutionary thought—or, anyway, it was when Paul Dirac first proposed it, decades ago. The next question was, if this were happening, how could you observe it?

There was some thought at the time that maybe it had already been observed. Why did the Earth's crust seem to move about over geological time, continents migrating and bashing into each other? Dirac's hypothesis might explain that. If gravity was getting weaker on the Earth, then the planet should be slowly expanding. If the Earth expanded, it would slowly crack its hard, brittle crust. Very likely pieces of it would wander about in the process.

Well ... since then the theory of plate tectonics has come along. It explains crustal movements very well without the necessity of assuming that our planet is swelling like a balloon. Also, the estimates of the other Large Numbers keep getting revised and, all in all, it had been at least ten years since I had heard anything much about Dirac.

Then I heard that he was going to lecture at the New York Academy of Sciences, and swiftly calculated that if I changed around a few other arrangements I could get there to catch his act.

The Academy is an old mansion in the high-rent district of New York—go one way from its doors and you pass where Jackie Onassis lives when in New York; go the other, and you pass where Bob Guccioni does. It isn't really very well laid out for an Academy of Sciences. Its ground floor plan is a hollow square around a garden. The room on the east is the main lecture hall, too small when there is a major attraction. The identical twin room on the west is used as a dining room for state occasions, and they are connected by a lounge.

Most of the Academy's lectures are sparsely attended, but I thought Dirac would be sure to draw a big house. I got there almost an hour early to be sure of a good seat. Not early enough. The hall had been full for half an hour by the time I arrived. It wasn't just Academy members. No one ever seems to check membership, so half the graduate students in astrophysics in the New York area had skipped dinner to hear the grand old man, filling the seats.

However, I had found out about the lounge once, years before, when I had lingered too long over my coffee in the dining hall and the meeting room filled. The lounge was the answer. Great scientists impress me, and when Dirac came by on his way to the platform it was like rubbing elbows with a Beatle.

Dirac is an elderly gentleman. He speaks softly, Britishly and reasonably—as though he is telling you about some train of thought that is just now passing through his mind—and slowly, with frequent pauses, as though he has never said any of this before and has to find the words as he goes along.

If you have not followed recent events concerning the Large Numbers Hypothesis, you might like to know where it stands now. Dirac has had to make some changes to keep up with new information. For the age of the universe, he has given up on the radius of the electron. His new unit of measurement is the mass of the electron times the cube of the speed of light. The electromagnetic/gravity ratio is unchanged; but for the number of particles in the universe he has modified it to the particles in the *observable* universe. All those being so, the numbers come out just where he wants them to: 10^{39}, 10^{39} and 10^{78} respectively.

Dirac does not contend that these goshy coincidences prove anything, but he says that there are some predictions that follow from the hypothesis. One, he says, is that if it is meaningful, then atomic clocks will run slower than astronomical ones. (Apparently they do—but you can derive that prediction from Einstein, too.) Another is the 2.8K background radiation that pervades the universe. But that also can be explained in other ways; and it will take a lot finer measurements than have been made so far to tell whether Dirac or Einstein et al have the right of it. And he is waiting, as patiently as he can, for them to be made.

Well, it doesn't stop there. Dirac first began talking about these things in 1939. There have been forty years of thought and discovery since then, and some very kinky theoretical structures have been built on this foundation.

Just as I was finishing this, the current issue of the *Journal of the British Interplanetary Society* arrived. In the lead article a Cambridge mathematician named Tang Tong (you heard me) takes a careful look at some of these gosh numbers. (He doesn't call them that.) It is not one of your easy read articles. I can't say much about it in this space, but it relates these strange "dimensionless" numbers to the question of what life is and how it came to exist. (And incidentally, it made me change my mind about how *Beyond the Blue* is going to end.) It is a long way past Dirac.

Still....

I respect the purity and impersonality of science, but I enjoy it as a spectator sport, too. Dirac is an endearing 75-year-old, and I'm rooting for him to come from behind and take it all.

Post script. Several people asked that I mention where courses for teachers of science fiction could be taken. There are three coming up: (1) Marshall Tymn's weekend seminar (this year in Florida), (2) a two-week course abroad, in conjunction with the World SF Convention in England in August, also sponsored by Tymn (for information: Dr. Marshall B. Tymn, English Department, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti MI 48197) and (3) the University of Kansas three-week July Institute on the Teaching of Science Fiction (for information: Professor James Gunn, English Department, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045). ■

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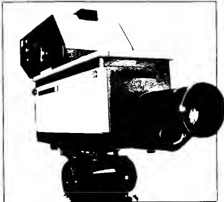

FILMEDIA

ROBERT STEWART

AUGMENTED DREAMS

It was a time of a curious convergency: Harlan Ellison delivered his SFWA Resignation Speech in April 1977 [ALGOL, Spring 1978], generating shock waves. One month later, the release of *Star Wars* set off reverberations throughout the international film industry. Since then, a number of names in the science fiction community, including Anne McCaffrey, Frank Herbert and Ursula K. Le Guin, have become closely involved in current film productions. Herbert is first-drafting the *Dune* screenplay. Ellison has scripted his *Citizen Kane*-inspired adaptation of Asimov's *I, Robot* for a $30,000,000 Warners production. Richard Matheson has adapted Ray Bradbury (*Martian Chronicles*) while Bradbury has first-drafted *Gnomes* (for CBS animation). Arthur C. Clarke and filmmaker Robert C. Radnitz are adapting Clarke's *Dolphin Island* (optioned by Radnitz in 1972) for a $6,000,000 film. And independent producer Gary Youngman hopes to make the "pussycat people" of McCaffrey's *Decision at Doona* as popular as Wookies. A lot of activity.

Principal photography on *The Lathe of Heaven* should be in the can by the time you read this. Planned as a major two-hour special, it's scheduled to air on the Public Broadcasting System in two parts to be seen on subsequent weeks during November or December of this year. Ursula K. Le Guin, originally brought in as a script consultant, stuck around as the Roger Swaybill/Diane English teleplay went through rewrites; Le Guin ended up contributing much dialogue and participating in the rehearsals. Initially announced for a November 1978 shoot, the production experienced delays because of icestorms at the Texas location site, the script rewrites and changes in funding (eventually from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and Unitel). Filming took place in the Dallas/Fort Worth area between March 13 and April 9 with an additional three days north of San Francisco plus a scheduled brief period of second unit work in Portland. Cast as dreamer George Orr is Bruce Davison (seen previously as the "Ratman" of *Willard* and the child molester of *Short Eyes*) with Margaret Avery as the lawyer Heather Lelache. Oneirologist Dr. William Haber is portrayed by former IBM sales analyst Kevin Conway who terrorized audiences in the *When You Comin' Back, Red Ryder?* stage production. In addition to that Obie Award-winning performance, Conway was also seen recently in *F.I.S.T.*, *Paradise Alley* and the WGBH (Boston) production of *The Scarlet Letter* on PBS. Additional casting of minor roles took place at Dallas/Fort Worth.

The executive producer of *The Lathe of Heaven* is David Loxton of New York's WNET. Co-directing are Loxton and Fred Barzyk of WGBH. Both have worked in this tandem fashion before, and their current dramatic productions are an outgrowth of years of experimental work at the Boston and New York PBS affiliates. So, herewith, a capsule history: As a Boston University graduate student, Barzyk came to WGBH in 1958, worked three days out of the week, became a part-time director and, in 1961, full-time. After-hours experiments brought about the freeflowing patterns and colors of his *Jazz Images* (1964), followed by the innovative, non-narrative 30-show series, *What's Happening, Mr. Silver?* (1967), a barrage of near-random video collage orbiting around different weekly topics. That same year WGBH received a three-year grant from the Rockefeller Foundation for the creation of the WGBH Artists-in-Residence project. This influx of video artists included Korean-born Nam June Paik who collaborated with Tokyo electronics engineer Shuya Abe to construct their Paik-Abe Videosynthesizer, a machine no one understood until it was completed. Works by Paik and others were seen on Barzyk's *The Medium is the Medium* (1968), generally cited as the first national telecast of video art (a citation that seems to ignore both the morning in 1956 when Salvador Dali dissolved a rhinocerous tusk into a head of cabbage for 12 minutes on CBS and a decade-plus of Ernie Kovacs' experiments). In August 1970, WGBH showed off the Paik-Abe Videosynthesizer during *Video Commune*, a four-hour explosion of Beatles music and abstract color design so potent it knocked out a transmitter. *Jean Shepherd's America* (1971) employed the first portable color video equipment. Meanwhile, similar work was going on at KQED in San Francisco where Brice Howard, in 1967, organized the National Center for Experiments in Television (since terminated), also with Rockefeller funding. The WGBH Project for New Television came into being as the result of a second three-year grant to WGBH from the Rockefeller Foundation. The WGBH Music-Image Workshop was established in 1972 by Ron Hays who later spent nine months combining visual configurations from the Paik-Abe gadget with computer and slit-scan animation to create his hypnotic *Tristan and Isolde*, a symmetrical post-*2001* tunneling through an alternate universe.

The success of the video art workshops at KQED and WGBH led to the February 1972 formation of WNET's Television Laboratory (aka TV Lab) with David Loxton as director. Born in 1943, Loxton is a Britisher who received an MA from Dublin's Trinity

College before joining National Educational Television in March 1966, to eventually become the staff producer (1969-72) for *NET Playhouse.* On March 13, 1972, PBS aired the Barzyk-directed, Loxton-produced *NET Playhouse* presentation of Kurt Vonnegut's *Between Time and Timbuktu: A Space Fantasy* with Bob and Ray, William Hickey and Kevin McCarthy in a bleshing of material drawn from *Cat's Cradle, Sirens of Titan, Player Piano* and other Vonnegut writings.

With Paik advising the Rockefeller Foundation on video, a $250,000 grant resulted in the June 1974 creation of the WGBH New Television Workshop, housed in a Watertown, Massachusetts, studio independent of the WGBH facilities. Headed by Barzyk, Dorothy Chiesa and Henry Becton, the first season (1974-75) of the NTW put an emphasis on exposing more than 75 artists (in dance, drama, video art and music) to the freedom and flexibility of half-inch videotape. During this period, filmmaker Andrew Silver's 25-minute *Next Door,* adapted from Vonnegut, aired on December 11, 1975, and was followed by a Silver adaptation of Bradbury's *The Murderer* (selected as "one of the best shorts of 1976" by the USA Film Festival).

The NTW's second season was more selective, commissioning a smaller group of artists to create works with network potential—along with the idea of tying the tapes together into a dramatic format. Lily Tomlin's writer, Jane Wagner (the writer-director of the 1978 flop, *Moment by Moment*) provided this narrative structure, and the result was the 60-minute WNET/WGBH co-production, *Collisions* (1976), "a contemporary science fiction fantasy-comedy" starring Lily Tomlin with Professor Irwin Corey, Tomlin's own family from Paducah, Kentucky, and *Saturday Night Live* cast members Gilda Radner and Dan Akyroyd. The videowork participants included Ron Hays, choreographer Louis Falco, Stan VanDer Beek (*Science Friction*), SF illustrator/video artist/filmmaker Ed Emshwiller and William Wegman (best known for the performances of his dog, Man Ray, in his tapes—one of which was shown on *Saturday Night Live*). Despite this array of talent, *Collisions* never turned up on PBS; like Peter Fonda's eco-crisis movie, *Idaho Transfer* (1973), it's a Seventies SF production seen by almost no one. When I called WNET in an effort to learn more about the non-appearance of *Collisions,* I was presented with this odd contradiction: (a) I was told it had "never reached final edit" but (b) that at the very moment of my phone call someone was viewing it in a nearby screening room. "Crossings in mist," as the *Lathe* aliens would put it.

As the New Television Workshop evolved into an umbrella title for many different projects, Loxton and Barzyk concentrated on full-length dramatic films: an evocative period Forties comedy-drama, the 1976 *Phantom of the Open Hearth* (adapted from Jean Shepherd's *Wanda Hickey's Night of Golden Memories, and Other Disasters*) and the 1978 *Charlie Smith and the Fritter Tree* (both seen on the PBS *Visions* series), leading to their current *Lathe of Heaven* film.

Others involved in *The Lathe of Heaven* are Ed Emshwiller and painter/sculptor/filmmaker Lillian Schwartz. Emshwiller's connection with Loxton goes back to 1972 when he made the compelling *Scapemates* (1973) for the WNET TV Lab by combining choreography with a computer graphics colorization of his own artwork, creating a tape that bears a strong resemblance to his science fiction illustration. As Visual Consultant for *The Lathe of Heaven,* Emshwiller contributed 20 pre-production illustrations to aid Loxton and Barzyk in their visualization of the altered reality dreamscapes of Le Guin's world, and he will use animation for the film's special effects. (This represents something of a switch for Emshwiller, who once told me that he turned down an offer from Kubrick to help design the *2001* "Trip Sequence" so he could work on his own independent films.)

To show Dr. Haber's Dream Augmentor, the plan is to use computer graphics generated on film by Lillian Schwartz, one of the leading filmmakers in this area. In off-hours at the Bell Labs in Murray Hill, New Jersey, Schwartz collaborated with engineer Kenneth Knowlton to make the 1972 *Apotheosis* (developed from images used in radiation treatment of cancer), the 1972 *Googolplex* (fast-flashing patterns to music from Ghana), the 1974 *Metamorphosis* (shifting geometric designs to Salieri's Symphony in D Major) and others. Schwartz calls her films "drumbeats on the eyeballs," and they *are.* Interstratifications of imagery beneath the surface cue responses from the unconscious, making her work as appropriate for *The Lathe of Heaven* as Jordan Belson's meditative Proteus monitor footage was for *Demon Seed* (1977).

Although Barzyk and Loxton have optioned no other SF properties at this time, *The Lathe of Heaven* is actually a pilot for a projected, hoped-for but as-yet-untitled/unscheduled series adapting "the best of speculative fiction," certainly preferable to the commercial networks' endless parade of superheroes, supertrains and Mork spin-offs. *The Lathe of Heaven* is a powerful, visionary dream. If the series goes, it could be what Orr and Haber called an "effective dream," altering the reality of television. ■

—Bhob Stewart

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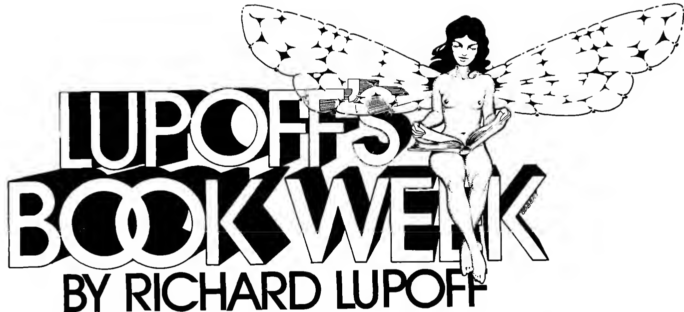


BELOVED SON, by George Turner. 375 pp. 1978. Faber and Faber (England). U.S. edition, 1979. Pocket Books

This first novel is remarkable for several reasons. It's long, it's ambitious, it's very serious, and it's almost successful. I think it's the seriousness of the book that made it most rewarding for me to read: the general direction of science-fantasy in recent years has been away from seriousness. The Burroughs revival, the Howard revival, the trivialization of Tolkien by his imitators (who have, by and large, succeeded in copying all his trappings and none of his substance) . . . all have contributed to this trend.

The massive success of the *Star Wars* industry, building from the base of the already established *Star Trek* cult, has in turn led to the ultimate idiocy of *Battlestar Galactica* and more brainless rocket-blasters. Did I say that *Galactica* was the ultimate? Perhaps I spoke too soon: *Buck Rogers* looms on the horizon, *Superman* has blasted in from Krypton—where will it end?

But back to *Beloved Son.*

Turner starts with a thoroughgoing Sense of Wonder sequence, the successful voyage of the first manned starship. The ship departs from earth in 1990 and returns in 2032. But a combination of slow-metabolism tanks aboard the ship, and our old pal the time-dilation effect, make the trip only eight years for the astronauts.

For some seventy-five pages or so, we are shown the journey. Turner's sense of character and detail is at its peak in this sequence; I found myself thinking back to such space-pioneer yarns as those of Arthur Clarke in his *Prelude to Space - Sands of Mars* period and Otto Binder's even earlier "Via Etherline" stories.

Turner pulls a switch on us, though. Having settled in for a good solid space adventure, we discover that he's switching venue. The astronauts return to earth eight years older than they left it—but 42 years have elapsed on the planet. In their absence, a world catastrophe has taken place. Not the Big War we all fear, nor a universal plague/blight/flood/collision-with-a-comet *a la* John Christopher, J.G. Ballard, Niven-and-Pournelle, etc.

Rather, in a devilishly *vague* way, Turner suggests that everything just got too complex, unstable, and generally mucked up. Somehow the last straw got loaded onto the planetary camel, and—*whoosh*! The whole damn thing just went to pieces.

Now, a couple of decades later, things have got put back together pretty well. At least in Australia, where the action of the novel is set (Turner is Australian), things are getting on okay. The population has been drastically reduced. Very few of the older generation survive, and these are placed in positions as advisors to the powers-that-be, "to keep them from making the same mistakes again." The cities are largely abandoned and/or dismantled, and we seem to be headed for some sort of post-disaster utopia.

Only everything is not what it seems.

Russia has gone back to some sort of black theocracy *a la* Czarism-*cum*-Rasputin.

America has gone—*ook! eek!*—Commie.

And the inscrutible heathen Chinee have retreated behind a new version of the Bamboo Curtain.

England is uninhabitable.

Only Australia, with its elimination of cities and reconstruction of towns, its officially sanctioned youth cult and super-accelerated education, and its dual reliance on civil police for ordinary law enforcement and the global Security force in lieu of military force, looks good after a while.

But there's something slightly rotten in even this state, as the novel's protagonist—the commander of the original starship—gradually finds out. There's been some sort of *sub rosa* experimentation with cloning and genetic manipulation. The returned astronaut digs deeper and deeper into the hidden researches, discovers an unpublicized struggle between the government and a revolutionary movement growing out of the clone. And the spaceman himself, as the donor of the original genetic material for the clone, finds himself the "father" of the entire coming race!

I must say that the final sequences of the book, taking place after the protagonist has penetrated some of the secret organization and takes a hand in the political/revolutionary struggle, become somewhat tedious. There's plenty going on, mind. It's just that, having introduced the various sides in the struggle, Turner doesn't quite make me care who wins out. They seem to be squabbling needlessly, pointlessly, and after a series of switches and counter-switches I lost track of who was who. Further, I found myself not really caring.

The book has other faults, as well. For one, there's a kind of snide superiority of tone that I found in some of the characters—and, I fear, occasionally showing through in the author himself—that is somewhat off-putting. And while the characterization in the early sections is rather good, as things progress it becomes less so, until, after a certain point, I couldn't tell the players without a scorecard. And didn't care.

Of course, if they were all members of the same clone, I suppose that was Turner's point. Or then again, maybe not.

I have to raise a cry, also, against Turner's handling of women in the book. For starters, he sends off his starship with an all-male crew. Think of that: half a dozen or so people are going to be confined in a spaceship for eight years. Wouldn't you think they'd be divided between men and women, for the sake of companionship, variety of viewpoint and talents, and of course for sexual relief?

But Turner, apparently, just assumes that the crew would be all men. Not the kind of thing the ladies are good at, dontcha know. Love the little dears—in their place. *Kurche, Kuche, und Kinder,* eh?

But what are that many men going to do cooped up for eight years? It's not as if they were homosexuals. Turner hints, at one point, that the captain has his suspicions about a couple of crewmen. But for the most part they just take cold showers and don't forget the saltpeter in the scrambled eggs, mates.

There are only two or three women in the whole book, in fact. One is a secretary who is called upon to lure a susceptible man into a trap by waving her feminine wiles beneath his nose. Another is a slightly overweight, slightly overaged Queen Bee type, complete with pretty-boy drone squad. The third is—of course!—a nurse.

The prose is rather dense, but more solid than clumsy. The future world that Turner portrays is as solid, as gritty, and as grim as the London of Orwell's *1984.* And the projected socio-biology is directly in the descent of Huxley's *Brave New World.*

Beloved Son is by no means a "fun read." But it is a powerfully wrought, thought-provoking serious novel. It requires effort on the reader's part, and it rewards that effort. □

ALICIA AUSTIN'S AGE OF DREAMS. $25. 144 pp. 1978. Donald M. Grant (West Kingston, R.I., 02892)

BEAUTY AND THE BEASTS: THE ART OF HANNES BOK. $15.50. 128 pp. 1978. Gerry de la Ree (7 Cedarwood Lane, Saddle River, N.J. 07458)

Two fantastic art books recently issued make an interesting contrast. Hannes Bok was the last member of the great trinity of pulp-era SF illustrators, the other two members being Frank R. Paul and Virgil Finlay. Paul's work was hard-lined, technologically-oriented, and very "scientifictional" in the old Gernsbackian, nuts-and-bolts sense. Finlay's work was more "organic." People (and other living things) were his main theme and he rendered in such lush, vibrant textures that you could all but feel the body heat radiating from the page.

Bok was a living elf, and his elfin nature pervades his work. He was more inclined to fantasy than to science fiction, and even his science fiction illustrations had an element of the ethereal to them. He died in 1964; the de la Ree book contains well over 100 pictures that he created between 1936 and the year before his death at the age of 50.

Alicia Austin is a young* fantasy artist whose exposure to date has been primarily through art shows at SF conventions. Her limited professional credits are dominated by her illustrations for the 1977 Grant edition of *Black God's Shadow* by C.L. Moore. Her formal background is in medical technology, which might lead one to expect a scientific orientation in her work. Such is not the case: everything that I have seen of hers, including the hundred-plus works in *Age of Dreams,* is informed by fantasy.

Publishing an elaborate (and expensive) book of plates by such a relatively unknown artist is risky business, and I commend Donald Grant for having the courage to do it—for examination and re-examination of *Age of Dreams* shows Austin to be a very fine talent, and the book to be a most worthwhile collection of her works.

There are 32 pages of full-color plates, printed on beautiful, coated stock. In addition, there are some 90-odd pages of luscious colored stock with pen-and-ink renderings. The book is printed and bound in a large, luxurious horizontal format that shows off the graphics to their best advantage.

There is great variety here, both of technique and of theme. George Barr in a well-informed introduction points out that Austin has been accused of (or perhaps credited with) showing the influence of both Aubrey Beardsley and Barr himself. Barr agrees with the presence of a Beardsley influence, but attributes the "Barrishness" of Austin's work to the miniaturist Arthur Szyk, suggesting that both Barr and Austin have studied Szyk's work.

The color works range from delicately pastel-toned dragons, gryphons, faeries, knights and ladies—to incredibly lush elves, medieval and classical scenes. I hesitate to pick a favorite, but a strong candidate must be "The Gift of a Sword," a magnificent impressionistic color plate embodying Japanese themes.

The black-and-white art is naturally less splashily arresting, but no less rewarding. There is a tendency to stylize, and the mythic themes selected adapt well to stylization. There are scenes from Egypt, from Faery, from the Arabian Nights; there is beauty here, and a willingness to luxuriate occasionally in the erotic.

If you consider the cumulative cost of the color plates and black-and-white prints in this book, at even the most modest of prices, the $25 that the volume costs suddenly looks like a very reasonable price—even a bargain. *Age of Dreams* is not a book that I will put aside now; it's one that I will take from the shelf to savor for a half-hour or an hour at a time, I expect, for a good many years to come.

I also suspect that Alicia Austin will achieve considerable acclaim in those coming years. If so, a first edition of this volume will be worth several times its present price. □

Beauty and the Beasts is by no means the first volume of works by Hannes Bok. Emil Petaja on the West Coast and Gerry de la Ree on the East have each produced worthwhile Bok collections in the past. Although I will cavil at one point regarding *Beauty and the Beasts* I will first say that I consider this, if not the definitive Bok volume, certainly the best produced to date.

Bok's work is notable for its whimsy, its imagination, and (from a technical viewpoint) the distinctive textured look that Bok achieved in all his renderings. He influenced a number of other SF illustrators—Boris Dolgov and Damon Knight in the 1940s, and (to a slightly lesser extent) Stephen Fabian in the '70s.

The earliest work in *Beauty and the Beasts* is a previously unpublished drawing dating from 1936. It isn't nearly as good as most of Bok's later works, but there are points of charm in it—a beautiful if somewhat ragged young woman standing beneath a nearly naked tree, reaching to touch the last clinging leaf of autumn. Beside her stands a strange dog staring at an even stranger creature that looks like a cross between a chihuahua and an armadillo. The technique of the drawing is not really bad, but the composition is a jumble: the eye does not know whether to focus on the girl, the tree, the dog, or the mongrel.

By the next picture, "Nightmare" (1939), Bok had things somewhat better in hand. The scene is still busy, with bats, werewolves, dragons, flying rabbits and rearing does competing for attention—but they are arranged so that the eye tracks comfortably from one to the next rather than jumping around like a demented flea.

As the years go by—the book is set up chronologically—we see Bok getting better and better, turning his eye to aliens, monstrosities, deformed and stylized beings of human and other species, as well as occasional macabre, mechanistic, and classical themes.

* She was born after I was. That's my definition of "young." What's yours?

Most—though by no means all—of the drawings were first created as illustrations for magazine or book editions of works of science fiction or fantasy. Bok illustrated writers ranging from the famous (Heinlein, Clark Ashton Smith, Lovecraft, Anderson, Taine, Pohl, Chambers, Kornbluth, Blish, Bloch) to the obscure and the forgotten.

It is almost impossible to resist the appeal of these drawings, to remember fondly one's few meetings with Bok, and to wish that he had been better treated by the publishers who commissioned these works and by the fans who sometimes bought up Bok's originals at conventions for more money than he ever received when he created them.

I said that I had a cavil with *Beauty and the Beasts*, and it is this. Some of Bok's most impressive works were done in color, and appeared on magazine covers or on the dust jackets of books. The de la Ree book is restricted to Bok's black-and-white work (although some of the works exist in both polychrome and monochrome versions, and the latter are included in the book). There's no practical way to re-do this book with a color section, I suppose, but de la Ree may be planning a bound book or a portfolio of Bok's color works. If so, it should be breathtaking, and—in my library, anyway—will stand beside *Beauty and the Beasts.* □

HEROES AND HORRORS, by Fritz Leiber. 238 pp. 1978. Whispers Press. Clothbound, $12; special signed edition, $25

BAZAAR OF THE BIZARRE, by Fritz Leiber. 128 pp. Donald M. Grant. $20

Two new volumes of selected material by Leiber, definite treats for collectors of lovingly made fantasy books and marvelous reading as well.

The Whispers volume, *Heroes and Horrors*, contains nine stories by Leiber, an introduction by John Jakes, and ten black-and-white full-page illustrations by Tim Kirk (as well as an excellent wraparound jacket painting by Kirk). There are two Fafhrd and Gray Mouser stories here (both continuing the adventure of Rime Isle), and a wealth of fantasy and horror material ranging from the modern, gritty, psychological variety reminiscent of Bloch's work ("Belsen Express") to the all-out Lovecraftian slithering-monstrosity variety ("The Terror from the Depths") to a strangely fascinating little literary in-tale about Edgar Allan Poe ("Richmond, Late September, 1849").

As are all Whispers Press books, this is a lovingly crafted production. Which only adds to its appeal. If you're an admirer of Fritz Leiber's work, you'll have to have this book.

Bazaar of the Bizarre, published by Grant, is a very special Leiber book of another sort. The contents are only three stories, all adventures in the Fafhrd and Gray Mouser series, introduced by Leiber himself and illustrated (in color!) by Stephan Peregrine. The stories are all from "middle period" Leiber—the oldest dates from 1959 and the newest from 1970, and all are excellent.

But of course, all are readily available in the standard Ace compilations of Lankhmar material in paperback and the Gregg Press facsimiles in hardcover. So why bother with the Grant edition, especially at twenty dollars a shot?

The book is published in an unusual format, with square pages, beautiful, sensuous paper, attractive type set off by wide margins, and of course the Peregrine artwork. The binding is of fine maroon cloth stamped in gold. It's the kind of book to give or receive as a gift. Or to give yourself as a gift.

At last Fritz Leiber is receiving the recognition he has so long deserved, and his works are being published in beautiful editions. This is something to celebrate! □

THE KING OF TERRORS, by Robert Bloch. $10. 204 pp. 1977.
OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF GRAVES, by Robert Bloch. $10. 194 pp. 1979.
Both published by The Mysterious Press, 129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019.

SUCH STUFF AS SCREAMS ARE MADE OF, by Robert Bloch. $1.95. 288 pp. 1979. Ballantine Books.

STRANGE EONS, by Robert Bloch. $12. 196 pp. 1978. Published by Whispers Press, Box 1492-W Azalea Street, Browns Mills, NJ 08015.

It's strange to contemplate the fact that Robert Bloch made his professional debut in *Weird Tales* for January 1935. Here it is nearly forty-five years later, and Bloch is still turning out stories cast in his unique mold—a mix of science fiction, crime story (certainly not "detective"), psychological horror, and borderline fantasy.

The trick, of course, is to start young. As Bloch did, a mere fuzzy-cheeked lad when he first made the hallowed pages of WT.

We have here four volumes of Bloch, three collections of short stories and one new novel. The short stories are selected from Bloch's output of the past quarter-century or so, and come from the science fiction and fantasy magazines, detective mags, and the men's slicks. The two Mysterious Press anthologies emphasize the psychological horror and crime stories, while the Ballantine leans more toward the fantastic. But with Bloch, one shades off into another and there is no distinct border between the categories.

As Bloch has himself observed, his stories tend to contain an element of humor—wry, black, gallows humor—so that even as the reader is horrified, he has trouble suppressing a nervous giggle. Of course, Bloch was one of the leading fan humorists for many years, so this element in his fiction is no surprise.

And these are the kind of books that you don't sit down with for a serious evening's reading. Rather, they're the kind that you keep around for a relaxing half-hour or so, when you want some diversion, entertainment, relaxation.

There's a certain morbidity to most of these short stories. (Well, you expect a murder yarn without death in it, Lupoff? You should try writing one, maybe.) And there's a frequent suggestion of the autobiographical—sometimes more overt than others. I suppose the most openly autobiographical is "The Closer of the Way," a short story included in *Out of the Mouths of Graves.* There's a convoluted history to this story.

"The Opener of the Way" was an early Bloch story with heavy Lovecraftian overtones. It originally appeared in *Weird Tales* in 1936, and served, a decade later, as the title-piece of Bloch's first collection, issued by Arkham House.

Weird Tales has been in its grave, alas, for these twenty-five years, and of all the attempts to revive or replace it, the most nearly successful has been Stuart Schiff's *Whispers* magazine. (*That* title comes from a Lovecraft story, too.)

In 1977, more than forty years after publishing "Opener" in *Weird Tales,* Bloch published "Closer" in *Whispers.* Its narrator is a horror-story author whose first short-story collection had as its title-piece, "The Opener of the Way," and. . . .

Somehow, I have the uncomfortable feeling that when a literary form gets this inbred and convoluted, it has entered—in fact, is well into—its decadent phase.

But all in good fun.

The world of most of Bloch's later stories is the tawdry world of Big Media. LA, the Strip, Hollywood, network TV and motion picture studios. His earliest stories, when he was most under the influence of his mentor, feature such gothicky Lovecraftian milieux as rotting New England villages and abandoned churches, Egyptian tombs and the like. Middle-period Bloch (of which there is a fair sampling in these three books) was laid more against the Middle Western small town environment in which Bloch himself grew up.

I like all three periods, but I think the third is the best—it combines a hip contemporaneity with the feeling that the eternal horrors are among the

eternal verities, and thereby represents a "serious statement" underneath all the trappings of Bloch's wise-guy, it's-all-show-biz tone of voice.

I think that of these three books, the one I enjoyed the most is *Out of the Mouths of Graves.* But it's a close thing, each of the books has some gems in it, and I still find Bloch an ideal author for that things-are-getting-too-heavy, what-can-I-do-to-distract-myself moment.

Strange Eons is doubly different from the other books: it's new, and it's a novel, not a collection. In discussions of Bloch, Lovecraft keeps coming up—and this book is Bloch's tribute to his original inspiration and mentor. Bloch takes Lovecraft's various stories and combs them for themes—the most prominent but by no means the only such being Lovecraft's famous "Cthulhu Mythos." All of these (or a passel of 'em, anyway) are woven into the plot of *Strange Eons.* Even the title of the book is a phrase from a Lovecraft tale.

The basic gimmick of the book—I betray no surprise twist by telling you this—is the notion that Lovecraft wasn't merely a strange fellow with a morbidly fantastic imagination, who put his bizarre fantasies into his stories. Rather, he had access (by *some* means) to Secret Truths, and wanted to Warn the World.

But—how could he? Who would believe him? He wasn't a world-famous scientist or philosopher or politician. He was an obscure recluse. So . . . so, he told all—or should I say, Told All—in his stories. Hoping that some day, somehow, people would see through the sham of fiction and recognize the horrid truths for what they were.

And *Strange Eons,* taking place in contemporary times, some forty-odd years after Lovecraft's death, is the story of that discovery or rediscovery and its results.

Is this convincing?

Of course not.

But is it fun?

Wonderful fun!

If you like Lovecraft, and if you like Bloch, the book is absolutely wonderful fun. And the package is itself a major production. There is a full-wraparound jacket painting by Richard Powers. The binding cloth is a richly textured buckram, with one of the monsters from the story actually stamped onto the cover. The book itself is set in unusual and attractive typefaces, and contains a dozen full-page illustrations by John Stewart. For me, the drawings were not uniformly successful, but again that's a matter of personal taste. And the best of them are marvelous.

I don't quite understand why Bloch's career is blossoming in this fashion just now. But I'm very happy to see it happen. If not quite a towering figure in the firmament of popular fiction, he is certainly one of the solidest of longtime pro's, and he deserves both a fair buck and a round of applause.

And I'll say as a fellow (albeit much junior) laborer in the same vineyards, the kind of production job that Whispers Press did on *Strange Eons* is the kind of thing that we all dream about. □

THE BOOK OF MERLYN, by T.H. White. 193 pp. $2.25. 1978. Berkley Medallion. (University of Texas, 1977)

EARTH MAGIC, by Alexei & Cory Panshin. 275 pp. $1.95. 1978. Ace Books

WATCHTOWER, by Elizabeth A. Lynn. 252 pp. $9.95. 1979. Berkley/Putnam

THE MAGIC GOES AWAY, by Larry Niven. 216 pp. $4.95. 1978. Ace Books

ANOTHER FINE MYTH. . . by Robert Asprin. 160 pp. $4.95. 1978. Starflame Editions/The Donning Company

Fantasy has been here all along, of course, but it does seem to have its ups and downs even more than science fiction does, and that's going some. The field is presently having its ups, and this sampling of five recent books covers a considerable range of fantasy. None of it, I note happily, in the pseudo-Tolkien *or* the pseudo-Howard tradition.

The Book of Merlyn, as noted by Sylvia Townsend Warner in her prologue to T.H. White's text, was originally intended as the final segment of *The Once and Future King,* White's cycle of Arthurian fantasies. Although Warner goes to some length in explaining why *Merlyn* was not published with the rest of the cycle, the explanation is distressingly ambiguous. The whole work was too long, wartime paper shortages militated against it, etc., but one is left with the nagging suspicion that the *real* reason was either that *The Book of Merlyn* contains a section readable as a satire on the conduct of the second World War, and in this section White takes a sort of pox-on-both-your-houses attitude instead of being suitably patriotic; or, that *The Book of Merlyn* is just not up to the rest of the cycle artistically, and the decision against it was a purely literary one (and correct!).

In any case, *Merlyn* lay unpublished for the better part of thirty-five years before its appearance as a best-seller for the University of Texas Press. We now have a mass paperback edition, and the opportunity to read this once lost work.

The Book of Merlyn actually deals with the last days of King Arthur. All of the familiar adventures of the Round Table are behind him; Lancelot and Guenever are gone; and Arthur, a tired and sad old man, sits brooding. The wizard Merlyn brings his King to a meeting of the animals, and here they discuss philosophy, the nature and meaning of life, of Man, and of other species.

The two main incidents of the volume are Arthur's two adventures in the world of animals. In one, he becomes an ant; in the other, a goose. Summarized, these incidents are also incorporated into *The Once and Future King,* but *The Book of Merlyn* presents them in full.

Arthur's experience with the ants is that of a typical cipher in a totalitarian, militaristic state. All thought is reduced to a minimum of slogans; all morality and in fact all judgment is reduced to the simple binary choice *it-is-done/it-is-not-done.* The only value is value to the state, and the only virtues are obedience and conformity.

The whole ant society is astonishingly like the England of Orwell's *1984;* the similarity is so great, that I am led to wonder whether Orwell might not have seen White's manuscript, or discussed his ideas with White.

As for the society of the geese, it is portrayed as a wondrous natural anarchism, one in which an innate and sensible order exists wholly without compulsion, and in which the sheer joy of being is the supreme aesthetic.

But Arthur is called back from both of these transformations, and sent out into the world of men to finish his reign with only a little hope for salvation.

The two magical incidents are lovingly and effectively wrought, but the rest of the book gets *awfully* preachy: dull, wordy and moralistic. I suspect that this is the real reason why White's publisher declined to use it in the wartime editions of the segments of the cycle; if the excuses about paper shortage and the like had been valid, *The Book of Merlyn* could easily have been added to the previously "definitive" edition of 1958—which it was not.

If you have read the earlier portions of the cycle you will surely need to read *The Book of Merlyn.* If you have not done so, take note that *Merlyn* can be read independently of the earlier material—it *can* be, but I recommend that you go back and start at the beginning of *The Once and Future King.* □

Earth Magic, by Alexei and Cory Panshin, features a cover suggestive of the Robert E. Howard slash-and-smash tradition of fantasy, but is actually cast more in the Arthurian mold. As in the early segments of White's cycle, we have the boy-prince studying under the tutelage of the older court magician. The boy is Haldane, the wizard is Oliver, and it is Oliver who is the more interesting and appealing character.

He's a fat, modest little magician, whose powers are very limited and who is mainly interested in keeping his belly full, his body dry, and his skin whole. No great ambitions for him.

The novel opens with an encounter between Haldane and an oracle who makes a Dire Prediction for the boy. Following this he returns to his father's keep which is overthrown by a rival lordling (actually, Haldane's prospective father-in-law), and prince and wizard escape in magical disguise. The rest of the book is given over to the usual flight-and-pursuit shenanigans of such tales, and there's an unexpected ending that I dast not mention.

The book has some lovely moments —Alexei Panshin did some fine writing back in the 1960's, and has been seen far too little for the past decade. There are bits of humanity and warmth and humor, little bits of business that one doesn't expect in skull-bashers or gut-slashers. Oliver and Haldane, pretending to be sailors home from the sea, earn their dinner and lodging at a farmhouse and there's a funny scene involving a farmgirl's bitter complaints at having to *work* while she'd rather hear the sailors' tales. It's a very minor incident, quite without impact in terms of the final outcome of the book, but it's a beautiful piece of fiction-spinning.

Other parts of the book are unfortunately murky, and there is a regrettable amount of cross-country trekking of the he-took-a-step-and-then-he-took-another-step variety; and when one gets to the end of the book there's more of a sense of unease, even of anticlimax, than there is of satisfaction.

Still, the general quality of work is above the norm for this kind of thing, and *Earth Magic* has some thoroughly exhilarating moments. That's not to be valued lightly.

One side-issue, please. I have the distinct impression—my files are too spotty to confirm this, but the recollection is vivid—that this novel was serialized some years ago in *Fantastic* magazine, under a different name. (*Son of Black Morca* . . .?) The present copyright notice says 1978 and there's no mention of the magazine version; the Ace edition is also blurbed as "First Paperback Publication" which is ambiguous enough to suggest that there was a previous hardcover edition—which I don't believe was the case.

So—what's going on? □

Watchtower is the first volume of a fantasy trilogy by Elizabeth Lynn, author of the earlier science fiction novel *A Different Light* and a number of worthwhile short stories in the past few years. It's a pleasure to see a writer developing her craft, growing more skillful and more sure of her skill with each successive work.

From a taxonomical viewpoint, *Watchtower* is an even more limited fantasy than is *Earth Magic*. Unless Lynn slipped something past me (it can be done, God knows!) there is no supernatural element in *Watchtower.* It's a tale of warlords, knights and villagers and villeins, petty warfare, succession struggles and quests, all laid against the background of a non-technological, sort of middle-feudal, society.

Lynn establishes her mini-kingdoms in a sort of never-never land, and the book is thus, in a sense, a fantasy. She could as easily have declared the countryside a bucolic section of Europe anywhere from Poland to Ireland, in the tenth or eleventh or twelfth or thirteenth or fourteenth century, and called *Watchtower* a historical romance. Such decisions are made over crystal balls in tall buildings overlooking Madison Avenue.

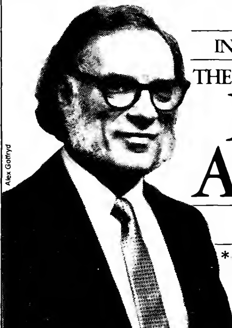
Again the basic structure is the familiar one: Our Side gets walloped by Their Side. The king is offed, the prince is humbled, the prince's best friend gets co-opted into the army of the new head-man. In due course there's the sequence of escape, flight, sanctuary, the raising of an army, return in quest of revenge, etc.

Lynn adds a couple of unusual—if not 100 per cent original—touches, including some mild overtones of homosexuality. But this is really a very minor aspect of *Watchtower;* unless you're going to get upset that, at bed-time, the two boys unroll their sleeping bags on one side of the fire and the two girls do the same on the other

In his 200th book,* Isaac Asimov reveals what makes a man write 200 books.

In his 200th book, Isaac Asimov finally writes about himself. IN MEMORY YET GREEN begins with his family's emigration from Russia and takes us through his education as a scientist and the writing of his famous *Foundation Trilogy* and "Nightfall." Along the way, he sells his first story; gets to know the legendary John Campbell of *Astounding Science Fiction*; joins the Futurians, a fan club that turned into a galaxy of SF greats. This is a book filled with the history of SF and with revealing insights into the formative years of the "national resource and natural wonder" that is Isaac Asimov.

To further mark the occasion, Doubleday has begun reissuing his early, classic science fiction in uniform omnibus editions. THE FAR ENDS OF TIME AND EARTH contains the novels *Pebble in the Sky* and *The End of Eternity*, and the story collection, *Earth is Room Enough*. The second volume, PRISONERS OF THE STARS, contains the novels *The Stars, Like Dust* and *The Currents of Space*, and the collection, *The Martian Way and Other Stories*. Eventually, Doubleday will republish all of Isaac Asimov's fiction.



IN MEMORY YET GREEN

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF

ISAAC ASIMOV

1920-1954

* Actually, Isaac likes to keep his publishers happy, so he has written two "200th books." You'll also find *Opus 200*, published by Houghton Mifflin, at booksellers now

DOUBLEDAY

. . . instead of pairing off boy-girl, boy-girl . . . you can just about ignore this.

There's some interesting medieval lore (or is it pseudo-medieval; how much is researched and how much is invented, I'm not sure). But the major interest of the book is in the characterization, the solidity of structure and the accomplishment of narration. The book lacks the warmth and humor of *Earth Magic*, but it is more cleanly constructed and more powerfully fabricated. It is a *novel*, needing no qualification or excuse.

Lynn has developed remarkably between her first book and her second. Where will she be with her third? □

The Magic Goes Away, by Larry Niven, is a lot more of a fantasy than either of the preceding books, if one's criterion is the inclusion and emphasis upon supernatural elements. Niven has built a career (and what a career!) on the ideational content of his stories.

This one begins with the sinking of Atlantis and the escape of one survivor, Orolandes. He makes land and falls in with a *marvelous* band of fellow adventurers: an ancient witch surviving on the basis of a youth-and-beauty spell, a pair of ancient rival sorcerers one of whom is presently a mere skull—but still alive and busy. . . .

The chief idea of the book is that there is a limited amount of magical force—*mana*—in the world. The roving band of magicians are trying to resolve the *mana*-crisis by one means or another, including a marvelously crack-brained scheme to pull down the moon: a whole *world* of hitherto-untapped *mana*. The book bristles with amusing devices: travel by walking on clouds (if you're a wizard, why not a spell for that?), a grand spooky idol, caves, giants, rocs, dragons, oversized amoebas. . . .

The only trouble is, Niven doesn't make any of it *real*, for me; there's hardly a spark of humanity in the book. Larry has made it clear in repeated public statements that he has no particular interest in characterization. And he has no discernible style; I don't mean that he has a *bad* style—even that, I think, would be preferable to the flat, dull, sterile narrative prose that he uses.

What he cares about is the idea alone; in his science fiction, Niven is current king of hardware, the logical successor to Hal Clement and all of the Campbell-era and pre-Campbell nuts-and-bolts writers. In an ingenious fashion he manages to apply the same attitudes and techniques to fantasy.

I found the reading a chore.

A word about the format of the book. This "novel" is published as a *very* heavily illustrated large-format paperback. The actual text runs to the length of an ordinary novella, and the book is spaced out with scores (maybe hundreds, so who's counting?) of drawings by Esteban Maroto. A few of these are spooky, sexy, or amusing. But most of them are clumsily executed and thematically redundant. They look like the work of a high-school boy of minimal skill and mediocre technical training, trying to imitate Marvel Comics' version of Robert E. Howard.

Altogether a bad job. □

Another Fine Myth . . ., were John Campbell still alive and were he still editing *Unknown Worlds*, would have been a sure-fire sale to that magazine. It's a madcap, lightweight, flippant, fast-paced chase fantasy with a fresh marvel in every chapter. It reads like something Sprague de Camp and L. Ron Hubbard would have cooked up over one-too-many bottles of slightly off-quality bourbon on a cold night before a warm fire. Especially if Ron had been to see Disney's Mouse-version of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* that afternoon.

We do, indeed, have a sorcerer's apprentice for starters. Ol' massa, he get himse'f killed and leave de poor kid with a giant green demon on his hands. Seems that the demon is really an other-dimensional colleague of the defunct wizard, come to pay a friendly-rivalish visit. Now he's stranded, *his* magic won't work in this world, his buddy who could have sent him home is croaked, and the kid who has to do it hasn't got to that lesson yet in his handy-dandy apprentice-wizard's course.

So it's off on a merry chase involving demon-hunters, spells, dragons, a marvelous magical bazaar on some plane or other, a beautiful whore with a heart of gold and curly green hair, etc.

Clever, amusing, trivial. A delightful wraparound cover painting by Kelly Freas and several equally good interior drawings by him. A minor cavil at the copy-editing (or lack thereof) in the book. There are just too damned many typos and/or minor errors in usage in this book. *Somebody* shoulda caught 'em, gang, and apparently nobody did. *Admonishment* for *admonition*, *tenseness* for *tension*, *alright* for *all right*, *to* when it should be *too*. Sometimes the name of the art is spelled *magic* and sometimes *magik*. There's a *neither . . . or* construction: chee-*sus*, folks, *either . . . or* OR *neither .. . nor* but not half of each, *please*!

These things are all trivial, and I'm not handing out grades for spelling and grammar, I hope. But it's god-damned distracting to try and read a story only to have these gaffes pop out like dirty-faced urchins hiding behind trees and jumping into your pathway.

Please, Starflame/Donning people, watch out for that stuff in your books. But this one is still good fun. □

AUDIO NOTES

The David-versus-Goliath contest in the field of recorded science fiction seems to have taken a distinctly one-sided turn. David (Alternate World Recordings) has issued no new records for some time now, although I understand that the company has issued a cassette version of a Harlan Ellison "roast" from one of last year's conventions. I have not heard the tape.

Goliath (Caedmon) on the other hand, has been quite active lately. Among their notable recent releases are Christopher Plummer's reading of excerpts from *The Book of Merlyn;* Judith Merril's reading of two of her stories, *Survival Ship* and *The Shrine of Temptation;* Anne McCaffrey's reading of excerpts from her novel *The White Dragon;* Arthur C. Clarke's reading of his stories *Transit of Earth*, *The Nine Billion Names of God*, and *The Star;* and Vincent Price's reading of two horror stories, *The Goblins at the Bath House* by Ruth Manning-Sanders and *Calamander Chest* by Joseph Payne Brennan.

It's hard to say which I like the most. As ever, there is the dilemma of choosing between the professional reading and that done by the author. From the viewpoint of technique, there's no quarrel, of course: pro'll whup a amateur 99 times out of 100 at the very least. But from the viewpoint of an authentic interpretation that's not necessarily the case. And from the viewpoint of historicity, it seems to me that I'd rather hear Edmond Hamilton reading Captain Future than hear anyone else do it. Unfortunately, *that* is never to be.

I suppose that both the author's-own and the professional versions are worthwhile to equal degrees but for different reasons. At any rate, for whatever it's worth—and somewhat to my own surprise!—my favorite from this batch, I think, is Price reading Brennan. Of course I'm a sucker for a good old-fashioned horror story. And Price gives *such* a juicy reading. . . . □

A new entrant in the field of SF audio is Hourglass Productions. This new outfit has announced a *very* ambitious program of recorded interviews, to be issued as tape cassettes. They list as either in-the-can or in-the-works, interviews of Isaac Asimov, Katherine Kurtz, Fritz Leiber, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Randall Garrett, Gregory Benford, Kathleen Sky, Stephen Goldin, Robert Silverberg, Larry Niven, Joan Vinge, C.L. Moore, Alan Dean Foster, Kelly Freas, Terry Carr, and Gordon Dickson. An impressive list, to say the least!

A further fillip is their use, whenever possible, of other authors (editors, illustrators, etc.) in the role of interviewer. Thus, Asimov is interviewed by Randall Garrett, Bradley by Kurtz, Carr by Susan Wood, and so on.

Hourglass sent me the Garrett cassette as a sample. The interview runs for an hour and is conducted by Vicki Ann Heydron. In response to questions, Garrett offers some very pleasant writerly reminiscences of his own career, his dealings with John W. Campbell, Bob Silverberg (with whom he collaborated as "Robert Randall"), Laurence Jannifer (with whom he collaborated as "Mark Phillips"), and so on. He does a brief reading of a scene from one of his "Lord D'Arcy" stories and talks a good bit about Lord D'Arcy, the genesis and growth of the D'Arcy series, his exchange with Rex Stout and the relationship between D'Arcy and his assistant Bontriomphe and Stout's Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin. (Bontriomphe = Goodwin.)

He also goes into the history of his parallel world in some detail. I found some of the incidents of this "other" history very droll—the story of Richard III sending his navy up the Tiber to force his man's selection in a Papal election was my favorite, and Garrett's mention that he's working on a full history book of this parallel earth brightened my day. It should be grand fun!

The Hourglass cassette comes complete with a photo of Garrett and liner notes. It is altogether a nice package, and promises well for the rest of the Hourglass line.

On the negative side, I must mention that the technical quality of the presentation was a trifle below par. Nothing grossly objectionable, but, for instance, the general quality and level of ambient background noise—what they call in the recording industry, "room tone"—is very uneven. Now room tone is *not* undesirable in this kind of sound tape. In a musical recording, maybe. But for a voice tape, you *want* room tone. You may not notice it when it's there, but you'll notice it when it's absent—as a kind of dead hush when nobody's speaking. But it should be steady, and in the Garrett interview it seems to appear, rise, fall away, and occasionally disappear entirely.

The questioning, also, sounded *very* stilted to my ear, while Garrett's answers, for the most part, came across as quite natural and spontaneous. Occasionally Randall does lapse into self-indulgence or self-promotion, including those moments when he and Heydron come on like a commercial. *Is it true that you have your very own fan club?* Why, yes indeed, it is. *And is there a post office box in Heyward, California, to which people can write to join your fan club?* Yes, that is true, it is Post Office Box Number Zilch-Two-etc.

No no no no no. Tsk, Randall, and also pshaw.

Still, much more good here than bad. I do recommend that you try at least one Hourglass tape—pick your favorite author and try an hour's worth. That's for individuals. For libraries, schools that offer science fiction courses, and other such institutions, I'd think that a complete file of the Hourglass tapes would be a good investment.

They're $4.98 apiece, plus 50¢ postage and (for California residents) 6% sales tax. The first six tapes available feature Katherine Kurtz, Fritz Leiber, Marion Zimmer Bradley, C.L. Moore,

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THE FICTION OF JAMES TIPTREE, JR., by Gardner Dozois.

Cover by Judith Weiss, 37pp., 5½". x 8½", bibliography, paper, $2.50.

This is a remarkable analysis of the Hugo and Nebula-award winning author by Gardner Dozois, himself a rising star in SF. Tiptree, revealed as Alice Sheldon, a 61-year-old psychologist, is analyzed and probed in this incisive volume. Jeff Smith, the only person in SF to actually know Tiptree/Sheldon in person, has provided a bibliography of not only Tiptree's output, but of the fictive work of Alice Sheldon as well.

"... Dozois' essay should stimulate more attention on Tiptree's unique abilities. The inclusion of the bibliography is a valuable addition for Tiptree fans and scholars" — Science Fiction Research Assn Newsletter; "... the analysis of Tiptree and Tiptree's work ... is excellent in both its insights and information" — Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine; Randall Garrett, and Gregory Benford. Others are to be added, and you can get a catalog from Hourglass at the same address: 10292 Westminster Avenue, Garden Grove CA 92643. □

ap algol press

The Martian Inca (Scribner's 1977) is not Ian Watson's first SF novel, but it's the first of his that I've read. It's a compelling and complex work, in which Watson uses the device of telling two seemingly unrelated stories, that do, in fact, impinge upon each other vitally in the last analysis. One of his stories is that of a Latin American revolutionary movement and its charismatic, almost godlike leader. The other is of an early, Apollo-type exploration party on Mars.

He suggests that there may once have been contact between Mars and earth (*a la* Weinbaum), and that a Martian virus can produce an organic alteration in humans, that provides both strangely enhanced mental powers and the physical ability to survive in the rarified Martian environment.

Watson cuts back and forth, between his Andean highland and his Martian landing site, building inexorably to a double climax, until. . . .

When I was reading *The Martian Inca* a while ago I mentioned this to my friend Tom Whitmore. Whitmore asked how the book was; I said I hadn't finished it, but so far had been very favorably impressed. "I read his earlier stuff," Whitmore said (or approximately so), "and liked everything except his endings. He seems in every book to build up to a big climax, and then just have a heavy truck run over everybody in the book."

Well, *The Martian Inca* unfortunately lives up (or down) to that record. It's an excellently written novel, inventive and compelling throughout. And then Watson gets to the end, and a truck just runs everybody over. Well, that's one way to end it. But it sure isn't very satisfying to the reader! □■

—Dick Lupoff

MOVING?

You must notify STARSHIP at least two weeks before moving. When a subscriber's copy is returned, we deduct one issue from the subscription due to the expense of postage due and address correction costs, plus the added expense of remailing that copy. Frequently the post office discards the magazine altogether, rather than forwarding or returning it. Please help save your money and our time.

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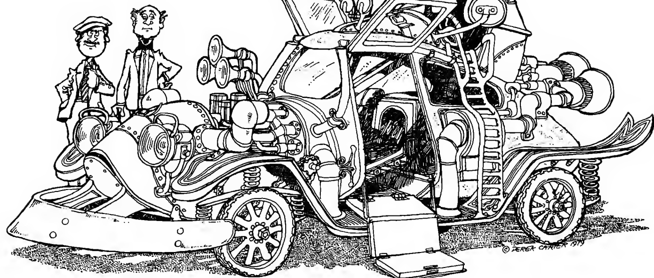

Canadian History

The Canadian automotive industry is a curious piece of existant non-existence for, after struggling furiously for years through hopes of a high calibre to achieve results of a low return, the industry today makes parts for another nation that sells the cars and the parts back to Canada.

It is this suicidal penchant for illogical merchandising that has led to some notable, and, like many Canadian matters, always forgotten forays into the world of automotive manufacture. While no doubt they have been prompted by dreams as large as Detroit, the realities of the Canadian scene impose their own stamp of oblivion on the final result. In the case of the infamous "Brunswick Brickbat" however the impositions stemmed from a different source, primarily the inventor.

It all began with the meteoric arrival of Molesworth Brunswick, an entrepreneur of dubious antecedents who came out of the West (the west of *what* was never really explained at the time) claiming to be a man of great talent, marvelous ideas, creative energy beyond belief (and reason) but no money. This last fact he glossed over, continually, as he expounded his idea for the all-Canadian car.

It would, he said, give employment to many. He forgot to add "of his friends" as he laid down the plans for the car he designated "The Brickbat," an odd choice of name but one he had made firstly because of the body material he intended to use and secondly because it went well with his own name.

He advocated the building of a car that stressed safety and reasoned that if one gave it a strong enough body it would repel all things. He believed concrete laid over oak beams would do just that.

Further hints of Molesworth's erratic engineering concepts began to emerge when after declaring he had noticed the similarity between his name and that of one of the Atlantic provinces, he declared that now the car would be endowed with a series of innovations to reflect this maritime connection. At the same time he announced a new fuel conservation policy and hinted at radical design features.

That feel for the maritime connection was present in two places on the Brickbat. The hood was given a decidedly fishlike appearance enhanced by a front fender that resembled the prow of a Victorian battleship while Molesworth's concept of suspension, large steel springs, would give the car a very noticeable rolling shiplike motion once it moved.

Hopes of it moving kept the backers going despite suffering recurring attacks of financial seasickness with every further demand from the ebullient Molesworth.

And indeed ebullience was needed to ride the waves of anguish and despair voiced by his backers, especially when he next announced that the Brickbat's steam engines were to be fueled by wood. This, he claimed, would aid the timber industry, maintain a pioneer spirit in the country and ensure the forlorn motorist that not all was lost should he just happen to run out of fuel while going through a forest. Of course the automatic fuel feed—inside the car, ensuring dry wood—meant that the driver's position had to be re-located on top of the car. This, in turn, would give the driver a wider view *if* he could manoevre the combined periscope and telescope to see over the rig that had been installed to raise the butterfly doors. These doors were in two sections, one opening upwards, the other downwards. Just how the doors were to realign themselves on coming together again was never really resolved.

Not that resolution was indeed ever required. Come the glorious day of the unveiling; to the amazement of all, not the least the erstwhile Molesworth, the first Brickbat rolled and swayed ponderously off a protesting production line that rose noticeably upwards as the concrete behemoth left it. As the great beast came to rest, its undulating motion finally subsiding, there was a stunned silence. Then up spoke Molesworth.

"O.K.," he said, "let's go for a ride." There wasn't a rush to join him as he clambered upwards into the padded glory of the cockpit but undaunted he carried on. Indeed with the brakes off, the hill at the car's feet so inviting, he could do little else *but* carry on, demonstrating several surprising extra and unplanned features of this amazing product as it went upon its maiden voyage.

Initially it was discovered that with the brakes released the Brickbat would move down a steep hill under no steam at all. Amazing conservation. Equally enlightening was the discovery that when the brakes were applied to halt the moving mass they were not able to perform efficiently, indeed they did not perform at all. And finally it was discovered, somewhat belatedly, that despite the maritime influence the "Brickbat" could not float. In fact it was so weighty that it could not be raised and remained in the foetid but placid waters of Toronto Harbour. It is rumoured that the landfill operations begun the next day to extend this self-same harbour area were in no way connected to the saga of the "Brickbat." That, however, like any good government cover-up, is merely a rumour. . . .

—Derek Carter, Toronto, March 1979

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SURVIVOR

OCTAVIA E. BUTLER

From an Earth ravaged by plague came the Missionaries, seeking a new home for humanity. Instead they were caught between two warring alien cultures, and only Alanna could see the enslaving lie the Garkohn "friend" offered—or how the Tehkohn "foe" could offer hope...

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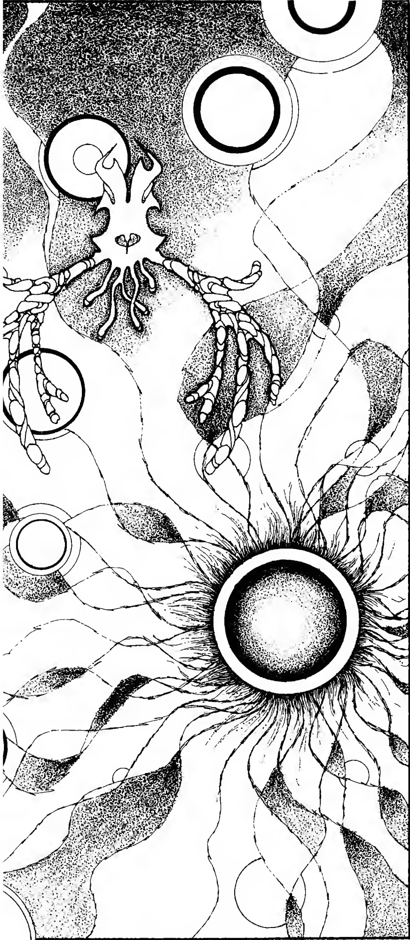


RANDOM FACTORS: LETTERS

David Gerrold
P.O. Box 1190
Hollywood CA 90028

I was struck by a comment of Vonda McIntyre's that there are a lot of people around claiming that they knew Tiptree was a woman all along, but she has yet to see something that someone had in print beforehand.

I refer you to page 11 of *Protostars*, an anthology I edited in 1970 and published in '71. I noted that the identity of Tiptree was a mystery, and that "if this man (or woman) were willing to write full time, he'd have to add three new mantlepieces . . . just to hold all the awards he'd win."

As a matter of fact, I had plenty of reason to suspect that Tiptree was really a woman, having actually come face-to-face with a very startled Alice Sheldon in 1969. But I never said much about it in print, neither pro nor fan, because I felt that whatever the reason why Tiptree wanted privacy, it was not my right to invade it with casual speculations. Co-editor, Stephen Goldin, also noted the possibility that Tiptree was female some years ago. I don't think that this is a case where individuals are claiming to have known all along; rather it isn't difficult to put two and two together and extrapolate a four.

Vonda's interview reminded me of another incident in 1969, which might be of minor interest. I was one of the editors who was buying Vonda McIntyre stories when she still wanted to be known in print as V.N. McIntyre. Her rationale at that time, which she very patiently explained to me, was that by using the initials neither editors nor readers would know that she was a woman. She was very annoyed with me for blowing her cover in my introduction to her story, where I revealed what the V. stood for.

At that time, I shrugged off her complaint with the comment that I wasn't buying authors, I was buying stories, and the author's sex was unimportant. It seemed fairly obvious then, not just to me, but to most of the editors in science fiction—at least, most of the good ones. But just as Vonda still had a lot to learn in 1969, so did most of the rest of us, and it's good to be able to say that Vonda has done her share of consciousness-raising in the years since. I've always liked her and always wished her well. Besides, in my old age, I plan on bragging about all the major talents I was able to give a little help to way back when. . . .

Robert Bloch
2111 Sunset Crest Drive
Los Angeles CA 90046

Somebody—I think it was Jonathan Edwards—said, "It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living god." I feel much the same way about this poor little postcard, when I read up front about how it's going to be unconditionally assigned for publication and copyright, and subject to "STARSHIP's unrestricted right to edit and comment editorially."

I'll bet you wouldn't dast make such a threat to Vonda McIntyre, you male chauvinist pig, you!

Vonda's a good writer, and so is Ms. Wood, but I do wish they'd stop worrying about how many females can be counted in *Star Wars* or how many unisex angels can sit on the head of a pin, and address themselves to some of the more pressing ERA problems—rape, battered wives, child support and welfare, abortion legislation, etc. And whatever became of the notion, so dearly promulgated by the suffragettes of sixty years ago, that giving women the vote would put an end to wars? That's real wars I'm talking about, Vonda—not *Star* Wars.

[I picked that phrase up from Playboy, *Bob, and I've noticed a lot of other magazines*

using it. It means that people can make fools of themselves in their own letters, and when you publish their comments, they can't sue you for spreading foot-in-mouth disease. It also means you can sell letters from famous people, if and when you have to, to finance your lifestyle. I'm waiting for you *to win that Pulitzer, so I can get rid of my postcard collection. AIP]*

Edwin L. Strickland III
Dept. Earth, Planet Science
Washington University
St. Louis MO 63130

I particularly liked the Lundgren cover on this issue. I had "sort-of-noticed" his work recently, and was very struck by its quality when I saw some—including the *Rogue Moon* cover—at Iguanacon. He is an artist I will watch closely over the next few years.

Jeff Hecht
54 Newell Rd.
Auburndale, MA 02166

I kept track this time—STARSHIP/ALGOL arrived sometime between March 6 and 9 while I was away. You mailed it February 12th. That means it takes 3 to 4 weeks to get 250 miles. Has the Postal Service rediscovered the covered wagon? Maybe the oxcart? (It takes about 3 weeks for *Laser Focus* to wend its way across the whole country second class.)

The cover was striking—it even got a comment from 4-year-old Leah, who thought it was scary. Her tastes run more to straightforward monsters.

Jack Williamson's article was fascinating. What most impressed me is the variety of experiences that he's been through, yet relates so matter-of-factly. We all tend to live in our own little cultural island universes, and he's lived in so many. What's strange now is to find myself having to explain the way things used to be to one of my daughters. I remember my grandfather describing how he came to this country in steerage in 1892.

The last three sentences of Greg Benford's letter lay out a rather awesome challenge for SF writers—one that Benford himself obviously is striving to meet. Yes, I agree, SF should try to "do everything," but *doing* that requires tremendous effort from the writer. The best example of that I can recall, by the way, was Benford's *In the Ocean of Night.*

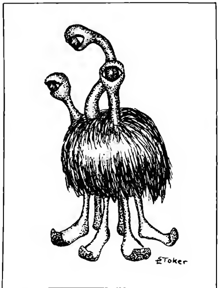
Robert Silverberg
Box 13160 Station E
Oakland, CA 94661

Jack Williamson's autobiographical essay was warm and wonderful and a bit eerie; to think that a man so vigorous and contemporary as Williamson grew up in the virtually prehistoric Old West gives one pause. (Like reflecting that Bertrand Russell's grandfather was born in the presidency of George Washington, and Russell outlived JFK.)

Vonda McIntyre's interview was refreshingly non-strident, and interesting and human besides; but I'd like to hear chapter and verse about the editor who told a woman writer asking for money that she should get some from her husband. Really? Who was it? And if it really happened, was he perhaps teasing? (Plucking at a raw nerve, maybe, but he might not have been serious; in any event I don't believe it happened.) As for the business of reprint anthologies being made up mainly of stories by men, that is indeed the case; but as one of the villains I feel constrained to point out that anthology editors are drawing upon a pool of fiction that is 80% or more male-authored, and even the recent influx of female SF writers hasn't done much to change the embedded makeup of the available reprint material. Nor do I feel much need for an affirmative-action program in my own anthologies; I will go on picking stories by merit, rather than the presence or absence of penises among their authors. (Which is not as belligerently male-chauvinist a statement as it may sound, since I think that about two thirds of the best SF these days is being written by women, and the makeup of my anthologies has begun to reflect that.)

On the other hand, Vonda talks about her surprise at Tiptree's turning out to be female, and says, "I guess there are people going around claiming that they knew all along that Tiptree was a woman, but I have yet to see someone show me something they had in print beforehand, so I think there's a lot of revisionist history going on." Alas, not so. The speculation that Tiptree was female was widely circulating in the fanzines as far back as 1973, and it was a supposition that was raised so often that when I wrote an essay on Tiptree in late 1974 I went to elaborate lengths to refute its probability. Which caused me some embarrassment later on. *Plenty* of people guessed Tiptree's secret, Vonda: you and *I* just didn't happen to be among them.

Fred Pohl's column saddens me. Defending the literary value of SF by attacking Melville and Shakespeare is nice smartass stuff, but Fred is too good a writer and too intelligent a person to be indulging in that kind of silliness.



Scott Macaulay
5981 Searl Terr.
Bethesda, MD 20016

It's nice to see the new column dealing with SF films. However, I found it amusing that Bhob Stewart only touched upon what I thought was Bakshi's major problem in *Lord of the Rings.*

When Stewart objects to the deletion of Tolkien's songs, I suspect that he was objecting to the film's lack of Middle Earth atmosphere. The songs and poems, along with the detailed history, genealogies, interesting side adventures, and trademarks of Middle Earth added a "you are there! ! ! " sense to the books, a feeling which is sadly missing from the movie.

Bakshi's LotR exists as an adventure yarn dealing with a bunch of funny people who are trying to destroy some magic ring, while the books portray a completely different world and culture. Admittedly, given the requirements of today's films, this type of depiction would be extremely hard, but Bakshi could have attempted richer characterization and a more detailed portrayal of Middle Earth.

I also disagree with Stewart's commendation of rotoscoping. I viewed LotR with a friend who has won several local awards for his animation and we both commented on the film's flat look. We found that the rotoscope process resulted in a film that had little depth with regards to characters and their backgrounds.

Also, the characters were certainly not imaginatively drawn or designed. Treebeard looks like a display at your local Safeway. I would have sacrificed some of Bakshi's supposed realism for some imaginative and innovative character design.

Finally, Stewart criticizes reviewers for latching on to the fact that the film only covers the trilogy's first half. I believe that most critics used this fact to speculate upon the chances for ever seeing LotR 2. Bakshi is purportedly working on another film before the Middle Earth conclusion and the chances for seeing this second half are low, given the costliness and time involved with a modern animation project.

LotR was not all bad (certainly better than the Rankin-Bass Hobbit) and contained some very good sequences. Some of the early Black Rider encounters were eerily surrealistic and evoked genuine chills. But then again, the film could have been a lot better, particularly in providing better characterization and atmosphere. Anyway, I look forward to seeing more of Bhob Stewart's columns. I like his format of commenting on one film rather than writing capsule reviews of every conceivable movie dealing with SF.

As a final word, I'd like to compliment you on SF Chronicle. The market report was extremely valuable, since most of that information is not even provided in the 79 Writer's Market. I hope to see larger Chronicles in the future.

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I think Bakshi botched his version of *Lord of the Rings* in far too many ways to make up for the good that's in it. Bhob himself points out the numerous omissions of poem and dialogue. Much of that dialogue is essential to the understanding of the plot, and I doubt many people not acquainted with Tolkien's original will fully know what the funny little hobbits and the pompous old fart of a wizard are quite up to, or why this or that obvious solution can't be taken when trouble pops up. Having read the book, this is pure surmise, and perhaps the screenplay is quite clear, but the complexity and the rate that the plot races along lead me to think the film must have been hard to follow for the non-initiate. Certainly, the richness of historical and mythological lore that backs up every invention of Tolkien's is lacking in Bakshi's film. The very first example I can think of is the hurried over history of the ring (apart from the film credits) which even leaves out the appearance of the inscription on the ring (though Gandalf does hurl it into the fire). Obviously Bakshi could not have carried over every line of dialogue and exposition from LotR, but equally obviously more could have been done than he chose to do. As Bhob points out, "at least 15 minutes of battle scenes could have been sacrificed to include some of the poems instead." Less interesting battle scenes than could scarcely be imagined . . .

But on these points I'm just emphasizing what Bhob Stewart has to say, not offering a new opinion. I disagree totally with his evaluation of the art, though.

The rotoscoping effect Bakshi designed was interesting, sometimes effective, but usually out of place, and often low quality. On the plus side were the rotoscoped ringwraiths. While normally the rotoscoped figures of bar tenders, Rohirrim, and spear carriers set them apart from the normally animated characters, the other-worldliness of the black riders was perfect. It could be

argued that orcs too ought to be otherworldly, but I think Tolkien made it clear that he considered them wholly of this plane, and as such should have been treated with the same animation techniques that Sam or Aragorn were. Several scenes in particular stand out in my mind in which the difference in technique was painfully obvious. The night the Hobbits stayed at the Prancing Pony for one. Disneyesque animated Hobbits fraternized with film-looped bar flies that looked more like photo solarizations than drawings. Aragorn on the battlements of Helm's Deep with a Rohirrim next to him; Aragorn properly drawn and the spear-carrier a ghostly xerox. If rotoscoping must be resorted to, either a less intensive form should be used, or rotoscoped and normally animated characters ought not to be mixed.

About now I should mention the different ways that rotoscoping can be used in animation. Disney used the mildest form in *Pinocchio*, where the character of the Blue Fairy was drawn from photocopied stop-motion photos of an actress performing the Blue Fairy's role. Disney preferred to think of this as "referring" rather than rotoscoping. The next step is to simply draw over the copies, changing to greater or lesser degree the expressions and motions of the figure as the artist has need. Something along these lines resulted in KoKo the Clown and some of the characters in Tex Avery's Warner Brothers' and MGM cartoons. Going whole hog, the photocopy can be transferred directly to the animators' cell without being touched by human hand. This was Bakshi's way. As such, I'm not even sure it deserves to be called animation, or even art, since in this extreme case no one draws anything and the "animated" segment is shot like any other take, then just matted over a background. The xerox-look resembling solarization is what makes me think Bakshi has just filmed live actors and transferred their acting to a cell. Had there been an intervening step in which artists transferred the actors to paper instead of a modified photocopier, then the discrepancy of styles would have disappeared.

Rotoscoping was used for unusual or difficult motions as well as reducing the workload of supernumerary characters. On several occasions I recall Bakshi resorting to cheating instead of genius, especially in Moria. The running fellowship was shown from various angles and elevations that would have been effective had they not looked like blurry photographs projected at slightly too many frames per second.

Enough of rotoscoping, though. I can pick nits enough in the normal animation without need of the exotic. Whenever more than two or at most three Hobbits were together it seems that the hair on their legs was too much trouble for the animators to handle. The hair writhed and jumped like a gorgon's snakes. During the eleventieth birthday party for Bilbo, legs and other appendages floated around, sometimes passing through supposedly solid objects such as barrels, stumps and other Hobbits. The distance shot of the Hobbits crossing over a bridge on the way to Rivendell had their train floating alternatively a little above or a little below the bridge's silhouette. Galadriel, when showing Frodo and Sam her mirror, is painted blue while the Hobbits seem unaffected by the moonlight and appear normal flesh tone. The blazes of fire in the eyes of orcs, riders, and steeds sometimes drifted elsewhere.

Recognizable scenes, such as Gimli's axing orcs at Helm's Deep, reappear.

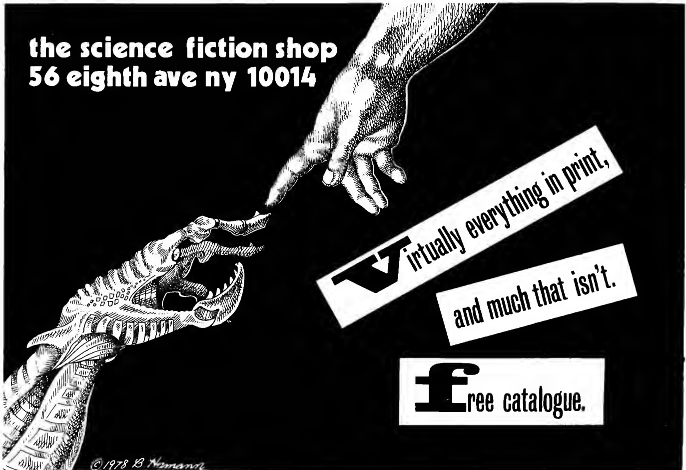
Many of the backgrounds are poorly conceptualized, so that a field outside Orthanc could have been on the other side of the world for all the attention paid to spatial relationships. Different scenes or angles in supposedly the same place would show trees and bushes jirst, then bare earth; predominantly greens then brown; light then dark. I keep coming around to the Helm's Deep episode, but somehow the best examples of all the worst seem to occur here. Hardly any of the backgrounds had any reference to any of the others while at Helm's Deep.

We could argue about the visualization of the characters. Elron reminded me of Jay Silver Hells of Tonto fame. Galadriel had improbably big eyes. Sam was too much of a moron. Frodo too young. Boromir not clean shaven as he was supposed to be. Golum painted battleship gray instead of fish belly white, bald and dressed in a neat loin cloth instead of rags (with pockets, according to Tolkien). But why bother. Not all the changes were necessarily bad, though I'd deny any were improvements.

And, to Bakshi's credit, there were many, many subtle nuances to characters' expressions and movements that I thought were exquisite, as well as many impressive still paintings as backgrounds (though Rivendell is *all* wrong, looking too much like a Howard Johnson's).

But whether it's because I'm an artist or because I'm a Tolkien fan or because I'm just plain fussy, I can't overlook the slipshod, hurried, cost-conscious artwork long enough to enjoy Bakshi's *Lord of the Rings* even where it triumphs. It needs to go back to the drawing board.

Being particularly paranoid about artist rights, I worry about work of mine that is theoretically copyrighted in Canada but printed in the States. How do I protect work of mine that some faned has published in the public domain? Somebody tell me that.



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About "Women and SF": my dissertation on Soviet science fiction has some discussion of reader and writer sociology, with appropriate comparisons to the U.S. and other countries. And all available information seems to suggest that SF in Campbell's day was overwhelmingly a male field. I wouldn't be surprised if the proportion of women writers was much higher than the proportion of women readers in the 1940's. (Come to think of it, gothics are slanted almost entirely at women, but a fair proportion of them are written by men, and even the audience for mystery novels is supposed to be mostly female in contrast to a goodly proportion of male authors. So maybe the SF situation had its parallels.) Even now, in the lofty regions of readership surveys to things like ALGOL and *Locus*, whose readers are older and probably better educated than the typical SF reader, female participation has reached only about 20%. Ten or fifteen per cent female readership would be a better guess for the Soviet Union, despite the presence of a number of talented women writers like Olga Larionova. It may very well be that the predominant antifeminism of pre-1970's SF is exactly what drove women away from the field. Not long ago my cousin-in-law (if that's not a word it ought to be), who has an SF-reader father and who consequently was exposed to the stuff from earliest youth, mentioned to me that she had been turned off to science fiction for some years on these grounds; I loaned her some recent Varley, Cherryh, and McIntyre as evidence of new trends, and these my cousin-in-law enjoyed. But scarce female readership was a fact, on whatever reprehensible grounds it became one, and Susan Wood overstates considerably when she writes, "The view of science fiction as a male preserve is a stereotype fostered by people such as John W. Campbell." That's the only flaw I found in the essay, though—and Susan bolsters her case with an impressive amount of research.

I was much pleased to see that Cherryh article published at last. I don't know what other people will think about it, but such lingering doubts as I myself had about its quality were done away with by seeing it in print and by some minor judicious editing on your part. I also like the illustration. I don't know whether it was done with Cherryh in mind or just happens to fit, but it is in fact very well suited to the point I wanted to make. When I wrote the thing I had had no personal contact with Cherryh, but subsequent correspondence and conversations at a couple of conventions confirmed many of my speculations (e.g., about lots of unpublished writing preceding the published works), which was gratifying. One thing I did get wrong was any intentional parallel between the kallia and Japan. Cherryh denies knowing anything much about Japanese history, so the parallels there were just coincidence.

I note that Williamson's psychotherapy, like Larry Niven's, was at the Menninger Clinic. Maybe they should start holding Clarion Conferences there. Williamson is extremely vague about just why he was in therapy. He, of course, has a right to privacy, but it would seem to make more sense either to be as frank about his problems as Larry Niven was or else to keep quiet and not pique the reader's curiosity. I wonder, incidentally, whether Williamson has ever thought of doing either a full-length biography or some sort of novel with autobiographical elements, sfnal or otherwise. I am thoroughly sick of Williamson heroes with one-syllable first names and two- to three-syllable last names who set upon completing the glorious tasks started by their fathers. On the other hand, even if he wanted to leave the problems related to psychotherapy completely out of it, Williamson would seem to have led a fascinating life, traveling all over the place even in the depression years and moving from a primitive farm to a professorate and career writing about technology. That I would like to read more about.

I keep waiting for Advent to put *SF in Dimension* into paperback, which would bring its price down to a reasonable level, and they keep holding out for maximum hardcover sales first, so I haven't yet read it. I see no copyright notice indicating that "John Campbell's Vision" is part of this work, but it does seem to be part of some larger whole. Maybe it just presupposes *SF in Dimension.* It doesn't stand too well by itself, in any case. Yes, Campbellian SF is typified by the quote from "Who Goes There" about how natural laws are the same throughout the universe, so nothing in creation is totally alien. But how do the Panshins get from there to the assertion that Campbellian SF is "proto-ecological"? Quite the contrary, I would think it more akin to physics, and even in classical physics (so I'm told) there isn't a general solution to the three-body problem. In physics, for the sake of general principles you like to keep your mutual interactions down to the minimum you can get away with. You keep pretending planets are dimensionless points, and whatnot. Note the difference between Campbellian SF, in which man, or at least his creations the robots, are the lords of creation, and the story which Stanislaw Lem keeps writing over and over again with wearisome regularity. The Lem monostory does not deny that there are natural laws guiding the universe; it merely asserts that these are too subtle or complex for humans, or at least the given humans in any story, to comprehend. Therc is no reason in principle

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this should not happen in Campbellian SF. It is simply an act of anthropolotry (which does or should mean the worship of the human race) that it never does. I hasten to add that I'm getting pretty damn sick of the way nobody ever understands anything in Lem, and even the Strugatsky brothers are beginning to emulate him in recent work. The contagion will doubtless spread westward too, if it hasn't already.

The characterization of SF that McIntyre ascribes to "either Joanna Russ or Chip Delany" comes from neither of this trendy twosome but from Old Wavicle Isaac Asimov. One place it can be found is the introduction to *Soviet Science Fiction* and another is the essay "Social Science Fiction" (1953). Ye gods! How does anyone put the Good Doctor's words into the hands of Russ or Delany? I find much of McIntyre's work readable, but the company she keeps! !

It's probably a good idea to add a film column, but it is to be hoped that this would be written not from the viewpoint of the typical SF movie viewer, who can go read *Cinefantastique*, but from that of the person whose chief interest is written SF. I haven't yet made up my mind whether Robert Stewart fulfills this criterion.

Vincent DiFate gives what seems to be eminently sound advice to artists, but I am a little disturbed by the first two or three paragraphs. I would be prepared to listen to an assertion that society owes everyone the chance at a job, but scarcely an assertion that society owes everyone the one job they want most. Andy hasn't been able to make *Starship* support him. Seven thousand five hundred out of the ten thousand fans DiFate alludes to in the lettercol would like to be full-time writers. There is no intrinsic injustice in the fact that artists make low incomes. (Do those statistics include part-time artists, incidentally?) If an artist enjoys his work so much that he's willing to live at the poverty level just so he can do it, he's a hell of a lot more richly rewarded than I am, and has nothing to complain about on that score. Now, let me make it clear that I think those introductory paragraphs have little to do with the rest of the article, which as usual for DiFate is eminently sensible. Unethical publisher practices should be halted, and artists should drive the hardest bargains they can. But even in the best, most ethical, of all possible worlds, it may still be the case that so many people want to paint, largely for the sheer joy of painting; that so many of them paint *well* even, that the supply exceeds demand. In that case the artist, like the rest of us, may have to spend part of his time doing something other than his best love. The year my freelance income exceeds my salary, maybe I'll start feeling sorry for that artist—not before. In the meantime, Andy will go on editing STARSHIP on a near-break-even basis, and I will go on writing articles which work out to less than minimum-wage per hour, and letters of comment for free, and I will content myself with the satisfaction I get from the task—while, of course, I too try to drive the hardest bargain I can get, and pay my dues to associations like SFWA which will help to protect me from the grasping publisher.

Ronald R. Lambert
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How dare you consider moving! Here you berate us readers for moving so much, and then *you* go and do it! Just be sure you notify us of your new address—and don't forget the zipcode!

A few comments about Pat McGuire's article about C.J. Cherryh. I think he (perhaps inadvertently) implied that Cherryh's extensive knowledge of human cultures past and present somehow is a drawback. Granted, *some* of her alien cultures have been composite beasts drawn from human precedents, but this is surely a lesser failing than that of many writers ignorant of human cultures other than their own who construct alien cultures that seemed to have evolved in Peoria. The universe certainly is not human; but even less is the universe Peoria.

Every writer goes through a gradual process of integration and synthesis, putting together what he/she knows and learning to generate new things from that basis. This is a part of the learning process that cannot be avoided. For a while, the writer does not stray too far from his/her precedents. But eventually a quantum jump takes place, and the writer really begins to extrapolate. This is when writers succeed in constructing truly alien cultures.

Cherryh has already reached this point, and as McGuire noted, some of her more recent writings depict truly alien cultures. Her Iduve were very well wrought.

The point I would like to make is that her knowledge of disparate human cultures is a distinct *advantage*. She had more to start with, greater breadth of perspective, than writers who are culturally illiterate beyond the boundaries of their own country and era. It is therefore no surprise that her synthesis, once she got it all together, should result in extrapolations that produce better depictions of alien cultures than can be found virtually anywhere else. Cherryh is already well on the way to establishing a reputation for herself of being *The* Sociologist of science fiction.

Even if she should slip up once in a while, I still find it more credible to read about aliens who are Etruscans than about aliens who are from Peoria.

I do not accuse McGuire of anti-intellectualism, but there is a lot of anti-intellectual-

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ism going around, sometimes manifested very subtly. In the science fiction field, one manifestation is evident in the widespread attitude that "soft" sciences are unimportant. Cherryh's contribution has particular value in demonstrating the relevance of her field to the concerns of science fiction, even as previous writers demonstrated for other fields of science. In doing this, she has broadened the scope of science fiction even more. Because of this, we are enriched.

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Many months of watching my fellow comic book professionals frantically trying to solve the "work-for-hire" issue as it relates to the comics industry causes me to pay close attention to all articles pertaining to this topic. So I closely read the latest installment of Vincent DiFate's "Sketches" dealing with the Graphic Artists Guild.

I sympathize with all the aims of the Guild. There is a great need for organizations which defend the rights of the creator, so I wish it the best of luck. However, there is one aspect of the Guild which I find fairly sexist. I expect that others will also write you to point this out, especially since this issue's letter column is filled with myriad controversial comments on Susan Wood's "Women and SF" article.

According to the Guild's membership application, which is reproduced on the same pages as Vincent DiFate's article, to join the Guild as a Professional member one must have an income over $7500. Artists making less than $7500 per year are confined to being only Provisional members. In the body of the article, though, it is indicated that the National Endowment of the Arts has determined that the average annual income for male and female artists is $9500 and $4100, respectively.

When these two economic facts are juxtaposed and inspected, they would seem to prevent the average woman artist from joining the Guild as a full member. If these figures of income can be accepted as truth, the income membership requirement must undoubtedly work in a discriminatory manner.

Why did the founders of the Guild, having equal access to these figures, choose to create this sexist membership barrier?

[This seems to be picking extremely small nits. Rather than discriminating against women, this seems to show a knowledge of the graphics field, and an awareness that a savings of $30 per year for someone who doesn't make that much can be very helpful. You don't have to join as a provisional member, after all—and there is nowhere on the application for a sex check. Or even a chromosome count. . . AIP]

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One comment on Fred Pohl's interesting, as usual, piece is that I feel *all* fiction should be judged on the same standards: First as literature and second as a genre (SF, mystery, etc.). Some fiction is written solely for its entertainment value but has no lasting literary quality. This type of fiction is doomed to stay in the pulps with few popular, but less than memorable, exceptions.

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James Gunn's article on SF and the future in the Winter issue repeats a rather unfortunate myth regarding the response of the "poor" to the reputed affluence of the industrial revolution. Quoting C.P. Snow's 1959 "Two Cultures" lecture, he implies that workers jumped at the opportunities for wealth promised by the new industrial system wherever it appeared.

This is simply not true. If Gunn had bothered to consult a source more recent and professional than Snow's twenty year-old lecture, he would have found out that the situation was exactly the opposite: E.J. Hobsbawm (*The Twin Revolutions, Industry and Empire*), E.P. Thompson (*The Making of the English Working Class*) and Barrington Moore (*The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*) all demonstrate that the labour pool required for early industrial capitalism was created by forcing a large part of the population off the land. The Enclosure Acts insured that this displaced mass faced the simple choice: work or starve. The industrial proletariat arose in response to issues of survival in the face of forced change, *not* as a result of desire for affluence. Given the

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notorious conditions of working class life in the early part of the industrial revolution, Gunn's assertion is ridiculous. Furthermore, even when one looks at the period when worker "affluence" became an important factor—the rise of mass consumption in the latter half of *this* century—it is clear that workers resisted such change: Harry Braverman (*Labor and Monopoly Capital*) demonstrates the coercive nature of rationalized work relations, required for control of rebellious workers, and Stuart Ewen (*Captains of Consciousness*) points out how people had to be pushed into mass consumption by advertising.

The point which Gunn misses, in *Alternate Worlds* as well as in the article, is that the transition to capitalism was not smooth and agreeable, but involved much hardship and social struggle. The ambiguous legacy of the industrial revolution is still with us, in science fiction as much as in class politics. Ambivalence regarding the fruits (bitter or sweet) of the industrial revolution marks the attitudes regarding scientific-industrial progress in SF literature, beginning with Mary Shelley's fable and continuing through the present with Frank Herbert's eco-politics or Niven and Pournelle's defense of intensive technology use. This tension provides much of the thematic depth and complexity responsible for SF's continued relevance. Ignoring its social roots (or mystifying them, as Gunn does, which amounts to the same thing) brings the added risk of misreading the potential of SF itself: more than simply "ideas worked out in human terms," SF vicariously confronts us with the human consequences of drastic social change. This "problem" is our legacy from the industrial revolution, an issue explored best in the ambiguous imaginary worlds of science fiction.

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Issue 33 is good as usual. The Susan Wood article on Women and SF was very interesting. It is beautifully researched and, except for gratuitous slashes at Heinlein and John Campbell, well written.

The Pohl diary is great. He said he wasn't going to give a con report, but two sentences on Iguanacon make a fine one: "I would be lying if I said I didn't enjoy the hell out of it." and "... I wish I could get my hands on the volume controls and turn them down a little: about 20% lower temperature, about 50% fewer people and about 60% less Harlan." (I would have said 30% less Harlan.)

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This is a GOOD issue. It's really nice to see Susan's paper finally in print; the points she makes in the wake of many others (Joanna Russ and the others she quotes) still need to be made in the large forum you offer (and I'm afraid SFR ain't going to offer its readership such a perspective); and the essay as a whole says what must be said with a quiet passion and a clear intellect. I really can't imagine that many people being able to argue that it's just another woman sounding off; it ISN'T.

The high point of the issue, though, is the super interview with Suzy McKee Charnas. Neal Wilgus is a good interviewer and that helps, but finally it's the fact that Ms. Charnas is such a good interviewee that makes it so solid. Of course I had realized that the rulers of Holdfast were descendants of the rulers of today's Pentagon, but I hadn't really seen them as referring to the Nixon crew. Once said, of course, it makes perfect sense and is funny as all hell. Her comment that the Women's Liberation Movement has made some progress for middle class women resonates with a letter I read elsewhere recently in which a woman stated (hereby breaking into more forbidden territory than even Women's Liberation, I suspect, in American psyches) that elitism is far more powerful than sexism in keeping women (*and* men) from the wrong classes out of the places of power in our society (but that can't be, because the U.S.A. is a classless society where everyone is equal, n'est-ce pas?). I look forward to *Motherlines* with great interest, and I enjoyed the whole interview and think Charnas a most intelligent and articulate writer. Thanks for giving it to us.

Fred Pohl's diary was great fun; it read like an extra chapter to his book actually and in a funny way belongs there, perhaps as a small extra in the paperback? I loved the reference to the intelligent talk show host in Chicago.

Vincent DiFate's "Sketches" is very useful to nonartists like me. It's something of an eyeopener to see exactly how a cover gets made, especially all the essentially non-art decisions which obviously affect the artist.

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Susan Wood's article, "Women and Science Fiction" sparked some thoughts—some positive and some negative.

First, let me say that I enjoyed it. My hackles did not rise nor my teeth grind. It was a good historical survey; but I'm not sure that's what Wood intended.

Most of the blatant examples of sexism she cited (excepting Laumer's story, and no one but Retief has any brains anyway in those tales) come from the period when SF was primarily written for sale to pubescent males.

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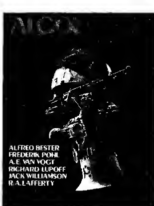

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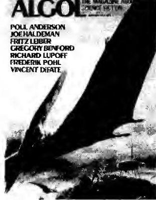

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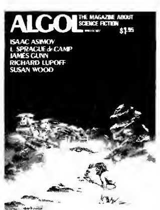

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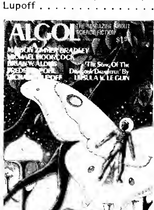

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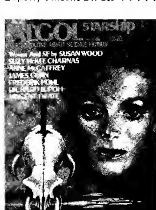

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CONLOG

May 4-6. PARACON II. Sheraton Penn State, State College PA. GoH: Norman Spinrad. Registration: $5 to 3/31, then $7. Write: Bob Castro, 425 Waupelani Dr #24, State College PA 16801.

May 11-13. ARMADILLOCON 1. Villa Capri Motor Hotel, Austin TX. GoH: John Varley. Fan GoH: Jeanne Gomoll. Registration: $6 to 4/1, then $10. Write: Robert Taylor, P.O. Box 9612 NW Sta., Austin TX 78766.

May 25-27. V-CON 7. Gage Towers, Univ. of British Columbia, Vancouver BC. GoH: Jack Vance. Toastmaster: Frank Herbert. Registration: $6 to 3/18. Write: V-Con 7, P.O. Box 48701 Bentall Sta., Vancouver VC, Canada V7X 1A6

May 25-28. PENULTICON. Cosmopolitan Hotel, Denver CO. GoH: C.J. Cherryh & Samuel R. Delany. Fan GoH: Don & Maggie Thompson. Registration: $10. Write: Penulticon, Box 11545, Denver CO 80211.

May 26-30. ABA 79. LA Convention Center, LA, CA. Write: American Booksellers Assn, 122 East 42nd Street, New York NY 10017.

Jul. 4-8. WESTERCON 32. Sheraton Palace, San Francisco CA. GoH: Richard Lupoff. Fan GoH: Bruce Pelz. Write: Westercon 32, 195 Alhambra St., #9, San Francisco CA 94123.

Jul. 13-15. DARKOVER GRAND COUNCIL MEETING 2. La Guardia Sheraton, Queens, NY. GoH: Marion Zimmer Bradley. Registration: $10 to 7/1, then $15. Write: Armida Council, P.O. Box 355, Brooklyn NY 11219.

Jul. 20-22. CONEBULUS III. Thruway Hilton, Syracuse NY. Registration: $6 to 7/1, then $10. Write: Conebulus 3 c/o Carol Gobeyn, 619 Stolp Ave., Syracuse NY 13207.

Jul. 20-22. DEEPSOUTHCON '79. Le Pavillion Hotel, New Orleans LA. GoH: R.A. Lafferty. Registration: $10. Write: Faruk Con Turk, 1903 Dante St., New Orleans LA 70118.

Aug. 23-27. SEACON '79/37th World Science Fiction Convention. Metropole & Grand Hotels, Brighton, UK. GoH: Brian Aldiss (UK), Fritz Leiber (USA). Fan GoH: Harry Bell. Write: Seacon '79, 14 Henrietta St., London WC2E 8OJ, UK.

Aug 30-Sep 3. NORTHAMERICON. Galt House, Louisville KY. GoH: Frederik Pohl. Fan GoH: George Scithers. Registration: $10 to 6/30; $15 to 12/31/78, $7 supporting. Information: NorthAmericon, P.O. Box 58009, Louisville KY 40258.

Sep. 28-30. PGHLANGE 11. Marriott Inn, Pittsburgh PA. GoH: Gene Wolfe. Registration: $7 to 9/15, then $9. Write: Barbara Geraud, 1202 Benedum-Trees Bldg., Pittsburgh PA 15222. (412) 561-3037.

Sep. 29-Oct. 1. MOSCON 1. Best Western University Inn, Moscow ID. GoH: Verna Smith Trestrail, Alex Schomburg. Fan GoH: Jessica Salmonson. Registration: $6 to 9/3, then $10. Write: Beth Finkbiner, P.O. Box 9141, Moscow ID 83843.

Oct. 26-28. MAPLECON II. Chateau Laurier, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. GoH: Harry Harrison. Fan GoH: Norbert Spehner. Registration: $7.50 to 10/1, then $10. Write: Maplecon II, P.O. Box 2912, Sta. D, Ottawa ONT Canada K1P 5W9.

Nov. 2-4. NOVACON 9 (WEST). Turf Inn, Albany NY. GoH: Bob Shaw. Registration: $7.50 to 4/16/79; $10 to 10/15/79; then $15. Write: Novacon 9, P.O. Box 428, Latham NY 12110.

Nov. 9-11. PHILCON 43. Sheraton Valley Forge Hotel, King of Prussia PA. GoH: Joan D. Vinge. Artist GoH: Karl Kofoed. Registration: $6 to 10/1, then $8 at the door. Write: Randi Millstein, 10104 Clark St., Philadelphia PA 19116.

Aug. 29-Sept. 1, 1980. NOREASCON 2. 38th World Science Fiction Convention. Sheraton-Boston Hotel & Hynes Civic Auditorium, Boston MA. GoH: Damon Knight, Kate Wilhelm. Fan GoH: Bruce Pelz. Registration: $20 to 7/1/79. Write: Noreascon 2, P.O. Box 46, MIT Branch Post Office, Cambridge MA 02139.

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