



JANUS

WISCON 77 ISSUE

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Welcome to the WisCon issue of *Jaxxa*—whether you are one of the fortunate persons actually attending this con of cons or whether you are one of the less blessed who were invited but didn't show up and now, no doubt, are repenting and are suffering your just punishment, i.e., to eternally regret your lost opportunity for happiness and fulfillment, and now wallow self-pityingly among the following pages attempting in vain to absolve yourself with vicarious experience. You should have a good time doing that, I guess, but really ya shoulda' been here! Not being overly committed to the old F&B (Fire and Brimstone) method of dealing with recalcitrant fans who fail to see the light, however, we'll give you another chance next year.

(Speaking of next year, it has been suggested that WisCon's title could evolve through a trinity of convolutions, so that next year you may attend ConCon, and the following year be enticed to slink to SinCon...) (...That assumes, of course, that there is anyone besides mundanes still alive in Madcity following this con.)

In any case, welcome to WisCon! We will attempt, besides entertaining you with our regular *Jaxxa* features, to guide you on a tour, so to speak, and give you an overview of the Madcity convention. Inside you should find some Goh! biographies, panel reports, con-film reviews, as well as reviews of Katherine MacLean's short stories and novels, and of Amanda Bankler's *The Witch and the Chameleon*. Also within the next 40 pages or so, you will find an article by Phil Kaveny that springs from a recent Madstf (the Madison Science Fiction Group) activity, that is, our involvement with radio productions via WORT-FM. Then too, there is an excellent review of Philip K. Dick's work by Lesleigh Luttrell, and besides that, some fiction, too (another rousing saga by John Bartelt, for one). Really though, the whole convention is pretty well described in the course of the articles we've accumulated for this issue and I'm wondering what the hell is left for me to say since this column is supposed to be an introduction to the convention...

(Is it just by chance, Jan, that it is my turn to do News Nurd's this time??)

Ah well...Hi, Hello! hope you enjoy yourselves, sit down, be comfortable, How's the family? Heard any good Martian jokes recently? (What's a Martian joke? You've got to be kidding! Like:

How can you tell if a Martian has been in your house?—All your lightbulbs have been eaten and there are little lumps of quartz on your rug, of course. Or: Why do Martians have so many high-way accidents?—Everyone knows that it's because it's hard to keep your eye on the road when you're worshipping the gearshift. Or even: Why are Martian paintings so dull?—Obviously because they only see in the police band. And then there's the one that asks: How do Martians mate?, the answer coming that: Better you should ask why. Or...)

OK, OK...the thing on my shoulder is beginning to claw me more vigorously than usual. Back to WisCon. Modestly not wishing to steal the show from the nice people who entertain you within this *Jaxxa* by their insightful and comprehensive reviews and comments regarding WisCon programming, I could still, perhaps, give you some behind-the-scenes ~~66666~~ data about the genesis of the con and of its committee.

You no doubt have already noticed the inspiring photograph of your committee below, and are experiencing an appreciative glimmer of understanding as to just why this city is known as "Madcity." You may also be experiencing a strange sense of suspense as you contemplate the fact that these are the people who will be taking care of you for the next couple of days. Of course that may be just indigestion. (What did you have for lunch? I hope you didn't eat at... Oh what's the name of that Madcity restaurant where all those people died last week? Well, I'll try to remember its name before the end of the column.)

(What's "33"?—Martian "69", of course.)

To make introductions...I'm the disembodied pointy head and Jan is the lascivious Swann dried on the upper right with vines crawling all over her. We make a great—though granted, a weird—team. Popeye and Art Nouveau poster lady (with the ostrich-feather fan, crouching beneath the UBIK can) are none other than the infamous Luttrells (Hank and Lesleigh, respectively), who are rumored to move from city to city inciting clubs and fermenting zines and conventions. Lesleigh will be taking your money and Hank will be stacking you into the Huckster room. The Dune fremen sitting next to the Ivy-hung Jan is Perri Corrick who is wondering which of them the hit-man and con-security personnel, Philip Kaveny (behind the can of UBIK) is going to get before the evening is through. Perri, along with Hank, can be held responsible for the movies you see at WisCon. Phil is the person, as has been mentioned already, who will take care of you should you need to register a complaint. Rick White, our can of UBIK and video-room person, sometimes keep us from deteriorating, though unfortunately was only partially successful a few moments before the photo was taken. Doug Price, our con co-chairperson (with Jan) who is standing next to the Mafia hit-man, found himself in the grip of a strange fit as he gyrated to the tune of 'The Time Warp' and John "40upm" Bartelt, con secretary (standing to the left of Doug), lost all sensation in his third arm. Several other Madstf members disappeared from sight entirely. Dick Russell, Diane Martin, Tom Hurn, Pat Sommers, Richard West, and Greg Rihn mutated into such strange forms (well, we all have our bad days), that it was deemed for the best anyway that we not ~~scare~~ ~~you~~ bother you with their pictures.

We'll take good care of you...

Q. How can you tell a male Martian from a female Martian?

A. Female Martians can't do square roots.

Q. What's the most important thing for a

Shriner to take to Mars?

(A. A table of square roots.)

As I try to keep on the subject of the WisCon the thought keeps wandering through my mind that this would be a good place to review the hopes and fears, aspirations, and goals of the con. But I can't, for the life of me, recall why we ever wanted to do such a crazy thing as put on a con. ... I think somebody gave us some money, and then we pushed Hank into a closet because he was screaming, "No, no, no! Not again! Oh god, no!" (he was acting pretty weird that day, but he was better when we let him come out again.) And then we were doing it. (Somebody said, "Here draw a picture of some convention stuff, Jeanne.") I just woke up yesterday, and wow, it's real ...

Ahem. Sorry.

In the course of this convention, we hope to uplift your spirits, deflate the disillusionment in your souls, engage your intelligence with provocative discussions of pressing issues of our time, and...

Forget that. Have fun. Have another Martian joke:

What do you call a Brillo pad with foam rubber melted all over it?—A Martian cheeseburger.

Why did we decide to do it? Would you believe that we're lonely and wanted to have a party? Me neither. I think it was Doug's fault. Talk to Doug; he'll explain.

I'm just getting confused talking about the con: read the rest of the issue if you really want to know more, and look at the list for a blame-

list and some other pertinent con statistics that I didn't get around to mentioning here. Since this column is called "News Nurdz" (well every other issue it is, because Jan won't write in a column named that; she says that's crude), I will finish off with an update on other Madstfanaic. (I, by the way, tend towards crudity. See the Martian jokes.)

We, that is the conglomeration that includes Madstf, WisCon, *Janua* and four other Madcity fanzines (*Cory*, *Digressions*, *Overint*, and *Starling*), are now officially incorporated. We have our own articles of incorporation, certificate of incorporation, bylaws, and everything, even a bureaucracy, no kidding, but so far everybody's still friends. We are known as SF³ (or the Society for the Furtherance and Study of Fantasy and Science Fiction.) If you are interested in joining (actively or supporting) you can write: SF³, Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701. (Even a Box number!) One result of our incorporation will hopefully be that we get a mailing permit. This is the reason you see such an unfannish thing as a definite schedule of *Janua* publication dates on the table of contents.

In recent months, Madstf has done several programs, in an attempt to snare closet SF fans from Madcity environs. Jan and I wildly acclaimed ourselves for our Doris Lessing program in which we discussed the three most recent of Lessing's novels *Memoirs of a Survivor*, *Briefing for Descent into Hell*, and *Four-Gated City* and her use of SF devices therein. Maybe next time, one of us will get an article together about what was said there. In mid-December Phil Kaveny and Jan did an exciting



TO P. 25

Your Community

PRESCRIPTION & PROSCRIPTION

THE EDITORIAL BY JANICE BOGSTAD

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of science-fiction literature is the close relationship between those who read and those who write it. Not only are many present-day writers well known fans of the past, but all readers of the genre can involve themselves in international fandom. Thereby they can meet and talk with SF authors about their past and future work. Of course, the middleman(woman), the editor in this case, is not totally out of the picture, but editors are (hopefully) responsive to the wishes of fans. For all of these reasons there is a great potential within the science-fiction community, the potential that rests in the SF fans' ability to influence what they are presented with in SF literature. It is to this potential that I wish to address my interests in the Women and Science Fiction panel. And, being devoted to literature anyway, I find myself addressing that potential in the form of literary criticism.

Now when anyone begins to speak in polite company about prescriptive and proscriptive criticism, the fur inevitably starts flying. Woe be to s/he who suggests anything which vaguely resembles limiting an author's freedom to write whatever may interest them. Yet editors are setting up guidelines for authors to follow all the time, and often for less artistically laudable reasons than fan interest. Nor are their guidelines structured so as to promote the kind of literature which might be effective in transforming society for the better, the ultimate aim of the kind of criticism I am suggesting. Authors must often abide by subject-matter and length qualifications in order to fit the theme of a certain magazine or paperback publisher. All of these have their place in effective publishing, but they are no more important, at least in my eyes, than the suggestions of serious fans who present a coherent program of interests and guidelines for the kind of fiction which they would like to see written.

Perhaps I had better define prescriptive and proscriptive criticism before I attempt to use them.

Prescriptions are a common enough experience to provide a beginning point for my definition. Just as a doctor writes down the kinds of medicine the patient must procure to cure his or her illness, the prescriptive critic will set down a prescription for the characteristics she or he might like to see in SF literature. There is, of course, an obvious difference between the doctor of my metaphor and the critic of its parallel. The critic does not necessarily imply that the work of a writer is "sick" but rather that it could succeed in other areas than it does, were the prescriptions to be followed.

Prescriptive criticism can be used in two ways, neither of which is mutually exclusive. It can exist and be invoked before or after the fact of a particular SF story, but it always involves setting up certain norms for a successful story, then looking

at how particular stories compare to these norms. The norms usually have an ethical or humanitarian purpose behind them. This presupposes that literature is an effective tool in building reality. No one disputes that this is a fact, they rather dispute the degree to which it is the case.

I could set up my own prescription for SF stories, based on my beliefs about the equality of all people as human beings and supported by the new discoveries in traditional and social sciences which Jeanne mentions in her panel article. I hope, however, for a concretization of the norms I can only suggest here, as a result of the panel itself and the following discussion. After all, five heads (or 50) are better than one.

As I have mentioned elsewhere, in passing, there is no reason why SF, which is so creative in other areas, needs to remain so archaic in the field of social and sexual relationships. One of our panel members, Mary Kenny Badami, recognized the definite need for social extrapolation in SF in her article in *Extrapolation* 18. Much of SF seems to include assumptions either that people will maintain the kind of interpersonal relationships—such as formal marriage, the nuclear family, and state authority—that exist in the late 20th Century in worlds so far in the future that everything else about humanity has changed, or else that they will have to become physically altered in order for interpersonal interaction to change. Jeanne elaborates on this second manifestation in her editorial in *Janua* Vol. 2 No. 4. Yet even in the real world of the 1970s it is possible to point to examples of working alternatives to the traditional social system which offer many advantages for individuals and groups. Why is this difference in social interaction so infrequently a part of SF stories? The keeping pace of social change with technological change within SF stories would be one of my prescriptive criteria.

Closely related to the first issue, mentioned above, but approaching the relationships between people and people, and people and technology, from a different viewpoint, is the problem of the portrayal of men and women as characters in SF stories. Now there is a reason that stereotypes exist. They respond to both a reality and a need in human experience, yet they may be a response to the needs of only a particular period in human history, and they may reflect that period's misconceptions of the need. Pete Brown has urged us to go beyond the rehashing of woman's inferior portrayal, beyond pointing out that women were minor and often unlaudable characters in SF stories before 1960, and Fred Pohl, Lester Del Rey, and Alexei Panahin remind us that men did not fare so well either as characters in SF. Well, let me speak up for sensitive character development in SF. But my prescription calls for devel-

opment of a certain kind. I guess I am somewhat of an idealist. I believe that if writers know that their readers are interested, and if they know that their works will be read, then they will be only too happy to experiment with truly effective and revolutionary characterizations. I don't mean that all characters must suddenly become Superman and Wonder Woman, either. That's not the sort of thing I want to see. My prescription for characterization would require a careful look at the depth of character found in real people in 20th Century America. SF could easily reflect the profundity of the minds and souls which are capable of coping with contemporary reality and not succumbing to despair. Not only this would I prescribe, but also that they respond to and represent future possible realities for human interaction, offering realities that are consistent with the true natures of people. This sort of prescription is similar to Lukacs's descriptions of typical characters. Characters should both reflect and inspire.

My prescriptions would begin with those interpersonal concerns and trace them as they are gradually revealed to be the concerns of society as a whole. The panel, with its grounding in concrete scientific and academic discoveries, can hopefully fill up these prescriptions.

Prescriptive criticism approaches the problem of constructively commenting on literary production from the other direction. Though it can also be done before or after the fact of a specific piece of literature, again it operates through a set of norms. Here is another place where Jeanne's group of progressive scientific discoveries can be inserted in the critical sphere. They will form the basis for those things which we do not like to see in SF literature. Though "proscribe" may be rather a strong word for this kind of suggestion, it nevertheless includes the implication of the negative aspects of prescriptive criticism. A good example of this approach to SF literature is found in the introduction to a feminist anthology which appeared in 1974.



Perhaps I could be a little more concrete with my next prescription. There is no reason why one person has to be dominant in any situation, though this is a common character-type in SF. In real life, the most productive relationships are those in which all the individuals involved contribute, to the limits of their own potentials, to that relationship. Along with this cooperation comes the recognition that those things other individuals have to offer to a community are as essential as one's own contributions. Why is the recognition so often not reflected in SF? Theorists would perhaps tell us that this is due to the nature of prose fiction. A prose story must concentrate on one major protagonist in order for the action to be coherent. This is true to a certain extent, but I have read many novels and stories that also manage to convey the movement of masses of people in history. Such a novel is Callenbach's *EcoTopia*, which conveys a combination of the anarcho-syndicalist's dream with an ecologically sound society. In the society it represents, individuals work together because they realize the necessity, not because they are coerced.

Vonda McIntyre and Janice Anderson, in their introduction to *Aurora: Beyond Equality*, made several prescriptive statements. For example, they mentioned that one of their criteria for selecting short stories was that the stories not be a simple inversion of the male-dominated adventures of SF's historical period. They did not want to present stories with Amazonian women who existed through the subjugation of men. Especially since such stories seem to emphasize the "unnaturalness" of such a system. A female-dominated society which collapses from within is a somewhat well worn theme in both SF and adventure stories. A constructive response to this problem is at least begun in C. J. Cherryh's book *Brother to Earth*. Here, the alien culture she created includes a matriarchal power structure which operates within the home. At least the kinds of power that women have been able to maintain in the real past is recognized in this novel.

Prescriptive criticism is "constructive". It offers modes and models and suggestions for what

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AMANDA BANKIER

BY - JENNIFER BANKIER

Amanda was first exposed to science fiction at the early age of seven or eight when her father read Hal Clement's *Mission of Gravity* to her and her younger brother. In addition to the resulting addiction to Clement's work, she subsequently acquired a taste for the writings of Russ, McIntyre, Delany, Norton, Charnas, Brunner, Ellison, and LeGuin.

Although she continued to read SF avidly, Amanda did not have any active contact with fandom from the age of eight until, at the age of 18, she attended FanFair II in Toronto. This convention did nothing to change her perception of the existing atmosphere within fandom as that of a male club. By the time of TorCon II, however, there were increasing numbers of women who got involved in fandom on their own initiative, and this, combined with the work of women writers such as Joanna Russ and Ursula LeGuin, encouraged Amanda to commence publication of her feminist fanzine, *The Witch and the Chameleon*, in August of 1974. In that issue she stated her goals as follows:

...I feel very strongly that science fiction has tremendous potential for treating women fairly and honestly, and should be in the vanguard of literature in this respect rather than at the rear as it was for so long. I hope we will soon

see a number of forums for women who care about SF and want to work on it, and where feminism will not be treated as a humorous aberration as it has been in so much fiction and so many fanzines.

In *The Witch and the Chameleon* I hope to have all kinds of material except one: that which insults or trivializes women.

That there was a major need for a fanzine of this kind is demonstrated by the fact that *Witch* has attracted contributions or correspondence from such prominent women in the SF field as Vonda McIntyre, Joanna Russ, Andre Norton, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, Raccoona Sheldon, Marion Zimmer Bradley, and Suzy McKee Charnas. It has also elicited positive response from both fans and feminists outside fandom. To date there have been four single issues and one double one (Number 5/6), with the latter being produced in an offset format.

In mundane life, Amanda spent a couple of years studying chemistry at Cambridge in England, and will shortly obtain a degree in mathematics from McMaster University in Hamilton. Her future ambitions, however, lie in the fields of printing and writing (both fiction and poetry). Her non-professional interests outside the SF field include choral singing, embroidery, and photography. 🐾

A Biographical Guide.

I will mention that she was born more than 52 and less than 10² years ago (like myself), and that we share some of the same early interests.

Ms. MacLean writes of her early years (before age seven), describing a fascination with Tarzan, wolves and Mad Scientists. She says her Tarzan phase lasted only until age five or six (my own was a bit more protracted as I had two younger sisters to boss around the jungle). When her decision to become a Mad Scientist won out, she was about seven and already in school. The next phase of her interest involved H. G. Wells, also one of my early favorites. She writes:

Science Fiction fed this dream (to become a Mad Scientist) and I studied encyclopedias diligently until an essay on H. G. Wells convinced me that I should follow his footsteps from the path of science to the path of science fiction, becoming a prophet and a forerunner of the future.

She elaborated, in a Wellsian fashion, on the sort of stasis she sees in 20th Century American reality in an interview, entitled "Utopia: When the Grass Grows in the Yard And the Kids Play with Horses", published in the Portland, Maine, *Evening Express*, July 1, 1976. In it, she describes how it is that we have passed by the period of time when it was possible for a true utopia to exist, with just the right mixture of technology and individual, hence immediately self-satisfying, labor. She points out that our over-dependence on technology has taken much of the creative possibility out of life in 20th Century America. There is hope, in her view, however. We can still achieve the balance of just enough technology and room for satisfying labor which should result in a harmonious balance with nature also. But this can be achieved only through conscious effort on the part of all of us.

We already know about Ms. MacLean's adult life, that of a lab technician and teacher and of a writer of science fiction who sold her first story in 1949 (that was "Defense Mechanism"). She describes her

experience with other young writers of science fiction with a great deal of relish, people such as Judith Merrill, whom she still claims as a close friend, and Fred Pohl, Harry Harrison and Lester Del Rey. She was a member of the early Hydra society and now belongs to Science Fiction Writers of America, the Science Fiction Research Association and Mensa.

But still, what impresses me most about Katherine MacLean is her wide range of interests and ideas. She seems equally at home with biochemistry and General Systems management, mentions an interest in social laws, evolutionary ethics, and psychic research.

Katherine MacLean talks about her stories as if they were patterned after scientific experiments. In this she reminds me of Ursula LeGuin's approach to SF as described in "Is Gender Necessary" (in *Aurora: Beyond Equality*, edited by Susan Anderson and Vonda MacIntyre). She tells us that she started writing under the Campbell school of SF, where each story had to have an original idea. I must admit, I am most impressed with stories that have not only one but several new ideas, extrapolations of new possible futures. She also bemoans the fact that few contemporary editors are looking for the kind of solid extrapolation and scientifically based stories she likes to write. In one of her letters, Ms. MacLean says: "Are fans no longer slans? Who am I writing to? Does anyone want ideas?" To those questions I hope you can join me in answering, Yes. We are still slans and we all read science fiction for the new perspectives it gives us on our own, often incomprehensible reality. What else would SF be for if not the ideas it explores? So, Ms. MacLean, keep writing stories that are idea-oriented and we will keep reading them. Perhaps the message will get across to editors that SF can be well-written and scientifically interesting at the same time.

Ms. MacLean seems very accessible to me in many ways. Not only our similar interests, but her friendly and exciting personality make me want to meet her very much. I'm sure you will want to also. It won't be long now!!!

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AMANDA BANKIER

BY - JENNIFER BANKIER

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WISCON. PANEL REPORTS

1. ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS OF SF

THE FEMINIST-SF PANEL -- BY JEANNE GOMOLL

At conventions I have attended and heard about, the potential themes of feminist panels have been disappointingly limited. More often than not, the panels have been managed as if their chairpeople have considered only one of two possibilities: snickering sexism or disorganized consciousness-raising. For obvious reasons, we have not invited a panel of bozos to give feminists lessons in humor. Instead, it has been in hopes of avoiding the worst aspects of the other situation that we have organized the feminist panel around concrete objectives.

One can usually assume that a convention activity will be only a one-shot opportunity, at least as far as the specific group that gathers for it at a convention is concerned. No matter how successful/ productive the session, the group can continue their rendezvous only in a fragmentary, delayed manner (at future conventions), or in an entirely different forum (as in an APA). A convention activity is almost by definition a "happening," a non-repeatable, non-continuable event. There's a lot of potential for high-energy idea generation created by the random assembling of fans here...but not, unfortunately, potential for a consciousness-raising group. The aforementioned lack of continuity, the often cumbersome size of the group, limited time, etc., make for a situation where a few dominate the discussion, which will often spiral and stall in topics of elementary feminist argument or of minor interest to the majority of those assembled. And all those people out there with ideas are wasted.

So we decided to build a structure, in hopes of promoting a lively discussion among all of us who show up, concerning some fairly specific and novel ideas. We're going to dispense with raising consciousnesses as a primary goal (though if that happens too, fine.) We want to raise energy levels.

Now, as to the structure...

SF has been said to be based on ideas, and so upon ideas did we build our panel. As of this writing, preparation is still going on, and so this article can only suggest general directions. But what we will be doing is dividing time and topics into "idea units"—each idea unit representing some scientific field or academic area in which feminist awareness has prompted basic changes in the structure of theories or in actual developments. The possibilities are many and we perceive our limitations to be imposed primarily by time: that is, how many ideas can be covered in the space of only a couple of hours?

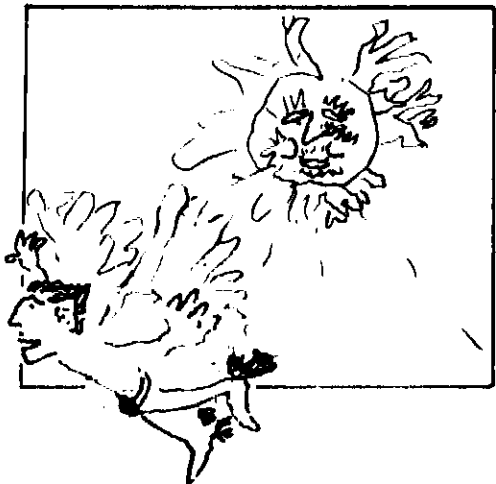
Consider psychology, for example, and the recently published works on female psychology, sex roles, learning process, etc.... Or anthropology, in which there has been an effort to go back to basic assumptions concerning human origins and weed out those theories which are based on beliefs that patriarchal, male-dominated societies have been the universal norm... Or history, in which many scholars have been actively experimenting with non-traditional modes of study—in order to gain a more realistic view of what a time was like, beyond the narrow confines offered by exclusive concentration on technology, politics and economics. (We know much, for instance, about the wealthy women of many periods: the foot-bound upper classes of China, the Medicis of Italy—both tiny minorities and unrepresentative of their whole societies—but very little about the day to day life of their poorer sisters who are "outside of history".) Or consider the biological sciences in which the presence of women as scientists and scholars has opened new fields and sparked exciting developments important to women and the control of our bodies and lives. The possibilities are nearly endless: linguistics, art history, sociology, neurology, and many more fields have all undergone dramatic and incredible changes in recent years due to feminist awareness and reconsideration.

SF has traditionally drawn its basic substance, that is, its ideas, from the on-going research done in the sciences. Therefore it is appropriate and worthwhile that the changes occurring now, as a result of feminist reevaluation, be reflected in science-fiction literature. But more than that: our impressions of our past create the visions we make of our future. And if the egotism of the SF community about its creations has any validity at all—that is, that



our visions of the future help to make that future—why then, there is all the more reason, as women, as people, to find images of strength and hope in our past.

In the feminist panel, or, the Alice-Through-the-Looking-Glass-of-Science-Fiction panel (the glass which inverts and juggles our ideas and conceptions and suggests to us new visions of ourselves), we want to talk about these ideas and, furthermore and especially, to talk about how they might be applied in the writing of science fiction. Jan talks more about this aspect of the panel in her editorial in this issue of *Janua*. Katherine MacLean, Amanda Bankler, Mary Badami, Jan Bogstad and I will be there, and hopefully we will have enough time for it all....



3. THE THINGS THAT THE THINGS THAT ATOMS ARE MADE OF ARE MADE OF

BY JOHN BARTELT

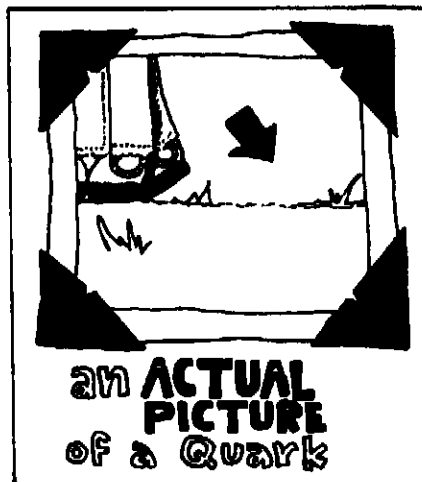
2. CONTEMPORARY SCIENCE FICTION

BY THOMAS J. MURN

It is our aim to present short talks and discussions which would represent some of the perspectives from which SF is viewed in this, the late, great 70s. It would be difficult to represent all existing factions and opinions, but some of the main angles of attack might be: the continuing exploration of the shady area between "hard-core" SF and "mainstream" literature; experimentation in speculative formats and whether it's creating new forms of expression or unreadable quasi-literature; and, of course, the overwhelming presence of the scientific worldview in modern Western societies, and whether SF can step back far enough to size up this cultural monster and deal with it in honest terms. I heard that some SF personality has claimed that the three primary aspects of our world as it exists today are overpopulation, pollution, and The Bomb (which is probably true), and that these three ogres should be the primary concern of people writing SF (an anachronistic if not laughable sign of arbitrary literary astigmatism.) Nonetheless, these three topics may have some importance to our panel, as we see how SF's synchronism roots it in the soil of the time of its writing. Nostalgic Inertia (a function of the scientific worldview?) might be carrying hard-core SF to an early grave. Anyhow, opinions on this and most other topics of importance to contemporary (i.e. up-to-date) SF will hope-

fully be aired. In regards to feminist SF, I would be interested in discussing its role as providing a testing ground for new ideas for a new society, but all SF should really be doing this, that is, respond to society's needs for new visions as society changes. Women will no longer be a *de facto* minority in our society, and any vision of a viable future must take that fact into account. But pertinent issues on women and SF may be explored in more rewarding detail in Jan and Jean's discussion of feminism and SF, and the interested fan is referred to their panel.

The contemporary SF panel is a joint production of Moan Media Madison, Moan Media Shorewood, and the Madison Scientifiction Group.



The science program will begin with a showing of a fascinating movie with the rather mundane title, *Powers of Ten*. It starts with a picture showing an area one metre across. Then the camera begins to pull back, ever more rapidly, until the Earth, the solar system, and finally even the local group of galaxies fade into the distance. Then, even more quickly, the camera zooms back and in on a skin cell of a man, then on past the microscopic, finally ending at the subatomic scale of a nucleus of a carbon atom. You won't want to miss it.

Dr. Robert March (professor of physics at UW and author of *Physics for Poets*) will take you one step smaller, into the realm of the objects making up the particles that make up the nucleus. In his talk "The Things That The Things That Atoms Are Made Of Are Made Of". He will discuss quarks, particles he has also described as "the dreams stuff is made of". The latest theories, speculations, and prospects for the future will be included.

Dr. March will also be available after his talk to answer questions in a more informal discussion, as will Jim Blair, a specialist in biochemistry, to field any questions on the interesting research going on in that area.



5. A FANTASY UPON THE THEME OF EDUCATION

BY GREGORY G. H. RIHN

The second problem in organizing a Science Fiction Studies Program is to lay out a basic introductory course format. The first problem, of course, is to convince the curriculum committee that there should be such a thing at all. On this, I can say little. By this point in time, the semi-respectability of science fiction as a field of study is fairly well established, and the popularity of SF courses, once they have been introduced, serves to maintain them. The panel will concentrate rather on alternative approaches to SF in the classroom.

There are a number of approaches to the organization of the SF course. One of the more popular consists of a historical overview. One follows the development of SF in a chronological fashion. A second approach is formal. SF literature is divided into groupings according to classical literary lines,

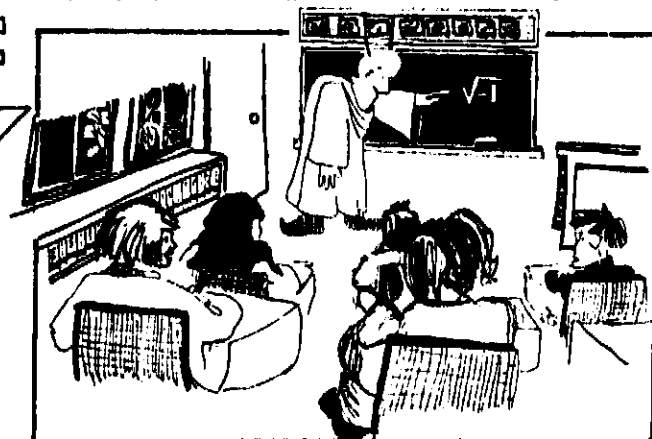
4. THE LITERARY PLEASURES AND POSSIBILITIES OF HEROIC FANTASY

BY RICHARD WEST

A panel discussion with James Cox, Gregory Rihn, Roger Schlobin, and Richard West (moderator)

In the decade since the success of J. R. R. Tolkien's fiction in the mid-1960's (and in some measure because of that success) heroic fantasy has become very popular and also gained academic respectability. This panel, while meandering in a fashion both scholarly and fanciful, will explore some of the ways in which this type of literature gives pleasure and, at least in the better examples, shows artistic merit.

Roger Schlobin of the English Department of Purdue University's North Central Campus will provide some basic definitions of the genre to help us know what it is we are discussing. Richard West, editor of *Orcrist*, will talk about some works which he sees as major successes as fantasy (such as Tolkien's Middle-earth books, Lewis's Narnia series, LeGuin's Earthsea trilogy, and the Panshins' *Son of Black Moroa*), and maybe also some he sees as less successful. James Cox will make a case for the value of the work of such authors as E. R. Burroughs and R. E. Howard, and Gregory Rihn will discuss some other popular fantasists such as Michael Moorcock. The format will be for each member of the panel to present his views for 10 or 15 minutes, followed by discussion among the panelists and with the audience for the rest of the period. We hope that by touching on such a wide range of authors we can illuminate how diverse are the entertainment and aesthetic values possible within the genre of heroic fantasy. ■



such as allegory, satire, or epic. I favor a thematic approach. I would organize the readings for an SF course according to various themes intrinsic to science fiction. Some topics might be time travel, man in space, first contact, or Mars as a symbol and a setting. Another possibility is author-centered studies.

These matters of interest in the area of organizing the teaching of science fiction and fantasy will be chewed over by a panel of persons of varying interests and experiences, including Professor Richard Doxtater of the UW-Stevens Point. I had hoped to have a note from him to include in this description of the panel, but none has reached me to date. Well, that's fandom; and it'll continue to be that way until we join the Galactic Postal Union. I do have an extract from a letter he sent me earlier this fall:

Hello and greetings from the land of Fantasy and Science Fiction, those nether regions neither the academic nor the general reading public have quite yet comprehended—and I suspect never will.

Consider that this year 200 or 800 Wisconsin middle and senior high schools offer SF courses, that 20-plus state colleges have the same, that 375 SF books were published in 1975, and 18 good, bad, or indifferent SF movies have been made in as many months—and you don't have to smoke to realize it's hard to catch one's breath. Especially when that's me, and my academic training lent itself to probing Jamesian metaphors, not Lovecraftian shadows. Anyhow, SF keeps popping up, saying "Told you so!!!" Witness Viking I and II, Legion Flu, and the Watergatean-who-was-bugging-whome. Ah, that our politicians and bureaucrats were as SANGUINE as SF writers and fans—maybe it's because they're not that we're here today.

Who knows? SF in the classroom today could produce SF in the government tomorrow...

6. FIAWOL

OR: CAN FANS STILL BE FANNISH WITH FROSTBITTEN NOSES?....
BY DOUGLAS PRICE.

FIAWOL (Fandom Is A Way Of Life) has plenty of meaning for the active science fiction fan. Originally begun in the letter columns of pulp magazines, fandom quickly grew large enough so that two fans actually bumped into one another. For fans, two is critical mass, and the explosion of ideas has yet to show signs of abatement.

Unlike readers and writers of other literary genres, members of fandom form a closed loop with its links of readers, editors, and authors. Indeed, fandom has been breeding ground for new generations of SF authors such as Ray Bradbury, Wilson Tucker, Harlan Ellison, and others.

Fandom is also publishing, like the fanzine/program book you hold in your hands. At present, it is estimated that over 3000 fanzines and amateur press associations are publishing, with distributions ranging from 25 to 3000.

Fandom is also strange people and even stranger happenings, which is what the fannish panel is all about. Fun and a weird tale or two are not the exception but the rule at WisCon.



MAJOR SPAKEY, Discovers
Intelligent life on another Planet;
in hindsight, he wasn't impressed...

[Handwritten signature]

H. G. WELLS

MULT-MEDIA PRESENTATION

BY PHILIP KAVENY



For the Wisconsin Science Fiction Convention we will be doing a multi-media production dealing with H. G. Wells, using slides, tapes, and whatever else we can think of.

Wells was born four years before the start of the Franco-Prussian War and died shortly after World War Two. One has the feeling that the development of Wells's mind mirrored many of the chaotic developments and transformations through which he lived. When he was almost 60 years old, he wrote *The Outline of History* in order to make the monumental absurdity of the First World War more comprehensible to the generation that lived through it. The exciting thing about Wells, in my opinion, is the process of movement which his mind underwent in order to take him from the position of the son of a professional cricket player and part-time gardener, a boy whose life from age 10 to 15 consisted of failures in at least six different careers and apprenticeships, to that of a writer who had a vision and, I think, an effect on the future. I am interested in the subtle interrelationship between accident, historical forces, and human will which led to the development of Wells as stated in his *Experiment in Autobiography*: "The development of a very ordin-

ary mind in extraordinary times."

I mentioned, in "Somebody's Out There Listening" [which also appears in this issue], that I am interested in the relationship between words and images. I am hoping that, through the economical use of slides supported by the spoken word, we will be able to develop means of producing an audio-visual presentation that will not need the support of a grant from the Ford Foundation. Our selection of this method of treating Wells will hopefully be an experiment in effectiveness and economy of imagery. With luck, it will bear fruit when mixed with the creativity of your own minds. ■



9. POLITICAL ISSUES IN SCIENCE FICTION

BY JAN BOGSTAD

8. RELIGION AND SCIENCE FICTION

BY DIANE MARTIN



Sex, politics and religion are universal elements of the human condition. That's why they're controversial. And that's why WisCon has organized panel discussions on all three topics.

The religion panel will deal mainly with religion as it is dealt with in science fiction. But not exclusively. It will probably also touch on sex and on politics, because religion has a way of extending itself beyond the personal to social, economic, and political matters. This phenomenon has been the basis of much science fiction. Our panel hopes to provide an eclectic approach to science fiction as it applies to current as well as non-current religious thought.

Topics to be explored include current trends in SF, anti- and pro-religious SF, mythology, Scientology, Dianetics, Christianity, Judaism, and universal myths.

Resource books vary from current SF anthologies such as *Dangerous Visions*, *Wandering Stars*, and *Strange Gods*, to novels by C. S. Lewis, Walter M. Miller, Jr., Robert Silverberg, A. E. Van Vogt, and John Wyndham (to name only a few), to such American-grown religious tomes as *The Book of Mormon*, and the *Oahope Bible*.

Please don't think that because the panel is on religion and SF that you have to be religious to attend. God forbid! (if you'll pardon the expression) All manner of believers and non-believers are welcome. You don't have to be one to know one. ■

In his essay, "The Classical Historical Novel", George Lukacs pointed out how the concept of historicity first appeared in the novels of Sir Walter Scott. He explained that it was only in the 19th Century that the author was able to place his characters at the mercy of historical forces instead of perpetuating the concept that individuals alone are responsible for historical change. It is not the great individuals, kings and princes, that control the climate of a time period or the way that great masses of people live. It is rather the economic climate, the mode of production, which takes the greater part in forming our society. Walter Scott was the first novelist, according to Lukacs, who realized and represented in his writing the idea of change in history. He was able to show that human consciousness changed according to the economic and political situation. This was a great liberating force because it meant that there was no reason to maintain oppressive conditions just because they existed in the past. He also praises Scott for concentrating his plots on what conservative historians would call the unimportant people in history. The heroes of Scott's novels are all minor historical figures whose lives are affected by the historical reality around them. Many of the characteristics Lukacs associates with Scott and such figures as Balzac and Rousseau are shared by a group of SF novels which have interested me lately.

In a few selected SF novels, which hopefully represent a progressive trend, characters are shown in the context of a well-defined social milieu. Not only their external reality, but also the whole purpose and function of their lives and the development of political consciousness depend on the milieu in which the novels take place. These are like the characters in Scott's works who become heroes only in response to the historical moment.

I am interested in the possibilities for SF novels to have political impact. They have some impact in that their contents affect the consciousness of those who read them, but I believe their influence is more far-reaching than this. This leads me to ask questions about the impact of SF.

How much potential do writers in this medium have to affect the inequities of our own political system?

I have read quite a few utopian novels recently. The most recent ones differ from classical utopias in that they offer a realistic picture of people in an economic historical situation different from our own. They present positive alternatives to present-day reality. Yet their effect as plans for a real future is affected by their being science fiction. They take place in settings that obviously never existed, and can therefore more easily be dismissed

as "daydreams" which do not have any bearing on reality. How effectively can one portray characters in history when they are immersed in a history that has never existed? Yet, if SF is not the next stage in the development of the historical novel, which Lukacs sees as no longer possible, what is?

These are some of the questions I would like to approach during the panel on Politics and Science Fiction.

We can also discuss the wide range of political appeals which have been made in SF. And we may wish to discuss a realistic future for SF as politically

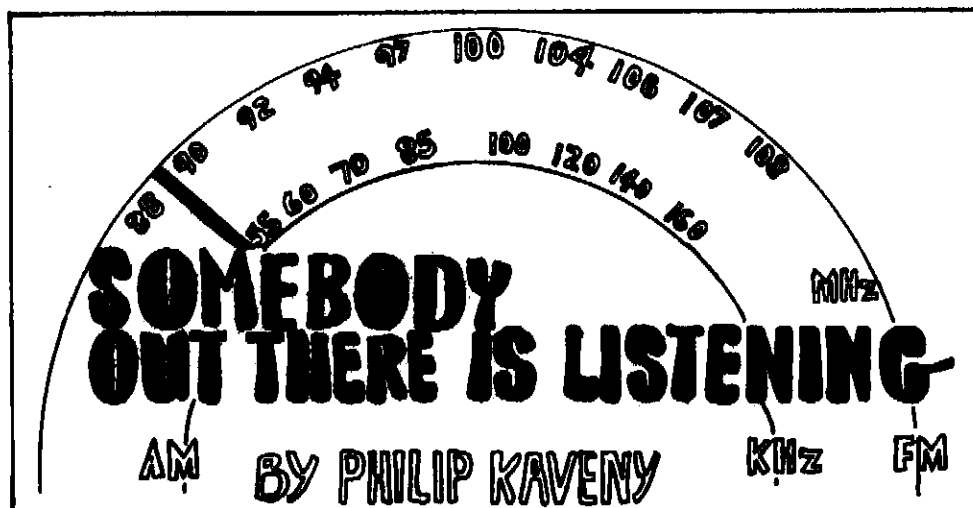
conscious literature. Why is there so little political extrapolation in the greater number of SF novels? So much of it seems to depend on misconceptions of past cultures, and yet the potential is there. Works such as *The Dispossessed*, *The Foundation Trilogy*, and some of the novels of H. G. Wells exploited this to varied extents.

At this point (three weeks to the convention), the politics panel is a very new idea. I know that I and Phil Kaveny will participate in it, and Tom Moylan of UW Extension (Waukesha) will be working with us. It should be very argumentative, judging from the subject-matter and the personalities involved. See you there. ■

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I was born at the end of what has been called The Golden Age of Radio. I spent untold hours listening to children's shows, adventure shows, horror shows, whatever science fiction that was available, and, Lord help me, at the age of 3½, I became a soap-opera addict. I was hooked on "Lorenzo Jones and his wife Bell", "One Man's Family", "Stella Dallas", and "Fibber McGee and Molly". My addiction was never really cured, but it was at least controlled when I was dragged off to school and forced to engage in healthy, wholesome activities such as finger-painting and nap-taking. These were considered more appropriate for a five-year-old who nevertheless totally hated the idea of being made to act like a child.

My early acquaintance with dramatic radio enriched my life in a unique way, one that I believe was unavailable to the generation of passively receptive television viewers that followed me. The magic of the spoken word, broadcast on the radio, works as follows: When one is the listener s/he takes an active part in the program by building, in his or her mind, associations with the words and sounds which come over the airwaves. The listeners become architects, building their own world of imagination.

Twenty-five years after I first heard it, the dramatization of Ray Bradbury's "Mars Is Heaven", presented on *Dimension X*, is still fresh in my mind. Mars, as it turned out, was not heaven, where all the dear departed of the crew of the spacecraft could be found. Rather, it was a place where the memories of their departed loved-ones could be used to mask something that was made to seem terrifying beyond all visual description. From that story, I, as a six-year old, was able to build a picture of the possibility of a world very much different from the parlor in the house at 1221 Jennifer Street, Madison, Wisconsin, which marked the boundaries of my own childhood experience. The images were mine. I made them out of the radioborne words and so I own them and still have them. When I take them out, I find that they are as rich as ever, perhaps even improved and embellished, because I have learned more kinds of language to describe them with.

I have a theory about why dramatic radio disappeared in the mid-1950s. It has to do with selling popcorn, and goes something like this:

A movie theater owner had a reputation for never booking a good movie. Someone asked him why he always booked the same sort of bad movies. He answered that if he booked a truly good movie every-

one would sit and watch it from beginning to end. If they did that, they would not get up and buy popcorn out of boredom. It was better to have a barely acceptable movie, so that people kept getting up and buying because, as everyone knows, the profit comes from the popcorn. I think this may be the secret to the principle that governs all commercial broadcast media. Just keep it on a level high enough so that people will not turn off their sets or walk out of the theater but don't produce anything good enough to let people be distracted from the virtues of the Vegemetic Vegetable Chopper or the Ronco Salad Spinner.

Luckily, all broadcast media have not been usurped by the popcorn sellers and the vegetable slicer magnates. WORT in Madison, Wisconsin, is one holdout. By accident, I was able to produce a Madison Science Fiction Group—Madison Review of Books half-hour Special. It was called: "A Critical View of Kurt Vonnegut's Courage and Humanism, from their generation to their disintegration." I had originally agreed to do a two-minute review of Vonnegut's latest novel, *Slapstick*. This review grew, seemingly by itself, into a half-hour program which made the argument that Vonnegut's last two novels have retreated from the position of humanism and ethical responsibility represented in his earlier works. He has increasingly showed a morbid preoccupation with the personal tragedies of his life and views the world as totally dead. We see this in one of the lines in *Breakfast of Champions* which reads: "Round and Round Goes the Dead Ball."

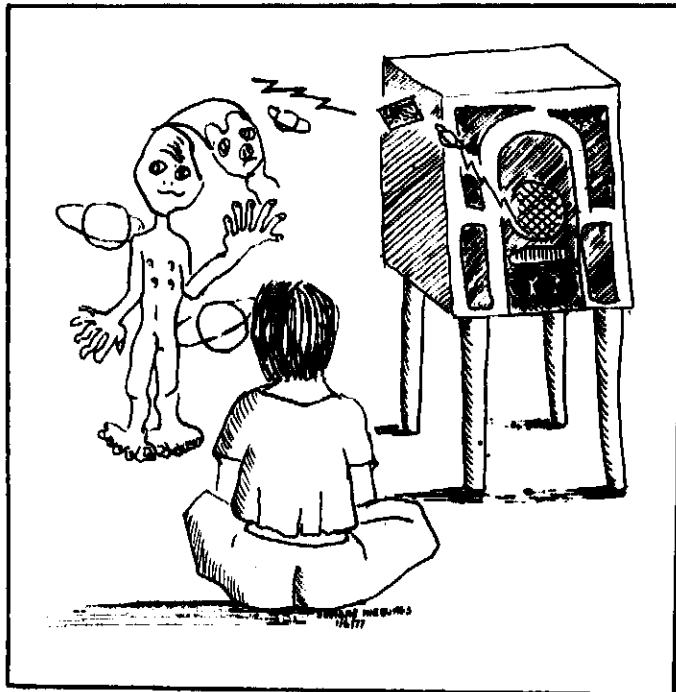
I feel that my program was an artistic success. It was also a technical failure, because of a minor communication problem which I will deal with later.

A radio production is both a very easy and a very difficult undertaking. You might say it is about as easy as falling down your basement stairs. In this case, Jan and Jeff Boustad did the dramatic readings, Doug Price acted as sound engineer, and Hank Luttrell supplied music and helped with the special effects. Since it was my program idea, I wrote and directed the production. Our production resources consisted of two reel-to-reel tape recorders and a record player. The actual production work involved taping several sections of the program separately and then mixing the dramatic readings with the appropriate music, supported by my own commentary and argument. The end result was a program that I was very happy with. The technical failures, however, greatly detracted from the effectiveness of the program as broadcast. It seems that the tape players at WORT operate at a considerably slower rate than the tape recorders upon which we produced the pro-

gram. The result of this technical inconsistency was that everyone's voice sounded at least one octave lower than it should have over the air. This disrupted the pacing of the dramatic readings so that they lost a lot of their effectiveness. I sounded like that great, now departed, patriot and owner of the Chicago Tribune, Colonel John "mush mouth" McCormick who, in the early 50s, used to sponsor opera so that he could mumble through fifteen minute speeches which our whole family found to be a great deal more entertaining than the operas which preceded them.

We all learned from the failures of the production. For example, if you are going to shoot a film, you'd better be sure to take the lens cap off your camera and if you're going to produce a taped program, you'd better be sure everybody's tape equipment is synchronized.

One problem with doing a radio show is that after your program has been produced and broadcast, you may have the distinct impression that the transmitter was not really operating. How else could it be that absolutely no one seemed to hear it. You will hear comments like: "I thought that station was only on the air from noon to one pm," or, as my mother said, "I was going to listen to your program, but the neighbors stopped over." or "Wasn't that played on Tuesday?" or whatever. Finally, over two months after my program was aired, one of my acquaintances mentioned to me that he had heard an interesting program about Vonnegut on WORT. I told him that I had produced it, to which he replied: "No shit, Kaveny." Then he shook my hand. This encounter was enough to fortify me with a new sense of purpose.



I would like to be in communication with others who are interested in doing productions for reasons other than selling a product, be it salad spinners, deodorants, feminine-hygiene sprays, or Grecian Formula Thirteen (does that mean it makes you look thirteen?) There must be other community-owned radio stations in other cities which would be interested in broadcasting dramatic, and I would particularly hope, science-fiction productions.

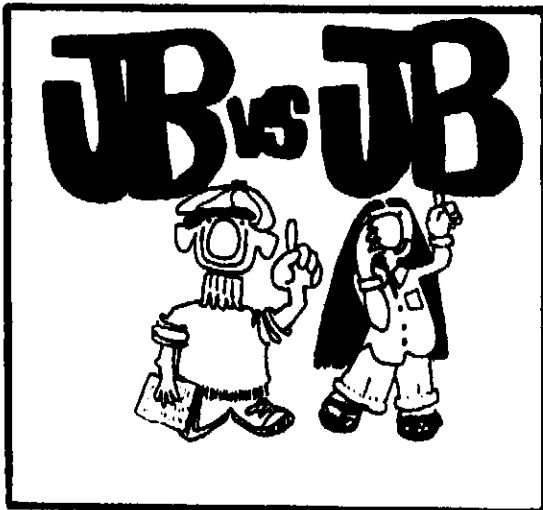
Since we completed the Vonnegut production, Jan Bogstad and I have done a live program for WORT which we called "Booklist 2000". For this show, we played the parts of two educators who are compiling a booklist for a course in the culture history of the twentieth century, 1915-1975, to be taught in the year 2000.

Live radio is in some ways easier to manage than the creation of taped radio productions. What you may lose in special effects, you can make up for with spontaneous happenings that go along with live productions. But, again, this type of radio work requires close communication between program and technical personnel. Jan and I finished "Booklist 2000" about two minutes too early because of my misreading of the clock. The engineer did not know that we wanted him to cut to some music since we had neglected to advise him beforehand. As a result of this misunderstanding, he and I kept smiling at each other for what seemed like an eternity of fifteen seconds, I expecting him to read my mind and he just not sure what it was I wanted.

The learning experience which I have taken part in, both the successes and the failures which have resulted from the production of live and taped programs, have led me to explore other types of productions. I am interested in the relationship between images and sounds. I mentioned earlier in this article that the magic of radio was that it allowed the listener to build his or her own world through leaps of imagination. From this insight, I have been led to wonder about the creative possibilities of presenting words with a few visual additions via films. I'm not talking about feature-length movie films but only small cornerstones of film upon which the creative minds of the audience would be able to build their own images of a previous period—the period in which H.G. Wells lived. I would be interested in provoking you rather than providing you, playing the part of a passive recipient, with great amounts of predigested, homogeneous materials which could pass through your mind as mineral oil passes through the digestive system, as quickly as it is ingested. "Educational" has always had the former connotation in my mind.

It is easy to say what effect I don't want to achieve, but this approach is also a starting point. I feel that I will find out about myself and my own abilities as I try to stimulate you to use yours. This is the two-fold object of my next production; the H.G. Wells multi-media production "The Development of a Very Ordinary Mind in Extraordinary Times" should be a fitting theme for the use of multi-media potentials. ●

- AUTOGRAPHS -



AN EXCHANGE-- JOHN BARTELT JAN BOGSTAD

It's Alternate Universe time again! (See the first installment of this column, *Janus*, Vol. 2, No. 1.) Let me refresh your memory: the standard science-fiction concept of the branching universe is one in which every time someone makes a decision, the decision is made the other way in an alternate universe; thus, new branches are constantly being created. I figured, if that were true, then what about aliens? And dogs? And chimpanzees and amoebae? Or even lower life forms, like cats? You finally get down to the subatomic scale: each time a random subatomic (or whatever) event takes place, there's another universe where it doesn't (or where something else happens).

The alternate-universe motif is popular for some obvious reasons. The concept allows for the branching off of an alternate time-stream from our own universe at so many points, an infinite number, as you point out at some length. I guess alternate-universe stories could be of two types, one which explores the implications of the concept and one which explores an alternative caused by a changed event. I've been thinking about the aspect of infinite branchings in conjunction with an academic experience I had last year. In the fall of 1976, I investigated a linguistics seminar given by a man who was also a specialist in computer science. In addition to these two credentials, this fellow was interested in time-travel stories. He claimed to have written a program that could deal with text generation; that's creating alternate stories from pieces of stories, I guess....Well, I'll tell you more about that later.]

After writing that column, it was brought to my attention that some physicists had actually posited such a thing. Hugh Everett III proposed it in his doctoral dissertation in 1957. It has attracted but a few adherents, apparently. It is known as the "many-worlds (or many-universes) interpretation of quantum mechanics", and was developed to help eliminate some of the philosophical difficulties inherent within quantum mechanics (which I won't go into, because, after only one semester of quantum physics, I don't understand them very well). This informa-

tion, by the way, is from the book *The Many-Worlds Interpretation of Quantum Mechanics*, edited by Bryce S. DeWitt and Neill Graham, (Princeton University Press) and includes Everett's original paper, plus some later ones.

What this is all leading up to is a discussion of an anthology of alternate-universe stories: *Beyond Time*, edited by Sandra Ley (daughter of pioneer rocket designer and author, Willy Ley) (published by Pocket Books, 1976, 268 pages, \$1.95). I like alternate-universe stories; I was trying to think up plots for them a long time ago. Maybe that's why I was disappointed by this book; or maybe it's because it's because the stories seemed to get progressively worse, and that left a bad taste in my mouth. [Didn't Ma. Ley ever hear of the old rule of putting your best first and the second best last? (Or something like that.)] There are twenty stories in the book (oddly, they all, apparently, first appeared in *Amazing* during 1975), so I can't go into them all.

The first story, "The Cliometricon", by George Zebrowski, is quite good. Interestingly, it's introduced by a quotation from a paper by Bryce DeWitt (which is included in the aforementioned book); it deals with viewing alternate histories, via the device for which the story is titled, which also depends on the user's imagination; and it goes into the quantal description of alternate universes. The next few stories, I recall, were adequate; then there's Lucy Corea's "Hail to the Chief", in which universe the Watergate break-in was never discovered. It's a pretty good story, with a good-enough ending, except that then she seems compelled to throw in a "surprise": the action is all taking place within the Watergate Hotel (I knew that from the beginning); it just doesn't add anything to the story (one of these days, I'm going to do a whole column on surprise endings).

[Alternate-universe stories which explore the political or ideological consequences of a change in a historical situation are particularly popular. They seem to be of the second alternate-universe type, examining the implications of a particular change rather than of the phenomenon itself. Lucy Corea was not the first person to explore this aspect of alternate universes. In fact, I remember reading a story a long time ago which speculated about the status of present-day America if the South had won the Civil War. Then, of course, there's Man in a High Castle by Philip K. Dick, and White Lotus by John Hersey, which explore the possibility of the Japanese and Germans having won WW II. Then there are your own stories in Janus, including the politically oriented one in this issue. It would seem that the alternate-universe motif is particularly useful for exploring possible political futures, an aspect of SF's potential that I find especially fascinating.]

The next one, Robert Coulson's "Soy La Libertad", was better than average. And the story by his wife, Juanita, was also pretty good, especially considering it dealt with that mythical beast, the Bermuda Triangle. Then there's "U-Genie SX-1—Human Entrepreneur: Naturally Rapacious Yankee", by Dimitri V. Gat. It's bad. First of all (or maybe last of all), it depends on a surprise ending which isn't a surprise (look at the acronym formed by the last five words in the title: HENRY; as in "Ford"); at least the last half of the story is rendered pointless once you figure that out. In addition, the science is bad: in the alternate universe in which the story starts, the "zipdisc", some sort of mass transfer device, was invented in 1920 (just because there was no Henry Ford to make cars). Come on!

Matter transference is incredibly complicated, if not absolutely impossible (especially when it comes to moving something as complex as a human being). And Newyorkville? What does the name of New York have to do with it? The whole thing is just clumsy. (Robert Chilson's story, "The Devil and the Deep Blue Sky" also deals, in a different way, with the automobile; actually, it wasn't very good either; a few chuckles for us knowing readers at the expense of these poor souls in an alternate universe.)

[The automobile fascinates a lot of people as an overt manifestation of American culture. One of the Madison television stations has employed a certain John Jerome, author of The Death of the Automobile, to do a series of documentary shorts called "Our 70-Year Love Affair with the Automobile". This fellow seems to agree with a lot of people in thinking that the automobile is responsible for many of America's pollution and energy problems. Where he differs from others' evaluations is in his belief that we can no longer afford the luxury of depending on the automobile for mass transit, but that our previous dependence on it has crippled us psychologically for accepting the necessity for more efficient mass-transit systems. He backs up his extrapolations with a lot of facts about the history of the automobile in America, like the fact that "we" were sold ten million Model Ts before they stopped making them in 1920, and that, though few of them

still run, there are still Model T hulks laying around messing up the countryside. At least the metal can be reused, but that does not apply to a lot of other things that are polluting the countryside! Anyway, his predictions of the doom which the automobile has wreaked on American culture reminds me of the arguments of the eminent classical Erewhonian philosopher whose predictions caused the inhabitants of Samuel Butler's utopia to do away with all machines. Mr. Jerome, however, seems to think that the automobile could do away with us.]

The last two: Chelsea Quin Yarbrow's "The Fellini Beggar"; I didn't get this one; maybe you have to be familiar with Fellini. And then "All Possible Worlds" by Laurence M. Janifer; I really disliked this one, because, I think, it's based on one of the worst analogies for the branching-universe idea (and as you can see, I'm interested in the theory).

Some of the stories are dissatisfying because they don't explain how their universe came about—where it diverged from ours. Others are too much history lecture and not enough plot. If they could just hit somewhere in between.

[I must not forget to finish my discussion of that alternate-universe computer program. Back in the early 20th Century—1928, to be exact—a Russian linguist, Vladimir Propp, collected a large number of Russian folk tales and, via structural linguistics à la Ferdinand de Saussure, analyzed their structure. He was able to discern similarities in their structural elements, especially with regard to the way

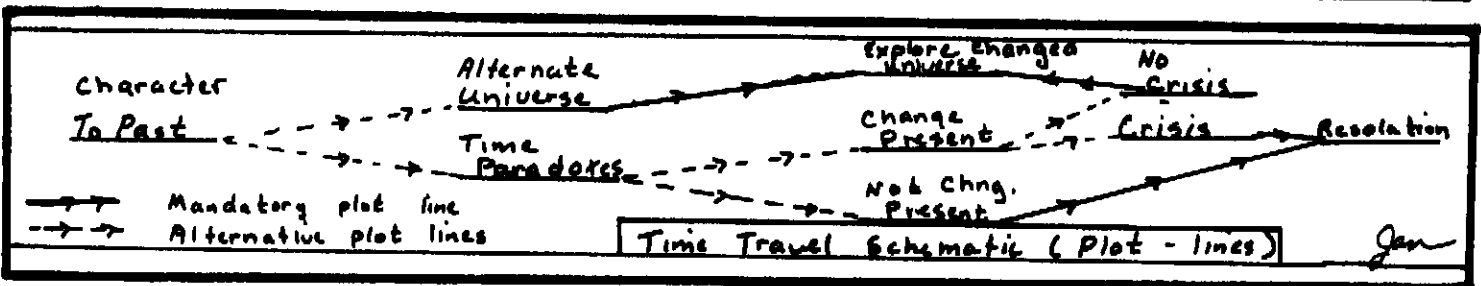
the plots were constructed. Each was made up of a finite number of infinitely combinable elements (for example, a hero who had a set of three tasks to complete or problems to overcome, a mythical agent which could be a person or an object.)

[Let us not dwell too long on the reasons that grown men might have for investigating folk tales. After all, we all read and enjoy space opera and many of us consume fantasies with an equal amount of enthusiasm. (Not that I would suggest that you, John, arch-scientist and Asimov lover, would be interested in such a thing.) Anyway, the linguistics professor I alluded to earlier claimed that he had written a program, based upon Propp's method of approaching the folk tale and separating it into repeated elements, that could be used to generate texts from these elements. What he wanted to do was to take apart a bunch of time-travel stories, decide which sections were necessary to make up a complete tale, decide which elements had to follow one another, and plug them into his program to see if he could make it write stories. Fun, huh!

[In case my masterful powers of description have nevertheless left you unable to understand how this process should work, I have provided a diagram below. But I still haven't applied this to alternate universes. It seems to me that a lot of alternate-universe stories are very similar. We may not want to analyse them to the extent that we could make it possible for computers to write this kind of story, but there is an advantage to looking at literature in terms of this type of formula. You see, if you have an oft repeated formula, when a story deviates from that formula, it becomes much easier to describe what it is that makes a particular alternate-universe story more interesting than others. Like Gene DeWeese's gothics which allow a female hero, a gothic prerequisite, but deviate from the pattern in the powers of observation and self-sufficiency they give her. Or mystery stories that assign blame to someone other than the butler, while letting you think the butler did it all along.

[Well, I guess literary criticism is as addictive as other forms of self-control of the mind (you know, the scientific method and bureaucratic government). Each to her own.... Look me up again in a few months, after I'm done with this bloody convention issue of Janus. A man may work from sun to sun but an editor's work is never done.... And it's almost a month to convention time. God knows what I'll be like by the end of January...almost 27, for one thing!]

Just to offer a comparison with a superior work, the collection, *Worlds of Maybe*, edited by Robert Silverberg (Dell-Laurel Leaf Library, 1974, 208 pages), contains seven classics of the alternate-universe genre, including the prototype, Murray Leinster's "Sidewise in Time"; also Larry Niven's "All the Myriad Ways" and Isaac Asimov's "Living Space"; and Silverberg gives a concise history of the idea of alternate-universe histories. And all for only 95¢ (but I fear it may be out of print).





PHILIP K. DICK & PERCEPTION OF REALITY OR, NEW WELTANSCHAUUNGS FOR OLD

BY LESLEIGH LUTTRELL

What I'm proposing is a radically new theory as to what is "real" and what is not.

—Dick in *Electric Shepherd*, p. 33

The basic test that distinguishes reality from hallucination is ... that one or several others see it too.

—*Rolling Stone*, p. 93

Phil Dick has described his novels as books that "try to pierce the veil of what is only apparently real to find out what is really real."

—*Rolling Stone*, p. 45

"What is reality?" This is a sophomoric sort of question that few, with the exception of idiots and geniuses, give much consideration to once they have reached the age of 20 or so. (Perhaps this is why Philip K. Dick's books seem to hit those of us who come to them young with particular force.) The question that Dick asks in his books is not simply "What is reality?", for he realizes that there is no single reality, but, "How can we interpret, how far can we trust our perceptions of reality?"

Dick's "radically new theory" of reality is not entirely his own invention, but is derived from the theories of European existential psychologists. They suggest that each person has two separate world views; one is their own unique, private view, termed *idios kosmos*, and the other is the shared worldview, the *koinon kosmos* (roughly equivalent to the *weltanschauung* of earlier linguistic-anthropological theory). It is only in achieving a rapport with other people that we are able to distinguish our personal view of reality from the shared view.

Dick has said that in his novels it is not the shared reality, "the really real", which is breaking down, but the personal worldview. As it breaks down, Dick claims, the shared universe (the world his characters share with Palmer Eldritch and Gien Runciter) emerges more strongly. This is a frightening experience for we each need our own personal *idios kosmos* to maintain our sanity.

Sanity, and various forms of insanity, are an important part of Dick's novels. However Dick, like most of us, is not sure how to define insanity. Is schizophrenia a complete retreat into one's own personal world, or is it the result of losing that pro-

TECTIVE individual shield and being subjected to the "absolute" reality? Manfred, the autistic child in *Martian Time-Slip* seems to be afflicted with the latter type of insanity, since he can see into the future. However his view of "reality" is so horrible that the reader would like to believe it is only a private universe.

However one defines it, insanity is, in Dick's novels, a way of breaking through, of "piercing the veil": "In my novels the protagonist's comfortable, private world is disintegrating and an awful, mystical, puzzling, enormous world is expanding—from elements already there—to fill the void." (*Electric Shepherd*, p. 32) This is an uncomfortable state of affairs for Dick's characters, who often go through hell in order to get to the other side of this veil, as has apparently happened to Dick himself at several times in his life.

Despite the pain and horror, it is important to Dick, and to his readers, that this veil be lifted, that we get through to the other side and achieve a new view of reality, or at least see the weak spots in our old view. Why is this important—why shouldn't we, characters and readers alike, stay safely in our private little worlds? An obvious reason is that science fiction writers like to play around with reality, and their readers enjoy these games, the stories of alternate worlds and time-travel paradoxes. Certainly Dick uses some of these tricks and clichés which are so familiar to sci readers in his books. However, there is one important difference between Philip K. Dick and most other science-fiction writers—he is not just "playing around" with reality, but is genuinely searching for a new reality.

Dick believes that there is evil in our world. Perhaps the most basic form is entropy. Entropy, the decay of the meaningful into the meaningless, is the real evil in this world: "Much of what in my books are regarded as hallucinations are actually aspects of the entropy-laden *koinon* world breaking through." (*Electric Shepherd*, p. 33) If that is out there in the "real" world is this evil, entropy, why do we want to break through? Perhaps because it is a human characteristic to do so. Only humans can creak through, can perceive that there is more than one reality.

Simulacra cannot achieve this. These quasi-hu-

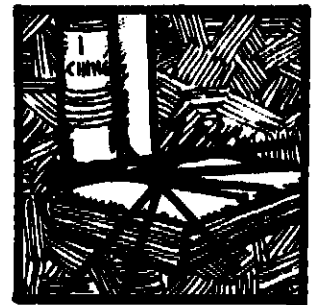
man machines are another of the threads which unite Dick's books. They range from simple, one-track mind mechanisms, like the coin-operated front door of Joe Chip's apartment in *Ubik*, to more complex teaching machines of *Time-Slip*, to the not quite human Abraham Lincoln simulacra in *We Can Build You*. However, these are still machines and, to Dick, one of the great potential evils in the world is the danger that humans will become less human, more inanimate, more machine-like.

The most frightening example of a mindless, machine-like "human", to the modern world, is the Nazi. Dick uses this figure in his most widely read book, *Man In The High Castle*. Like true simulacra the Nazis cannot deal with the idea of alternate worlds, with the revelation that there may be more than a single reality. Most human beings do have a great deal of trouble dealing with different realities, but it is a basic expression of our humanness that we at least make the effort.

Dick throws his characters into situations in which their perceptions of reality change, and even break down. If we, the readers, wish to emulate Dick's characters, wish to break down the barriers of our own limited view of reality, how can we go about it? We may try some of the methods which Dick's characters use.

The most readily accessible method, for most of us, is drugs. Taking drugs for Dick's characters (and his readers?) is a deliberate attempt to alter their perceptions of reality. For example, in *Now Wait for Last Year*, JJ-180 removes from the characters' minds and bodies "their private misconceptions about cause and effect." Can-D and Chew-Z plunge their users into the equally frightening shared realities of Perky Pat and Palmer Eldritch. Dick states the usefulness of drugs most clearly in *Dave Trae*, in the thoughts of Peter Sands: "He believed that the so-called hallucinations caused by some of these drugs (with emphasis he continually reminded himself, on the word 'some') were not hallucinations at all, but perceptions of other zones of reality." (p. 22) Drugs allow us to perceive other realities, provide a way of piercing the veil, but that thought also contains a warning—not all drugs give true perceptions. Jason Taverner is plunged in a frightening state of non-existence in *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said* because someone else has taken a time-binding drug, KK-3. "Anyone affected by it is forced to perceive unreal universes, whether they want to or not." (p. 208) It is this possibility, that drugs can cause the perception of "unreal realities" which makes them dangerous. In *Time-Slip*, Arnie Kott dies, not realizing he has been shot in the real world. This danger is presented most starkly in *A Scanner Darkly* as Substance D shatters both the personal and shared realities of Bob Arctor, first splitting him in two and then reducing him to a barely functioning hulk.

Scanner is Dick's most depressing book to date because the characters in it seem to derive no new

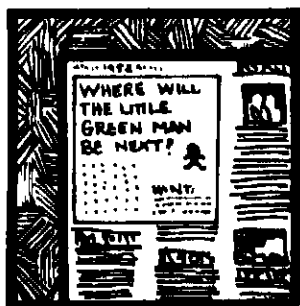


insights into reality from their experiences with drugs. Instead, drugs lead to insanity and death for most of them. In earlier novels, insanity was a creative force. Many of Dick's characters experience episodes of insanity (most often schizophrenia). These are frightening episodes, to be sure, but they seem to help in the struggle to find the really real. Joe Bohlen of *Time-Slip* apparently sees into the future in his period of insanity, other characters have similar experiences. Perhaps the true importance of insanity is that it is an ultimately human experience. Although machines may go "insane", only humans can learn from the experience of insanity. However, it is not something we can control (as we imagine we control our drug experiences) and thus is not likely to be a method of altering perceptions of reality which Dick readers can easily use.

Another method which most of us have little access to (although, as with insanity, the possibility is always there, lurking at the edge of our consciousness) is telepathy. In many of Dick's worlds (most notably those of *Three Stigmata* and *Ubik*) telepathy and other psionic powers, such as precognition, are taken for granted. Yet telepathy is the ability to intrude into someone else's reality, precognition to view the shared realities of the future. In *The Game Players of Titan*, drug induced extra-sensory powers allow Pete Garden to see "things as they really are", to see the Vugs masquerading as humans. However, there is danger in these powers as well. Pre-cogs can only see into possible futures, not into the future. (There is no single reality.) Characters, such as Palmer Eldritch and Pat Conley in *Ubik*, who come to believe that their powers allow them to manipulate reality, are in grave danger of disintegrating, of losing their own *idiot common*.

Knowledge from the outside, knowledge which intrudes into the personal worlds of Dick's characters, is another aid in their search for what is really real. Strong personalities, such as Joey and Glen Runciter in *Ubik* can impose their version of reality on others, at least for a while. Scanners may offer a way of seeing reality more clearly (but Dick is not sure that these spying devices do offer any real knowledge about reality): "if the scanner sees only darkly, the way I myself do, then we are cursed, cursed again and like we have been continually, and we'll wind up dead this way, knowing very little and getting that little fragment wrong too." (p. 146)

Religion may shake up a private worldview—religious beliefs are the ultimate form of shared reality—or serve to reinforce our personal realities. The users of Dan-D in *Three Stigmata* develop a religion which "explains" their altered perceptions of reality. The religion of the Bleekman in *Martian Time-Slip* allows several characters to transcend their private realities. In *Man of Death* God turns out to be a real entity, rather than merely a part of our shared reality, and is able to inflict horrifying changes of reality on the humans who are unfortunate enough to come under its power.



other source of knowledge about what's on the other side of the veil. In *Ubik*, Joe Chip finds messages from Runciter in match folders and bathroom mirrors, words from the other side. Dick's characters may find such messages in more ordinary places, particularly in books such as the *I Ching*. The word helps Dick's characters break through while we, the readers, find new ways of looking at reality, and learn something about our own limited perceptions of reality in the writings of Philip K. Dick. ■



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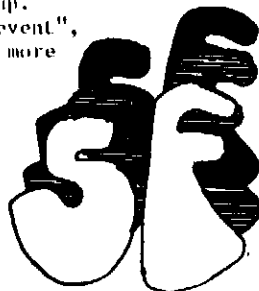
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'TIMEWAVES'

JOHN BARTELT

He felt the pieces of the puzzle fall into place, and in doing so, they completed a piece of the larger puzzle. He needed information, and what better place to get it from than a certified moron.

Russell Long continued to study the computer printout. It described the mental abilities of one Michael Danson, age 17, fresh out of a training center, an orphan. He had been sent here to the American Bureau of Labor and Employment (ABLE), and the computer complex had run a battery of tests on him and thousands like him. His IQE was only 79; there was nothing particularly remarkable about him, save one feature: his short-term memory. It had been rated at 182 (where 100 was average) and indicated a "photographic memory". That was why, undoubtedly, the computer had bothered to bring this case to his attention. He made another check; yes, the position at the government's motor factory was still open. Then he edited the computer record, simply deleting the "1" from the "182", and assigned Michael Danson to the shipping department of the Riverside Motor Factory; classification: unskilled laborer. He would meet with Danson in a week or so, to see how the job was going; there would be nothing unusual in that.

And maybe he could get Lindemark his data.

The computer brought up his next case, a Cheryl Aukman; he checked on what was available in Women's Work, and gradually lost himself in the everyday routine of a minor bureaucrat.

But then, the bureaucrats ran the country.

Quitting time rolled around, but instead of going home Long walked briskly to meet Frank Lindemark where he worked: the library of a small college. Lindemark held a doctorate in physics. He was now a clerk; Long had been able to swing at least that much for him, when the physicist had fallen into disfavor.

Together they went to one of the public recreation, prayer, and fellowship halls for a few quick games of chess. They would talk about many things; but when they talked in hushed tones, they discussed a plot to change the world—literally, and completely.

Long told him about the new piece of the plot; Lindemark was skeptical, particularly at first, but eager to see if it would work.

Several months before, Lindemark had been sent to Long to be assigned to a new job. The physicist had sat, fuming. "Idiots!" he muttered. "All I wanted to do was try a few experiments; most important theory since relativity or quantum mechanics, and they shut us down. Bastards!"

"What was your line of research?" Long asked, rather uninterestedly.

"Transcendental physics," Lindemark replied.

Something flickered in the back of Long's mind; but he didn't want to show too much interest. "Oh; like temporal viewers, that sort of thing?"

"Temporal viewers are 60 years old; this was new," Lindemark continued, more to himself than to Long. "A few experiments; they were afraid I'd change the past. Maybe that's what I should do; that'd fix them."

Long was quickly trying to integrate this information, but continued, "We have an opening here at the college library. Do you think that would suit you?"

"Hmm? Oh, library. Do they subscribe to the physics journals?"

"I believe so."

"Better than nothing."

Long made a mental note: this was a man to get to know better.

Several months of chess playing and conversation had done that. He found that Lindemark had been dissatisfied with the government's interference with scientific research before, but this had been the last straw. To disrupt the advancement of science was the ultimate crime, and a crime against humanity.

Long was winning again, when he saw a man approaching and grimaced. It was Joe Peters, another employee of ABLE. He stopped to talk to Long: "Say, Russ, I haven't seen you in church lately. Where've you been?"

"At the park, for the Proteo game. I'm the strategist for the Gophers, you know; have to get out there bright and early Sunday morning," Long said, as sincerely as he could.

"Oh, yeah, right. Well, that's good; I was afraid I'd have to report you to our supervisor; I wouldn't want you to lose your job," Peters said. "Well, I'll be seeing you."

Long was relieved to see him go. Proteo could

help cover a multitude of sins, atheism among them. No atheist or pagan held a government job.

Saturday he went shopping for groceries and such, always under the watchful eyes of TV cameras inside and outside the stores, keeping a sharp lookout for thieves, robbers, assaulters, litterbugs, jaywalkers, traitors, and people who used nasty language.

Long was more concerned with a different type of surveillance device, perhaps the most terrible ever invented: the temporal viewer. It could look anywhere at anytime within the last 200 years, and view events practically as they happened, or years after the fact. During the past 60 years, the government, in the form of various federal security agencies, had used it to wipe out all resistance to the state, to crush all dissenters, to eliminate all radicals and protesters; privacy had given way to the "preservation of democracy". Fortunately, there were not enough of the viewers, and not enough trained operators to view just anyone; there had to be a reasonable amount of suspicion before the equipment and time would be invested in an investigation.

Sunday he was at the park for the Proteo game—the game that's never the same. Literally. Each week, a computer would choose a new combination of playing field, equipment, and rules, and two teams would play. (Occasionally, a particular game would catch on, and continue to be played, but then it was no longer Proteo.) Long's job was to come up with a winning strategy, and, usually, new strategies to counteract the other team's play. Between Long's agile mind and the players' agile bodies, the Gophers won again, something that happened more than 70% of the time.

Now, however, Long was engaged in developing a strategy to change the world, to eliminate the totalitarian state that America had become. He was deciding that they would change time.

Lindemark had been the first piece to the puzzle. But he didn't have a sufficient knowledge of practical engineering to construct a temporal viewer, something their plot required.

But Long had filed away a fact a few years before: a factory known as the "Riverside Motor Plant" was in fact the "Riverside Temporal Viewer Plant". He had gotten the information from a misdirected inter-office memo.

He had arranged things so that he was seemingly "forced" to have his meeting with Danson after hours, away from the office—where there might be ordinary bugs. He arranged to meet Danson at a cafeteria near the office. When he arrived he found Danson there, waiting. "Michael Danson? I'm Russell Long," he said, and stuck out his hand to shake. The boy timidly shook hands and said hello. "How's the job going, Michael?" Long asked.

"Fine, Mr. Long; fine."

"Well, good; I have a report here from your foreman, which says you learned the job quickly, and you're doing fine." Danson smiled. Long continued, "Now, Michael, I want to ask you to do me a favor. We're afraid some of the people in the factory may be stealing parts from shipments."

"Stealing?" Danson said, looking a little surprised.

"Yes; we're not sure who it is, so we want to investigate. Since you're new there, we know it's not you, so we can trust you." Danson smiled again. "What we want you to do is memorize each shipping list you get. You've got a good memory, don't you?"

"Yes," he said, sheepishly. "How will that help catch the stealers?"

"By comparing the lists you memorize, with what

actually gets shipped, we can find if anything's missing."

"Oh."

"So each day you memorize the shipping lists, and then when you go home you write them down. At the end of the week, I'll come and collect what you've written down."

"OK."

"Fine; I'll see you next Friday then," Long finished, and left.

It was Long's contention that by studying what went into each shipment, they could make correlations to discover which parts went together; if there was a consistent pattern of two of these for one of those, that would tell them something about the construction of the temporal viewer.

It worked; a few months later, Danson was stealing parts, so Lindemark could build a temporal viewer. That was also the major step in building the transtemporal transducer, the device which would incorporate the physicist's theory. Lindemark invited him over one evening to proudly show off his apparatus.

"I've got it working. Look at this," Lindemark said, pointing to a TV screen and throwing a switch. "It was lucky we could use a TV; Danson would have had a hard time stealing an imaging tube." The screen showed an irregular pattern of dark and light. "It takes a little fiddling to get a good picture; it's grainier than usual, because Danson couldn't get a full-size receptor. There!" The TV showed a picture of Lindemark's kitchen wall, a clock ticking off the seconds, and a calendar. "See, the day before yesterday is crossed off, but not yesterday; if you look in there now, yesterday is crossed off. We're looking at yesterday."

"Beautiful," Long finally said. "Beautiful. Good work, Frank. How much longer until you can build the transducer?"

Lindemark, beaming with joy over his new creation, answered, "A month at least; I'm still working on the design; I'll need some more parts. What I have to do is modulate the nuclear field in the receptor, so it will send the proper signal. Hmm; 70 years ago, a long-range nuclear field was a ridiculous idea; then we learned how to use it to catch the time-traveling neutrinos, like in that receptor; now we'll modulate it, and change the past." Lindemark paused and mused, then asked, "By the way, have you figured out what we're going to change? It has to be in the last 150 years, and we can only affect a little bit of matter—like an ounce."

"No, but I'm working on it; I'm studying the time about a hundred years ago, before there were any temporal viewers; when there was dissension... and freedom." Long sometimes felt very noble in his plot to give humanity a better fare.

Long and Lindemark met several times during the next month; but one evening the physicist was particularly excited. "Let me guess," Long said. "You've got the transducer working?"

"Yes, yes, but it's not just that—my theory wasn't quite right, my experiments showed me that—it's led me to a whole new understanding of the fundamental nature of...everything! Here, watch. See, over there." Lindemark pointed to several strings strung between two chairs, three of which had been broken in the middle. "Those have been there all day; you can see them on the viewer; now I'm going to do a close-up on one of them, as they were about 14 hours. OK, now I've got the transducer set. Watch the viewer. Here goes." He flipped the last switch. Five seconds later, the string seen on the viewer broke.

Long looked at the string now—it hadn't broken; he started to say something when suddenly it was broken. Lindemark said, "See, the five seconds to reach the past—that was predicted. But it took another five seconds for the change to reach the present."

"I don't understand; but then, I don't even know how the viewer works," Long said.

"OK, I'll try to explain; the viewer first.

It's simple: the Sun pours out two hundred trillion trillion trillion neutrinos per second; a small fraction of those—a million trillion trillion—encounter the Earth. Some of them are unaffected by it, and zip right through; a few are absorbed; but some of them are scattered through time; it has to do with the Earth's billions of anti-neutrinos. Anyway, by using our receptor, we can detect those neutrinos. From there it gets complicated, because the neutrinos come from the whole object, rather than just being reflected by the surface, so we have to use this little computer"—he pointed to a small, irregular box with plenty of switches—"to differentiate the signal and reconstruct an image, which is fed to the TV. Like I said, it's simple. So you get a black-and-white picture; the way they get sound is by picking up vibrations in solids; that's a little trickier, and we can't do that.

"Now, the transducer," Lindemark continued. "It sends a packet of four-dimensional neutrino-nuclear waves into the past, which constructively interfere at some point in space-time, and cause

energy to be rearranged, in such a way that entropy increases. The signal travels at the speed of light, sort of. The farthest away anything on Earth can be is 13,000 kilometres—less than a 20th of a light-second; but the Earth is moving at about a 10,000th of the speed of light, so that in 10,000 seconds we're another light-second away from where we were—so it takes a second to reach the past. That the present doesn't change right away was the surprising thing—but that would require the instantaneous transmission of information, and that's not allowed. It's opened up a whole new realm—I'm probably the one person who really understands time.

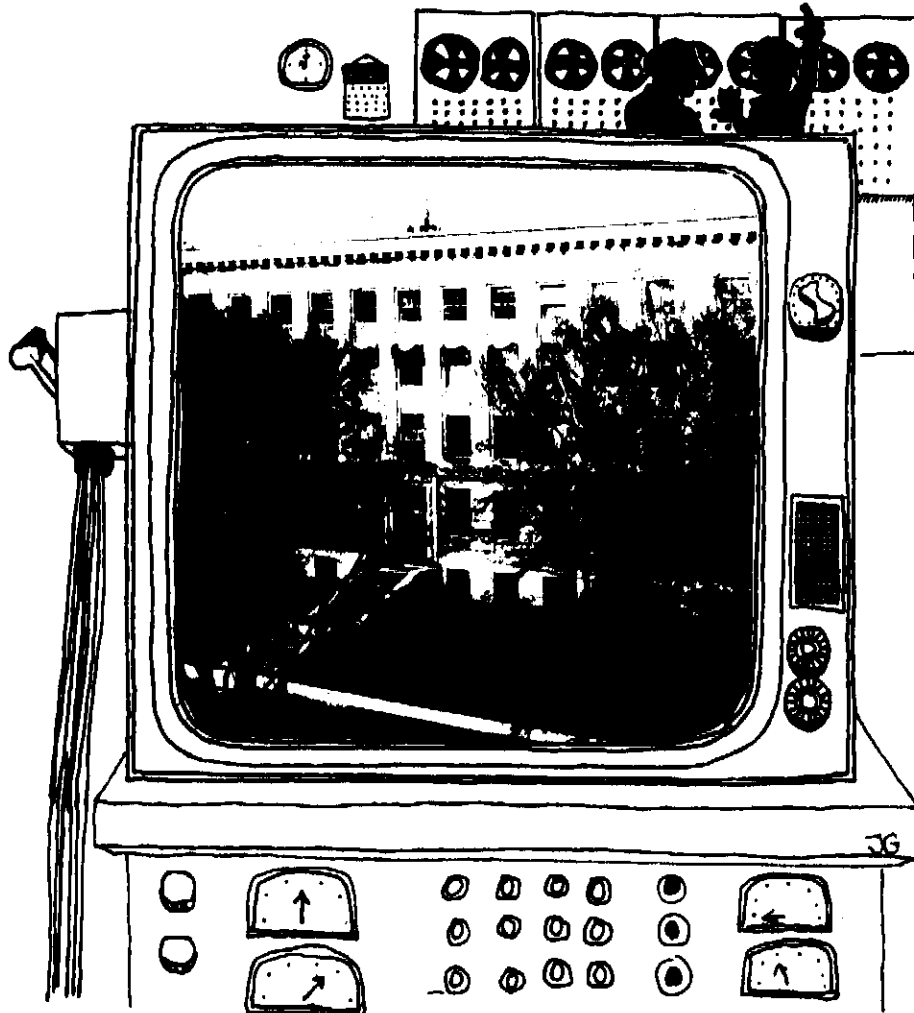
"Umm, but doesn't the Sun move, too, and the galaxy?" Long asked.

"Oh, yes—interesting point; motion with respect to the Sun is what counts; the whole thing is dependent on the local warping of space by a big mass—like the Sun; and it's the source of the neutrinos, which diverge from...well, I can't explain it all; it's got to do with general-relativistic quantum dynamics.

"But anyway, since for anything in the past 10 minutes or more," Lindemark said, "the motion of the Earth is the major effect, so for every 10,000 seconds we send our signal into the past, it takes a second to get there; less than an hour per year."

"But with respect to the Sun, we're in the same place every year, aren't we?"

"In physical three-dimensional space, yes; but not in four-dimensional space-time; we have to sort



of back-track the Earth and its antineutrino field through time. OK?"

"All right, so when we change time, we don't immediately wink out of existence—say, I didn't feel anything when you did that little demonstration."

"Oh; well, you didn't change; once time changed, you were a different person for the last 14 hours than you were before; everyone is; with a new set of memories; but the change was small enough so that your now memories were identical, supposedly, with your old; as for me, I remember seeing that string break this morning, now that we've changed time; I can't remember not remembering it."

"Yes, I see; as I was going to say, we don't wink out of existence right away, could we change our minds after sending the signal? Undo it?"

"No; once that signal is sent, another signal couldn't catch up with it; besides, our changes also have to be irreversible, in the thermodynamic sense." Lindemark paused; "What we could do is send back another signal, and make a second change to lessen the effect of the first; but the present would change, twice."

"OK; there are some points in time I would like to look at; about a hundred years ago," Long said.

"All right, I'll need some more exact coordinates."

"Madison, Wisconsin; August 24, 1970; a little after midnight; on the campus of the University of Wisconsin."

"What in the world happened there?"

"A man died in an explosion."

"And you want to prevent the explosion?"

"No—just the death. You see, besides the peace movements on the east and west coasts, there was a strong center of protest in Madison; but when this explosion, which was aimed at an army research center in Sterling Hall, killed Robert Fassnacht, who was a physics researcher unassociated with the army, the movement disintegrated; because one man had died. I want to see if we can't prevent the death, so the movement is sustained, and perhaps strengthened; it would be a force against the creeping totalitarianism."

Lindemark zeroed in on the scene; together they studied it for hours; finally they were agreed.

"That's it," said Long. "We destroy Fassnacht's

building pass; when the guard comes around, he'll throw him out, just like he threw out the astronomy student."

"And we've got our safety valve: if history doesn't go right, we induce a heart attack in the guard, so he can't throw him out," Lindemark added.

"Not a nice prospect."

"No; but better than a nuclear war." Long shuddered. Lindemark continued, "Well, it's late, and it'll take a lot of calculation to figure out the wave we have to send; why don't you come back tomorrow, and we'll do it then." Long hated to delay but agreed.

Saturday night, Long pushed the button. Wednesday morning he called in sick, and went to Lindemark's apartment. There they watched history change.

They watched Robert Fassnacht look in his wallet for his pass, find nothing—but a little dust; they watched him leave Sterling Hall; they watched the powerful explosion at 3:42 a.m., August 24, 1970. They watched the people rally, Fassnacht among them. Slowly at first, then gathering momentum, they watched the old history give way to a new one, as it swept toward them like a kind of tidal wave.

Morris Udall wins a resounding victory in the Wisconsin presidential primary of 1976; he starts to gain in the race for the nomination; he's elected president. Long and Lindemark watched the TV screen, catching bits and pieces of history (often viewing newspapers), as the wave swept toward them. The ERA is enacted in 1977; that had never happened....

Long and Lindemark slept only occasionally, and ate only what was handy. Lindemark had been satisfied with himself for a while now—he had developed the most sweeping theory of physics, and he had done it without a government grant; Long was pleased with the new history; they saw the world growing closer together, instead of retreating into isolationism. They saw strict laws passed governing the usage of temporal viewers in AD 2020. They saw peace in the world, and personal freedom in the US; they saw a golden age unfolding, in which energy was cheap and the solar system was explored by a united Earth.

Finally it was just a matter of watching the clock; Lindemark existed in the new world, but as a very different man; Long didn't even exist; the clock ticked away the final seconds, and the wave caught up with the present and swept them away. ■

FROM P. ③

program on political issues and controversies in science fiction, talking about Vonnegut, Jonathan Swift, Marge Piercy, Huxley, Callenbach, Farmer, Wells, Bellamy, Brunner, Orwell and others. Jan is definitely planning to report on that in some future issue (hopefully before the MZB article). She and Phil were also responsible for a couple radio shows on WORT-FM last month, one of which was titled, "Booklist 2000."

Other news: Hank Luttrell has won the position of Book Review Editor of the Milwaukee *Bugle-American*; honestly, as far as I know (though the shootings were never explained...). Perri Corrick, John Bartelt, and the Luttrells came out with new issues of their zines, *Corr*, *Digestions*, and *Starling*. The portion of Madstf that still goes to the University survived the semester, and a significant minority of the group counted among their Christ-

mas loot the excellent *Alternate Worlds* (ed., James Gunn). I got a letter from SF writer, Charles DeVet apologizing for being unable to make it to WisCon, but surprising me with the information that he was an old friend of my dad's (who he made into a character in one of his early stories.) Speaking of nice letters, Jan and I blushed and were much pleased to receive a letter from one of the most brilliant and respected professors at the University, our old SF teacher in the Comparative Literature department. (She likes *Janus*!) Mostly, though, we've been going crazy putting on WisCon. You'd better have fun.

Martian jokes come from an old (1972) issue of *The National Lampoon*. Have you heard any good Venusian jokes?

What do you call an amoeba with black net stockings?—A Venusian hooker.

Can I stop now? ■

THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW

Reviewed by Doug Price

The hero and heroine slowly back out the door of the ballroom, incredulous at the decadence spread before them. The shadow of the elevator cage descends behind them, an eight-inch glitter platform shoe tapping to the bass rhythm of barely suppressed music. The grating crashes open and the heroine spins around. Upon sighting the black-cloaked figure of indeterminate sex within, she falls in a classic Hollywood swoon. The music blasts forth as the cloaked figure swishes past our daring couple into the ballroom. His voice sounds male ... for the most part — yet we are confused once again as he/she discards his/her cloak to reveal black net hose and garter belt, and a string of pearls. His songs fills in the missing information, he's just a sweet transvestite from transsexual Transylvania. Simple, is it not?

Thus we meet the good Dr. Frank N. Furter, who invites Brad and Janet, our worthy heroes, to view his latest project up in the lab. He's been busy "makin' a man" to relieve his "tension." It's the most refreshingly insane takeoff of Frankenstein I have ever seen, and it gets better as the film goes on. Originally produced as a stage play in London, where it is still being performed, it combines British inanity with liberal doses of incest, drugs, all manner of strange couplings, odd wardrobe, film nostalgia, ax murder, muscle love, and other pleasantries into a riot of bizarre imagery and song.

The film opens with the appearance of huge red lips which sing "Science Fiction/Double Feature", a nostalgic romp through old classics like Forbidden Planet and Day of the Triffids, as the credits roll by. In the next scene we find Brad, the boy, and Janet, the girl, in front of a Midwestern church. They are flanked by a couple of oldsters who look like they just stepped out of the painting, "American Gothic". This sets the stage for a parody of the old boy-marries-the-girl-next-door routine in the song, "Dammit, Janet, I Love You."

Next comes the almost painfully cliché-ridden set up, as their car breaks down on a stormy night near Dr. Furter's Gothic cathedral of a house, with a geodesic dome on the roof. Using the Frankenstein story as a very rough outline we are drawn, along with Brad and Janet, into voyeuristic observation (and later active participation) of the strange happenings within. We are introduced to many of the main characters here, as Riff-Raff, the hunchbacked butler, leads the performance of the Time Warp, a lascivious bump and grind that passes for dancing at the Frankenstein place. We meet his incestuous sister Magenta, the maid; and Columbia, a venomous member of Frankie's groupie minions. Enter Frankie, then it's up to the lab where he animates his



newest creation, the Rocky Horror, or Rocky for short. This blond muscleman proceeds to foreshadow his own doom by singing, "The Sword of Damocles is Hanging Over My Head". Dr. Frank and his creation then retire to their bridal suite while Brad and Janet are sent to their rooms. Frank then proceeds to seduce first Janet, then Brad, as they are both drawn more actively into the happenings of the house. Janet disposes of her sexual inhibitions to a musical scream of lust called "Toucha, Toucha, Toucha Touch Me". Brad simply becomes more and more confused.

Enter another SF movie cliché: the learned old scientist in the wheelchair who will set everything to rights with his educated pronouncements. Dr. Scott does make several learned pronouncements, yet he is ineffective. He has come looking for his nephew Eddie, who has mysteriously disappeared. Then, in one of the film's most gruesome moments, Frank whips the tablecloth off the table, revealing the half-dismembered corpse of Eddie, who they realize must have been the main course of the meal they have just eaten.

Frankie's tolerance of his guests goes rapidly downhill, at which point he turns nearly the entire cast into statues. Is this the end? Oh no, says our narrator, the criminologist, who has been leading us through the story like a Hitchcock. Thus we come to the (literally) staged finale, in which each of the statues comes to life once again to sing, "Rose Tint My World", a ballad glorifying unreality and escapism. Then we come to Frankie, as the curtains part, and we see him standing in front of a forty foot tall backdrop of the old RKO Radio Pictures logo, dressed in Impeccable drag. He sings "Whatever Happened to Fay Wray", which leads to (as if the backdrop weren't bad enough) a sudden open-



ing of the stage floor, revealing a swimming pool and a Busby Berkeley-esque water ballet.

Can this go on? I won't tell. Let it suffice to say that the ending is conveniently ambiguous. The play's message ending has been deleted; apparently it was thought unsuitable for an American audience. We are not let in on the characters' feelings at the end. There is a lack of completion, of finality. This is the largest of the few disappointments the film offers its viewers. It's so refreshing to see a film that has fun thumbing its nose at our encrusted views of "reality". The film forms its own little universe which is internally self-consistent. We need only watch with an open mind and the film grabs us up into its world.

In this film, the story is not the things, it is the characters. Tim Curry in the role of Frank N. Furter is devastating. His vocalization changes from masculine to feminine, line to line. There is a delicacy with which he handles his part that is undeniable. Indeed, Curry's performance is so dazzling it tends to mask the other players. Richard O'Brien, who played Riff-Raff, was also the playwright and composer for the Rocky Horror Show. He wrote the Picture Show with the help of Jim Sharmon. Riff-Raff's image and personality suit O'Brien admirably as he slinks about the mansion assisting Frank at his dastardly chores. A brilliant bit of staging brings out Columbia's character as she tap dances in the Time Warp number. The scowl of rage and frustration on her face as she slips and falls flat on the stairs quickly clues us in on her scaly side. It is hard to detail the characters of Brad and Janet, since they usually had things done to them, rather than acting independently. Dr. Scott plays the thoughtful and stable scientist to the hilt. But it is through him that we see that seedy underside that exists in all of us. When the statues come out of stasis for the "Rose

Tint My World" number, all but Dr. Scott find themselves dressed in drag. When Scott's turn to sing comes, he throws aside the blanket that has covered his legs, to this point, and reveals them encased in black net hose. He proceeds to do high kicks from his wheelchair in the background through the rest of the song. Rocky allows himself to be lead through all of this, speaking only through song.

Setting was superb throughout the film. No effect was too low for a sight gag. Everything from plink tiles in the lab to a bow-relief of Atlas supporting the world over the bed in the bridal suite was used. Musically, the film is a crazy montage of acid, 50's rock and roll, love ballad, and elements that defy absolute categorization. I found the over-all effect pleasing. Costuming scaled the heights of campy. Glitter, nylon, and assorted accouterments appear in profusion. However, the make-up is where this production really shines. Curry's make-up is applied so skillfully that it almost makes the part itself. The pasty white of his face contrasts sharply with the eyelines and the almost black lips. Flawless shadow detailing under the cheekbones keeps Curry's face from looking clownish, however. His every facial movement shows up sharp and clear. Camera work was quite clever at times. As Curry sashayed into the ballroom during the "Sweet Transvestite" number, we, the camera, are forced to backpedal, as Curry sings at the top of his lungs inches away from our subjective "face". Overall, there were no major technical errors I noticed.

While this film isn't quite SF, I think it accomplished its purpose in successfully creating an alternate reality. No real messages here, but a lot of craziness and fun. With a film like this, one either loves it or hates it; few can be indifferent. I liked it. 🐣

The film program for the WisCon will be a varied lot, although the list here will be expanded by the time of the convention. Check the WisCon Pocket Program for the final film program, and a schedule of film seminars for people who want to discuss films as well as view them.

German Fantasy

We will be able to present a good cross section of the silent German fantastic cinema. An effort will be made to provide music, so wish us luck. As a group, these movies tend to be full of incredible visual images, and are impressionistic in a dark, shadowy way. Modern audiences aren't used to seeing the acting styles of silent actors, but the films have much to offer, and you'll probably find it interesting to see the familiar elements of modern fantasy and science fiction movies in their original forms.

Nosferatu (1922) directed by F. W. Murnau, with Max Schreck. Much closer to Bram Stoker's *Dracula* than later versions, but avoiding that title for copyright reasons. Schreck's vampire is violent, repellant and yet suggests the erotic in his relations to his victims.

Metropolis (1927) directed by Fritz Lang, story by Thea von Harbou, cameraman: Karl Freund. The revolt of the working class in a future civilization. The film uses incredibly imaginative and vast-looking sets, which have probably influenced the design of dozens of other futuristic movie sets. The special effects and visual images are as impressive today as they were fifty years ago.

Siegfried (1924) directed by Fritz Lang.



WISCON **NOSEFRATU**
Film Notes
By Hank Luttrell

The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari (1919) directed by Robert Wiene with Werner Krauss and Conrad Veidt. An intense, impressionistic attack on authority which idolizes power. The story of a somnambulist killer is explained away as the dream of a madman, but the film retains a powerful impact.

Hollywood Horror in the 1930s

Inland of Lost Souls (1933) directed by Erle C. Kenton, screenplay by Philip Wylie and Waldemar Young from *The Inland of Dr. Moreau* by H. G. Wells, with Charles Laughton, Richard Arlen, Bela Lugosi. Tends to lack the style and elegance found in the best of 1930's horror films, but it is sometimes effectively shocking.

... plus other '30 favorites.

Off-the-Wall Fantasy

Little Shop of Horrors (1960) directed by Roger Corman, written by Charles Griffith. Made on a tiny budget in one week, it is nevertheless a bloodthirsty, humorous movie about a person-eating plant.

Night of the Living Dead (1968) directed by George A. Romero. A cast of unknowns produced one of the most frightening, not to mention stomach churning, horror films ever made. Includes a funny parody of TV disaster coverage.



SIEGFRIED



THE THING



NOSFERATU

Possible

The short films of Georges Méliès stand as a permanent monument to one of the motion picture's greatest pioneers. Méliès was a popular stage magician who initially saw the motion picture as a means of performing elaborate magical tricks. Soon he began to tell imaginative stories, some of the first ever filmed. Virtually all of the techniques now used in film making—double exposure, stop motion, animation, fades, dissolves—were used by Méliès.

The Thing (1951) directed by Christian Nyby (showing the touch of producer Howard Hawks) with Margaret Sheridan, Kenneth Tobey and James Arness in extremely heavy make-up. Scientists discover a downed saucer containing an intelligent vegetable in the Arctic. Based on a story by John Campbell, it remains the classic monster-from-space film.



THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI

Survival (?) of the Fittest (?)

By that infamous pair of film skeptics,
Diane Martin & Richard Russell

Charles Darwin's famous theory of evolution acquires a few detours, leaps, and extra branches in the four movies we will look at for this issue. The "descent" from one's forebears is also an appropriate concept to bear in mind when discussing the quality of these efforts.

The first film is the most heavily publicized movie of 1976:

T: King Kong
P: Dino DeLaurentiis
D: John Guillermin
W: Lorenzo Semple Jr.
S: Jeff Bridges as Jack Prescott
Charles Grodin as Fred Wilson
Jessica Lange as Dwan

Special Effects: Carlo Rambaldi and Glen Robinson

Preliminary advertising claimed "there is only one King Kong." When it was pointed out that this was probably true, Dino DeLaurentiis tried a new tack. When the movie was released the advertising claimed that "The most exciting original motion picture event of all time is also one of the great love stories of all time." Wrong both times. Hardly original. And not great.

Briefly, for anyone who—is it possible?—may be unfamiliar with the story, an expedition to a remote Pacific island discovers a colossal ape, captures it, and brings it back to New York. The ape escapes, wreaks a certain amount of havoc, climbs atop the city's highest building to avoid its tormentors, and is shot to death by circling aircraft. It is mourned only by the beautiful young woman whom it seized and fell in love with prior to its capture.

The plot has not changed in the 43 years since the original film was released: only a few corporate identities have been updated. Instead of a movie-making expedition, it is the Petrox Oil Company which discovers and tries to exploit Kong. (Could this be a pun on "pet rocks"?) Petrox's Wilson gloats that Kong will be bigger than Esso's "tiger in the tank". Helicopters replace biplanes, and the World Trade Center is substituted for the Empire State Building. Nikon Cameras, which paid for the publicity, are used exclusively and shoved in the face of the movie viewer several times to make sure you appreciate their co-sponsorship.

This remake of the real original *King Kong* has more money, better technology, and Technicolor going for it, but in spite of these advantages it falls short of our expectations. Kong is quite believable, but it takes an hour before he appears on the screen. In the meantime, the plot is carried by less talented actors. Let's face it: there are only two kinds of actors who are going to sign up for a remake of *King Kong*—those on the way up and those on the way down. No established film star is going to play second banana to the world's biggest monkey. The money that might have been spent on casting was clearly diverted into special effects, with results



that were only too apparent. The viewers' sympathies lie solely with Kong from the very beginning: all the other characters are ninjas (Dwan), assholes (Petrox), or non-entities (the natives).

Since the acting and dialog vary between non-existent and insipid, the viewer has time to consider more interesting phenomena, such as Kong's size. No one has ever successfully explained how Kong can support himself, since his proportions are those of a normal ape, expanded by a factor of eight. At least this is the inference voiced in the film upon finding a 6'4" (1.93 m) footprint, and it seems like a fair extrapolation of the ape's height. But Kong's volume (and hence his mass) is expanded, not by a factor of eight, but by a factor of eight cubed, since the expansion occurs in all three dimensions, not just height. Given that the mass of a normal gorilla is about 150 kg, an expansion by a factor of 8^3 (512) produces a mass of 77 metric tons. This large mass must be supported by bones which are larger in cross section (two dimensions) by a factor of only 8^2 (64). This is known in biology as the "square-cube" rule, and it explains why animals don't just get proportionally larger and larger. It also explains why elephants, the largest land animals, have legs like tree trunks, and why whales, the largest of all animals, live exclusively in buoyant salt water. It doesn't explain Kong. (And neither this rule nor any other biological law explains his lack of genitalia. That fact is explained by certain economic laws which pertain to the relative income of films rated R and those rated PG, like *KK2*.) Incidentally, it might be interesting to have some engineer perform a structural stress analysis on the effects of a 77-ton mass leaping from one tower of the World Trade Center to another. Not just your normal swaying in the wind, we'll wager.

Another anomaly that comes to mind concerns Kong's existence on the island. Has he lived for nearly four centuries (or perhaps more), as is hinted by Prescott early in the film? If so, how? The energy requirements must be tremendous, yet his island home is too small to be shown on any maps. *KK2* explains that this is because the island is constantly shrouded in carbon dioxide mist caused by animal respiration. If this is the best "rational" explanation the screenwriters can come up with, perhaps it's as well that they avoid the attempt.

Since *King Kong* is an adventure story, it is perhaps asking too much that there be some effort made at explaining some of the obviously incredible things it contains. It is difficult to say that *King Kong 2* is a bad film. In most respects it is not much better or worse than *King Kong 1*, and certainly that has become a classic. But a remake has its own peculiar challenge: it will invariably be compared to the original, and it must be clearly superior to the original in addition to meeting normal cinematic standards. Otherwise, why bother?

DeLaurentiis has succeeded in making a pretty good imitation. It's like a high-quality four-color print of the *Mona Lisa*. But there's only one *Mona Lisa*. And there's only one *King Kong*.

A few steps up the evolutionary ladder from *King Kong* are the denizens of two Edgar Rice Burroughs worlds depicted in a twin bill from Amicus Productions. Since they were offered up together, we will consider them together.

T: *The Land That Time Forgot*

P: John Dark

D: Kevin Connor

W: James Cawthorn and Michael Moorcock, based on the 1918 novella by Edgar Rice Burroughs

S: Doug McClure as Bowen Tyler

John McEnery as Kapitän von Schoenvorts

Keith Baron as Captain Bradley

Susan Penhaligon as Lisa Clayton

T: *At the Earth's Core**

P: John Dark

D: Kevin Connor

W: Milton Subotsky, based on the 1914 novel by Edgar Rice Burroughs

S: Doug McClure as David Innes

Peter Cushing as Dr. Abner Perry

Caroline Munro as Dia

Edgar Rice Burroughs specialized in heroic fantasy adventures. His successful formula was to take a strapping male protagonist, hurl him unexpectedly into an unfriendly alien environment, give him lots of strange semi-, sub-, and non-human creatures to battle at regular intervals, introduce a beautiful female for him to defend and pine over, and wrap the whole thing up with a successful escape. ERB's heroes (and the word is exceptionally appropriate) are strong, noble, brave, and usually tremendously gifted natural linguists; his heroines are demure, yet surprisingly (?) competent; both are pure of heart, mind, and (are they ever!) body. The action is breathlessly fast-paced.

OK, so we know it's a formula. So we know how incredibly unrealistic it all is. So it requires a suspension of disbelief that shouldn't be expected of a third-grader. What the hell, it's worth it! [That was strong, noble, brave, and (usually) tremendously gifted Russell speaking. Martin is somewhat less enchanted with ERBland.]

In *The Land That Time Forgot*, ERB's formula is carried over fairly successfully into the film medium. The first and last scenes of the film are identical. They show an object being hurled from a high cliff and landing in the ocean. The object is a case containing the manuscript which Bowen Tyler has written of his adventures in the land of Caprona, a huge island somewhere in the approximate vicinity of where we now know Antarctica to exist. The year is 1916, and the German submarine *U-33*, von Schoenvorts commanding, torpedoes and sinks the freighter *Montross*, on which Tyler and Lisa Clayton are passengers. Tyler and the *Montross*'s Captain Bradley engineer the takeover of the *U-33* when it surfaces for air. In a series of mishaps, the *U-33* ends up with limited fuel and water off the frozen coast of a land described by the Italian navigator Caproni. The *U-33* passes up an underground river to find Caprona, a lush prehistoric jungle. The Germans and the English declare a truce from World War I and place themselves under the leadership of Tyler, a neutral American.

*We regret having misidentified this film in a previous issue of *Janus* as *Voyage to the Center of the Earth*. Our faulty memories of the film's preview were responsible.

The truce is an uneasy one, though, and one of the Germans finally commandeers the submarine, along with the freshly refined fuel, and tries to leave, taking all but Tyler and Clayton with him. But the *U-33* explodes in a river superheated by lava from an erupting volcano, leaving the protagonists hopelessly stranded. (In the Burroughs novel, this completes the first of three novellas; the second novella shows them being rescued.)

In *At the Earth's Core*, Dr. Abner Perry has invented (and David Innes has financed) a huge mechanical prospector which is capable of drilling into the Earth at tremendous speed while carrying passengers inside. It goes amok on a test run and burrows through to Pellucidar, a world on the inner surface of the sphere formed by a hollow Earth. The passengers are captured by Sagoths, gorilla-like servants of winged lizards called Mahars, who rule Pellucidar. Another captive is Dia the Beautiful, whom Innes befriends. After a brief stint of slavery, they all escape, then return to attack and destroy the Mahars. Innes and Perry return to the surface in the giant drill.

Technical effects in these two movies are a study in do's and don't's. *The Land That Time Forgot* (TLTF) shows mainly medium-distance hothouse shots, with an occasional outdoor forest scene; adequate. *At the Earth's Core* (ATEC) deals in close-ups of eight or ten leafy (and probably potted) plants; inadequate. TLTF uses actual cliffs and real rocks; realistic. ATEC has papier-mache and styrofoam constructs which aren't even spray-painted very well; distracting. TLTF uses process shots of battling dinosaurs around which the actors stalk from various angles; believable. ATEC has process shots in which the actors stand in a line at the bottom of the screen on which the battling beasts are being projected; unbelievable. TLTF has mechanical monsters; slow but not obviously fake. ATEC has (1) guys dressed up in rubber suits (terrible); (2) dummies dressed up in rubber suits (worse); and (3) a fire-breathing dragon with an obvious pipe in its throat (worst).

The screenplays are also a study in contrasts. ERB's work has been nicely adapted by Cawthorn and Moorcock for TLTF. They make von Schoenvorts less of the Prussian villain than Burroughs did. While this makes the characterization easier to take, it also necessitates the introduction of the exploding volcano as the motivating factor in the *U-33*'s hasty departure. Burroughs simply had the evil German commander desert everybody. The film also leaves out some of the captures and countercaptures which Burroughs delights in, and it omits several of the sub-human tribes which occur in the novel. But mainly it is faithful to the original. ATEC, on the other hand, has gaping holes in the plot. How, for example, does Innes forge an alliance of the humans in Pellucidar when he knows only the members of a single tribe? Why is Perry allowed free run of the Mahars' library? How come there are only a handful of Mahars, if they rule all of Pellucidar? What are the egg-like objects that one character sacrifices his life to destroy?

Lastly, there is the matter of evolution. TLTF briefly mentions Clayton's "theory" that all the creatures in Caprona are individually evolving from sub-human to "Galu", or human, but does not dwell on it. At least a brief lip-service is paid to this idea which Burroughs used as his central theme. ATEC, on the other hand, reflects none of the reluctance that the original Abner Perry felt at the prospect of murdering the telepathic Mahars, who were clearly the most intelligent species in Pellucidar. In fact, it seems that the movie Mahars are not telepathic at all, but that they control the Sagoths by

hypnosis, even out of line of sight. There are scenes of Sagoths standing around like cordwood until the blink of a lambent purple eye activates them. (Never explained, of course.)

The Land That Time Forgot was first released several years ago, and apparently met with enough success to inspire *At the Earth's Core*. Would that Amicus Productions had done as well the second time around.

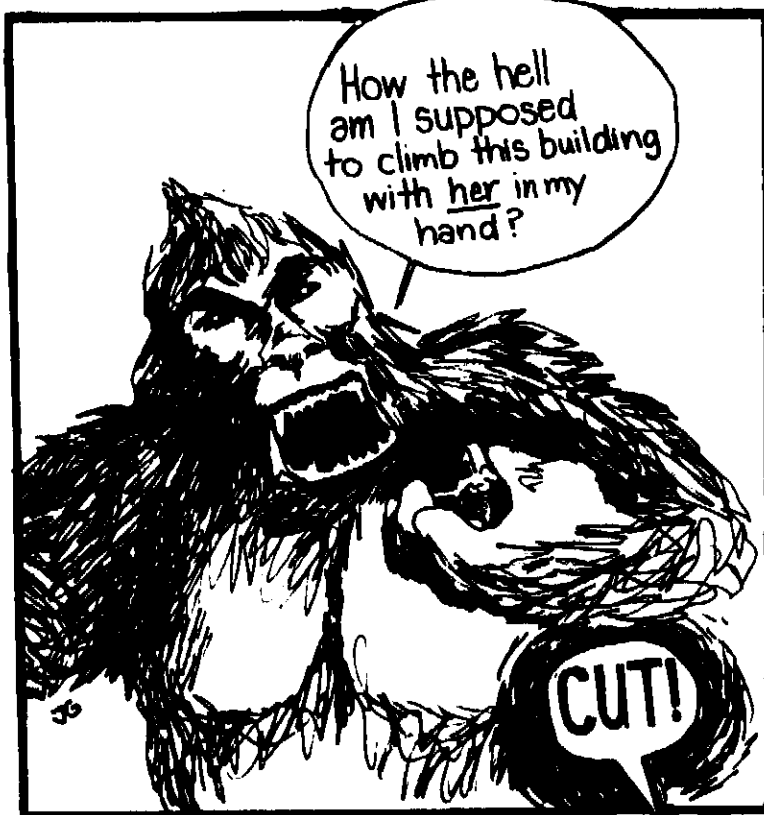
The final film is about an evolutionary step which is ahead of us, rather than behind us. The step is toward psi powers (from the Greek letter Ψ , initial of *psyche*, or mind), specifically telekinesis (TK), the ability to move things by thought.

The film is:

T: Carrie
P: Paul Monash
D: Brian DePalma
W: Lawrence Cohen, based on the 1974 novel by

Stephen King

S: Sissie Spacek as Carrie White
Piper Laurie as Meg White
William Katt as Tommy Ross
Amy Irving as Sue Snell
Betty Buckley as Miss Collins
Nancy Allen as Chris
John Travolta as Billy



The plot is straightforward. Carrie is the class toilet. Everyone dumps on her. When she gets her first menstrual period as a high-school senior, she doesn't know what's happening and thinks she's bleeding to death. Unfortunately for her, this traumatic event occurs in the girls' shower room at Bates High School, and the other girls shower her with sanitary napkins, tampons, jeers, and insults. Miss Collins, the gym teacher, sympathizes with Carrie. "That was a really shitty thing you did," she tells the other girls, just before a week's detention during which she exercises their little fannies off. One of the girls, Sue Snell, really is sorry. She arranges for her boy friend, Tommy Ross, to ask Carrie to the Senior Prom. Some of the other

girls are not so sorry; they're mad, and want to take it out on Carrie. They know that Tommy Ross is a shoo-in for Prom King, and that Carrie is thus going to end up as Prom Queen. So they set up a couple of buckets of pig's blood on the gym rafters and tip them over on Carrie a few seconds after her coronation. Boy, are they sorry. Carrie, you see, has TK, and she proceeds to wreck the place and everyone in it.

It really isn't giving much away to describe the plot, because you can see most of it coming from a considerable distance, and it's the execution, rather than the anticipation, of the action which is the focal point of the movie. Indeed, the movie does a rather better job of building suspense than the book, which starts right out by telling you that Carrie was responsible for the almost total destruction of not only the high school but the entire community. Due either to artistic restraint or limited budget, the film restricts the carnage to one high school gymnasium and one private home.

The root of the problem is Carrie's mother, a religious fanatic who thinks that all sex (that's right, all sex) is the work of Satan. That's why she has neglected to inform Carrie of the facts of life. It's also why Carrie is "different" and thus picked on. The inside of the White home is a veritable montage of religious paintings, statues, candles, tracts, books, etc. The most striking item is located in a broom closet which Meg White has fixed up as a shrine for her daughter to be locked into when she has been bad: it is a crucifix with a tremendously agonized and tormented Jesus writhing upon it, pierced not only by nails but also by a number of darts from which painted blood flows copiously. It is Meg White's dearest ambition to be just like Jesus.

The acting in *Carrie* is excellent. Sissie Spacek conveys just the right amount of baffled self-pity giving way to happiness and finally blind rage. Piper Laurie will probably be up for Best Supporting Actress for her work. The kids look and sound like real kids, people we can remember from our own high-school days.

The work done in transforming Carrie from the class klutz to a radiant Prom Queen is commendable. Not so good is the paint job performed on her after she is first hit by the blood. Special effects are excellent; no strings, wires, or mirrors visible anywhere.

The time spent on TK is limited, unlike the book, which contains considerable speculation on its nature and source. But, in the one scene where Carrie is researching it in the school library, look for an interesting little touch. Andre Norton's *Breed To Come* is misfiled in with the nonfiction. That means that United Artists has either an SF fan working in its prop department or a director who thought Norton's book was about people, rather than cats.

On the whole, a moderately successful movie, not tremendously suspenseful, not really horrifying (except once), and not particularly lucid. But it has believable characters, and it is possible to identify with them.

What does that do to our theme of evolution? Have the fittest survived? Carrie didn't, even though she was probably a step in advance of *homo sapiens*. Kong didn't, even though he was very powerful. Both succumbed to ignorance and bigotry. Doug McClure survives. Edgar Rice Burroughs struggles but falters. A triumph for mediocrity. What, exactly, do we mean by "the fittest"?

Oh, well. Ted Sturgeon remarked that 90% of everything is crud. That just makes it easier to pick out the remaining 10%. Maybe next time.



JANUS BOOK REVIEWS: KATHERINE

MacLEAN...

THE DIPLOIDS, THE MISSING MAN,

AND MANY OTHERS --

AN OVERVIEW

OF MACLEAN'S WORK BY JIM COX

Back when SF anthologies first saw the light of print in the closing years of the 1940s, there began a curious custom of the publishing tribe. Books would come out with 10 or 12 stories written by 10 or 12 authors on the inside, and only three or four authors' names on the covers: big name authors. The seven or eight lesser lights were summed up with those fine old phrases "etc.", "and others", and the ever-popular "and many others".

Katherine MacLean, beginning in 1949, was almost invariably one of those many, many others.

Her name may not have stood out on the cover of those 35- and 50-cent SF anthologies (aren't those cover prices nostalgic?), but her stories did. And after rereading them for this review, I found they still do.

If any SF True Believers out there in fandom land haven't read "Unhuman Sacrifice" or "The Snowball Effect" or some 20+ other stories Ms. MacLean has created in the last 26 years of writing SF, descend at once upon your nearest used-book store or unsuspecting fellow fan and gather them to your shelves for your SF-reading pleasure. You've got a treat in store.

The lady writes well. Always has. Editors like Groff Conklin, Damon Knight, and Terry Carr have raised one chief complaint: wishing out loud for more samples of her tale-telling expertise to

put into their anthology books. Speaking as a reader, a fan, and a perennial pilgrim in search of that elusive sense of wonder...I agree with them.

She won the Nebula Award 1971 for *The Missing Man*. But my personal all-time MacLean favorite is the short story "Unhuman Sacrifice" (*A Century of Science Fiction*, Damon Knight, ed., 1962). "Unhuman Sacrifice" has cropped up in mind three or four times over the years since first I read it. It's a good sad story. Sad because I could see it like a symbol of the world around me. Missionary Zeal rushing in where God Herself would fear to tread. Cultures misunderstood by the professional dogooders (missionaries, diplomats, social workers—the list is a long one, about the length of the human race, I'd say). I mean, look, folks, don't mess with what you don't understand or you may be in for some surprises. What a story!

Mine are not reviews that rehash plot outlines. I hate being handed outlines of stories masquerading as reviews. Reminds me of high-school book reports—and about as interesting. My style (Pulitzer, of course) is to tell you what I liked/disliked and why I think the author succeeded/failed.

MacLean succeeds. Every time. She does so because she does not pump out her stories by the pound, box, and bale. Her stories seem to come along on an average of about once a year. This lack of overkill a la Henry Kuttner (writer) or Roger Elwood (editor) surely means quality is triumphant over quantity for Ms. MacLean.

MacLean succeeds as an SF author because her material reads fast and easy. It's her ideas, her speculations, her questions—overt and implied—that tend to stick in your mind after the simple pleasure of the story has run its course.

MacLean succeeds as a superior SF author because she has always had the technical skill to put (in a story form that entertains first and seduces one to reflection second—albeit a strong second) her own twist on traditional and well worn SF themes like Telepathy, Ecology, Sociological Extrapolation, or Alien Worlds.

MacLean has got to have one of the very best ratios in the business of stories published in SF magazines to stories later reprinted in SF anthologies. She has had no problem showing up in original anthologies, either. She has even made it into her own single-author anthology with *The Diploids And Other Flights of Fancy*, 1962.

Katherine MacLean is nowadays no longer to be searched for among those "many others". Her name is on the cover now. And deservedly so. MacLean stories are all highly recommended. 🍀

A TRIBUTE
TO
THE SF STORIES
OF
KATHERINE MACLEAN
IN
TEN ANTHOLOGIES
EXTRACTED FROM
MY AWESOME PAPERBACK COLLECTION

Katherine MacLean
You write a mean
Science Fiction story.

—James A. Cox
November 30, 1976

The world of Katherine MacLean's novel, *The Missing Man*, is based upon the mad vision of the deranged programmer of the city's original economic computers:

"You think I'm kidding, they think I'm kidding. Anybody who wants to give me a hard time can think I'm kidding. That's their option. But we did it. Just like we taxed bad things for the cost of their social damage, understand? We gave a tax write-off for the progress value of laborsaving machines. But they cost extra. They cost all the wages lost to the fired apes they replace plus his lost production, plus all the cost of supporting the apes on welfare or the cost of moving them and training them to another job. It cost plenty. Cost always distributes, so it cost society plenty. I left that out. Laborsaving machinery rated crazy cheap and put half the work force onto unemployment compensation." (p. 154)

This neat little equation tends to work against all but the "button pushers", the computer techs. People are supported by the city for 20 years until their childhood support runs out, at which point they find a job, starve, or apply for their guaranteed pensions. To opt for the last alternative, however, also means that they are shipped out of the city to an agricultural job, and sterilized.

George Sanford, our hero, is one of the "muscle-heads" no longer suited to what MacLean imagines urban life to have evolved into. He refuses to apply for welfare or a pension and runs the risk of sterilization in any case, should he be caught begging. He has gone without food for two weeks at the point of the novel's beginning. Larry, another rebel, laughs at George's attempts to find a place in the system and stay in the city (New York): "...your unemployment pension is piling up.... When it piles high enough, you'll go in and claim your money and let them sterilize you and ship you out to the boondocks, like everyone else." (p. 109)

But George is not an ordinary musclehead. True, he finds it physically impossible to fill out the forms and categorize his activities in the bureaucratized language necessary for urban survival, but he has a special talent. In fact, all the major characters of *The Missing Man* have "special talents". Never do we really get an up-close look at the endangered species, the pre-urban human. The idea behind the story of *The Missing Man* is perhaps that humanity will continue to evolve even when we seemingly trap ourselves into deadends. Indeed, Larry (a more beligerent and destructive misfit/rebel than George) announces with Heinleinian bravado:

"My descendants are going to be there the year the sun runs down and we hook drives to Earth and cruise away looking for a new sun. My descendants are going to surf light waves in space. Nobody's going to wipe them out and nobody's going to make them into button pushers." (p. 109)

George's special talent enables him to detect other people's thoughts and dreams when these are propelled by strong enough emotions. As it turns out, therefore, George is a perfect and much needed recruit for the system. Throughout the novel, really a picaresque novel (like *Huckleberry Finn* or *Tom Jones*, in which the character travels through a series of episodes and learns about him/herself), George uses his talent to aid his friend, Ahmed, and Ahmed's department, the Rescue Squad, in a series of urban emergencies. These emergencies involve a trapped, pregnant woman; a kidnapped computer technician whose knowledge of the city's "weak spots" is being used to trigger disasters by a gang of guerrillas; a missing



Arab leader being made the involuntary victim of an authentic Aztec sacrifice/ceremony/recreation on Carnival Day; and, at different times, the kidnapping of both Ahmed and George. Each involves a missing person and suggests one of the reasons for the title choice. But, on a more important level, the novel follows George's quest for his own identity and his need to discover whether he belongs with the system or fighting against it.

However, the real story of *The Missing Man*, and by far the most exciting part of the novel, is the background tapestry with which MacLean weaves George's society in such marvelous color and detail. This book is packed with casually offered tastes of a fascinatingly complex world. The skill with which George's world is described often reminded me of the best of Heinlein, where idea, not character, struts out on the stage as hero, and is, no doubt, the reason for the novella version of *The Missing Man* winning the 1971 Nebula award. Take for instance Ahmed's department, the Rescue Squad. Unlike *Adam-12* and such, the Rescue Squad of the future city detects crises by unconscious telepathic pickup by crowds. Ahmed explains:

"Adults don't like to use telepathy. They pretend they can't. But say a man falls down an elevator shaft and breaks a leg. No one finds him, and he can't reach a phone, so he'll get desperate and pray and start using mind power. He'll try to send his thoughts as loud as he can. He doesn't know how loud he can send. But the dope doesn't broadcast his name and where he is, he just broadcasts: 'Help! I've got a broken leg!' People pick up the thought and think it's their thought. They think, 'Help! I've got a broken leg.' People come limping into the emergency clinic and get X-rays of good legs. The doctors tell them to go home. But they are picking up the thought, 'Help! I'm going to die unless I get help!'... The Rescue Squad uses them as tracers. Whenever there is

an abnormal wave of people applying for help in one district, we try to find the center of the wave and locate someone in real trouble." (p. 8)

In a similar way crimes can be detected beforehand and prevented because the criminal broadcasts early fantasies about the action and creates emotion-waves of anticipation and fear in the area. George turns out to be one of the most effective, most incredibly receptive tracers the Rescue Squad has ever had access to.

But perhaps the most beautiful bit of world-painting is found in the chapter which describes the city-wide annual festival, called Carnival Day, in which all the people costume themselves as their "opposite". Thus, throughout the day, wild pandemonium is the rule. In the descriptions of how people act differently, how the neighborhoods have changed for the occasion, the reality of the city comes alive. George's memory of a fifth-grade anthropology class sketches a philosophy of explanation:

"Every system becomes a system by excluding its opposite actions. In human nature, all opposite impulses, though repressed, do not fade. They accumulate and build up charge as fantasies. All old and lasting civilizations stabilized themselves by holding periodic ceremonies to release the charged opposite actions." (p. 126)

George's visits to the different neighborhoods, actually wildly varying cultural groups, describe a chilling extrapolation of the process, which is very different from the American ideal, the melting pot. All quite clearly delineated and guarded by gangs are the Karmle Brotherhood Commune, the Aztec Commune, the Creative Anachronisms Medievalist Commune, Black Kingdom, Spanish Harlem, and, walled off entirely, Arab Jordan. (The last, a self-imposed ghetto, is inhabited by Palestinians located there and in parts of all large cities of the world as part of the UN's final Mideast settlement.)

In terms of the world-creation detail, *The Missing Man* is an exquisitely wrought book. In its expansion from novella to novel, episodes were added in order to increase it to the requisite length. Thus it is somewhat unsatisfying for its lack of a really coherent and connecting plot. But, as stated before, it works fine as a picaresque work. Added fun comes with George's understanding of his unique talents and intermittent communication with similarly talented (and power-hungry) people living somewhere near the Pacific coast.

I highly recommend *The Missing Man*: It is a novel crammed with detail and sparkling with ideas. ▀

THE DIPLOIDS*

THREE REVIEWS

* AN ANTHOLOGY INCLUDING: THE DIPLOIDS, DEFENSE MECHANISM, AND BE MERRY, GAMES, INCOMMUNICADO, THE SNOWBALL EFFECT, PICTURES DON'T LIE, & FEEDBACK.



1. JIM COX

In April 1953, *Thrilling Wonder* ran a story by Katherine MacLean titled "Six Fingers". Ten years later the story was renamed "The Diploids" and became the lead item of her own single-author anthology called *The Diploids and Other Flights of Fancy*.

"The Diploids" is a truly prime sample of the science fiction writer's art and effort. It's a longish short story taking up about a third of the

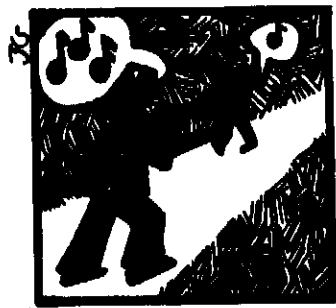
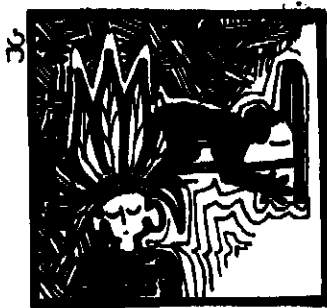
anthology. A puzzle story for the first half (you find out, at the same time the hero does, just how come he has extra fingers, an eye in the back of his head, superior intelligence and all the other little goodies that make him superhuman, or is he human?)

Superman stories have been told before—Phillip Wylie's "Gladiator", Van Vogt's *Slan*, even the British with *Odd John*. To these early and excellent three I confidently add patent attorney Paul Brenden, diploid-at-large.

And what's a diploid? How about "two-fold; in biology, having twice the number of chromosomes normally occurring in a germ cell: most somatic cells are diploid." (*Webster's New 20th Century Dictionary*, 1966).

And what's a diploid? How about a misfit man who makes other folk feel vaguely uncomfortable and obscurely hostile. Small groups of supermen hiding out from people in general and each other in particular.

Oh yes, let me mention fast pace, a puzzle, a couple of cliff-hangers, a love interest, a cast of dozens and Katherine MacLean—her talent and skill soar high up the scale of splendid entertainment. And "The Diploids" is no exception. ▀



2. DOUG PRICE

About mid-December, Jan asked for volunteers to review "The Diploids," a short story written by our Guest of Honor. Not having read any of her work previously, I was interested, so I took the assignment. Let me start with a short synopsis of the plot.

Paul "Mart" Brenden is a patent lawyer. He is nicked by a bullet one day as he walks down the street. He thinks little of it; there are madmen in every city. As he returns to his office with another lawyer, a woman named Nadine, his television rings. He finds himself looking into the barrel of a gun which appears on the screen, wielded by a former client. The client claims that Paul is a "diploid", then the phone goes dead as the madman fires into the viewscreen. The way he says the word "diploid" reminds Paul of his childhood. He begins to tell Nadine of his peers who called him "martian" because he had six fingers. His arms and legs are also in the wrong proportion to the rest of his body and, strangest of all, he reveals the third eye in the back of his skull, which has been hidden by his hair.

Nadine's casual discussion of his possible origins forces Paul to reconsider it himself and so he is driven to seek out his real beginnings. Nadine finds an ad in the newspaper which includes a portrayal of a six-fingered hand. She suggests that the ad is aimed at him and perhaps others like him.

Soon after, he finds that he is an E-2 control standard test embryo that has been illegally brought to term. Hundreds of thousands of embryonic replicas of himself are washed down the drains of genetics labs every year in the name of science. The aberrations in his structure are modifications originally induced so as to be visible on a microscopic scale. He meets other diploids and learns from them that his genetic make-up represents the cream of the human genetic pool.

Paul leaves this meeting, calls Nadine, and proceeds to tell her what he has discovered. He knows he has lost her love as he hangs up the phone. At this point he is captured by the "supers", rogue

diploids who believe themselves to be superior to humanity. Injected with hypnotic drugs and commands, he returns to the other diploids to expose the fact that they are doing genetic experimentation. Paul is able to break the hypnotic conditioning at the critical moment and throws in his lot with the diploids while also helping to capture the madman who has been trying to kill him. In the end, Nadine regrets her decision to not marry Paul and tells him that children are not necessary to her happiness. We have learned moments earlier, however, that there is a method by which Paul can produce offspring, and they will be without his physical aberrations. So, a perfect ending is provided to this love story.

This seems to be the tale of what it means to an individual to be different; what it is like to carry a name other than your personal one from your early childhood. Even Paul's friends of later years, long after children taunted him with the hated "martian", still call him by the nickname "Mart". He finds himself beset by the question that concerns every outsider in a conformist society. Does he continue to try to fit in or does he accept and work with his status as a changeling? If he chooses the second, does he strike out against humanity which has excluded him? These questions are brought out very clearly in the story, and yet the work lacks something: the expression of that terrible hate which usually marks the receiver of such a brand and leads him/her to react to it violently. In Paul, it appears mostly in the form of frustrated love. Indeed, the frustration is not fully satisfied by the main character even up to the end of the story. Rather, a supporting character executes an abrupt turnabout in feelings to precipitate the happy ending. Had the author probed the hate more deeply, I believe that a better story would have resulted.

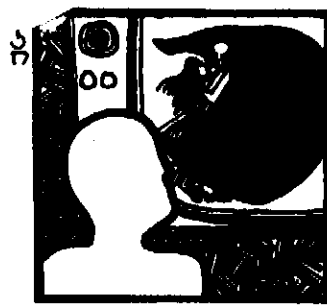
Having Jan and Jeanne for editors has made me rather sensitive to the way that women are portrayed in SF stories. In "The Diploids," Nadine's only claim to self-sufficiency is that she is a successful lawyer herself. However, at the end of the story, she drapes herself across the strong male character, almost begging his forgiveness. But, it must be noted that the 1953 audience to which this story was addressed would find the course of events concerning Nadine quite natural and acceptable.

My tirade being finished, I think I should continue long enough to note some of the good points of "The Diploids." In that it deals with internalized hate and a character's reactions to this very human phenomenon, I find the story very enjoyable. It is a statement about the nature of the human condition that is hard to ignore. And, the fact that a female character is portrayed as being successful at anything at all is unusual for the period of time in which the story was written. So, despite the problems I have noted above, I found the story enjoyable in many ways and recommend it to you.

3. JIM COX

The Diploids and Other Flights of Fancy is Katherine MacLean's now long out-of-print 192-page SF anthology published by Avon Books early enough in the 60s to sell for 50 cents. Eight SF stories are gleaned from her earliest work. I believe her first sale was "Defense Mechanism" to *Astounding* in the latter part of 1949.

I like MacLean's tale-telling talent. This samp-





ling of Here storymaker's skill is superlative. She is good for my Sense of Wonder, very good indeed.

The strongest stories in this collection ("The Diploids", "Pictures Don't Lie", "The Snowball Effect", "Feedback") are genuine classics, i.e. folks who read SF will pick up on what they've read as genuine entertainment and they will read again—because there's something more and beyond simple entertainment in them. The weaker stories ("Games", "Incommunicado") are still as good as the best of most other SF writers.

I don't give plot-synopsis reviews, but because I want you to rush right out and scour the shelves of old-bookstores and your unsuspecting fellow fans for this OOP goody, I'll lay some one-liner teasers on you.

1. "The Diploids". A puzzle. Is he alien? Superhuman? something else? You get the answer in the middle of the tale, when he does, but you still keep reading furiously to the last sentence of the last paragraph.
2. "Defense Mechanism". How to keep a telepathic infant from going crazy.
3. "The Pyramid in the Desert". When the husband's away the wife will play—with immortality.

4. "The Snowball Effect". I always know my sociology professor could tell the local women's sewing circle how to take over the world.

5. "Incommunicado". From a computer to body language, speaking your mind may be more than meets the eye, or ear.

6. "Feedback". That's the trouble with people, they keep on wanting to do their own thing.

7. "Games". Even a child can be a man, and a man can be something very special.

8. "Pictures Don't Lie". Assumptions can be so...so...so assuming!

This is what I call a versatile book. It's good for novice and jaded SFers alike. Good-to-excellent stories, well-to-brilliantly told.

Hey, all you publishers out there in publisher land, how about a reprinting of this superlative lady's fanciful flights? And while you're at it, an anthological sequel of her stories since 1961 would not be amiss!

This book is highly recommended only for those who like SF, imagination, ideas, stories, entertainment, and the human race. ■



FROM P. 6

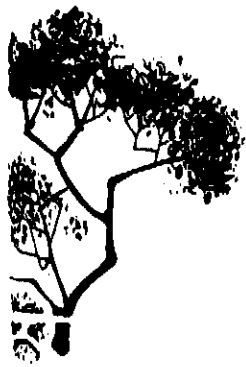
elements might be included, and in what ways, to make SF more acceptable in an ethical sense. These models or norms can be offered to writers before they write or used as a platform from which to view their writing. As Campbell used to say: "one idea per story", but these models need not be quite so formulaic. They must, at least as far as feminism is concerned, be equitable. They attempt to forge a link between the desires of the reader, the production of the writer, and the betterment of society, for ethical rather than monetary reasons.

Proscriptive criticism is made up of don'ts, a list usually composed from the mistakes and unfortunate products of previous literature. How do we know about the inverted world of the bad-but-equal Amazonian adventure story? Because, of course, that kind of story has already been written. But the ultimate consideration of any of this kind of criticism is how it represents reality. The world that each author knows and believes in is somehow reflected in his or her work. A writer can only represent that which he or she knows. Thus any criticism which attempts to control that work must also imply a certain modification of world-view. Defining the exact relationship between the writer's experience and the final literary production is a problem that will never be completely solved. I am not proposing a criticism which attempts to control each step of that process by which the writer translates and transposes his experience to the literary work. Rather, I wish to provide a mechanism whereby cer-

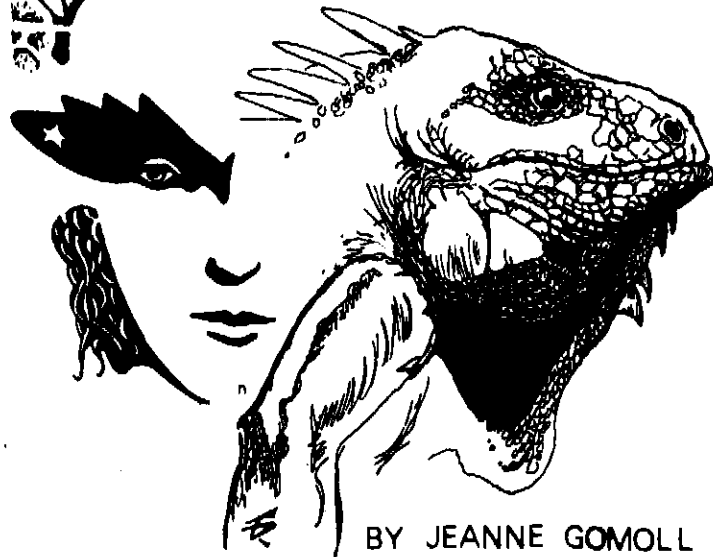
tain norms can be presented to the writer or which his or her work can be measured against. And this is for a very good reason.

People in America have this funny notion that literature is not important. They seem to think that it doesn't affect their reality. This is the biggest hoax ever perpetrated by the society as a whole. I know, for example, that my own interests and self-image were immensely affected by the SF that I read as a youth. Thankfully, much of what I read gave me a view of the strength and inventiveness of the individual, which counteracted the rather unfavorable positions which women were assigned in SF. I just never identified myself with those creatures, but rather with the youthful and adventurous male protagonists and with younger females like Pewee in *Have Space Suit, Will Travel*. And I got used to people thinking me odd for reading SF. The heroes in my favorite novels always had ideas and abilities that set them off from the greater number of their contemporaries, and so, of course, I did too.

The point is, literature immensely affects people's reality because it affects how they interpret reality. This is even more true of the SF that we enthusiasts read. We look to SF not only because it offers us pictures of our own time transmuted, but also because, as Ursula LeGuin pointed out, it is a medium within which alternative approaches to a better future can be explored. This is the full potential to which our attempts at criticism are addressed. ■



A REVIEW OF: THE WITCH AND THE CHAMELEON



BY JEANNE GOMOLL

In *The Witch and the Chameleon* I hope to have all kinds of material except one: that which insults or trivializes women.
—Amanda Frances Bankier
Issue 1, August 1974

Things are changing.

Had I not already decided to use the beautiful drawings by Tom Robe and Robert Kellough to illustrate these words about Amanda Bankier's zine, *The Witch and the Chameleon* (*Watch*), I may have inserted a "Before-After" sketch on the order of the illustration for Jan's editorial. I am new in fandom and therefore have only nebulous, vulnerable "impressions" about the history of fan publication—but it seems to me that the kind of criticism found in fanzines, and the kinds of things fans are saying about the literature are changing in quality, maturing really, as the whole of science fiction's vision matures. Amanda's *Watch* is in the vanguard of this change, whatever its origin, contributing to and supporting what is going on.

The change I see occurring has to do with a general recognition that SF is more responsive to the assumptions and mores of present-day reality than SF fans have sometimes admitted. We are more aware that the impetus/preparation for change that SF fosters is not really an easy, natural effort. Rather, I think, it is becoming obvious that it is much easier, and still a far more natural occurrence for writers to reaffirm old values rather than to imagine and promote new ones.... It is easier to use stereotypical models of human characteristics and interaction—or even of whole cultural patterns—as background for that important "one new idea per story" than to reevaluate and extrapolate on all levels. As a result, in areas with which SF has not typically been much concerned (character development and sexual roles, for two examples), the literature has remained dismally reactionary.

The change in fandom involves more publications and writers who demonstrate an awareness of and are critical of the ways in which important social issues are or are not dealt with in SF. There is Denys Howard's excellent *Women & Men* in the area of feminist awareness, but the very first fanzine I heard about (in *Ms.*, in an SF bibliography by Joanna Russ) was Amanda's *Watch*. There are no other zines with a near total devotion to feminism and SF. (*Janus*, being the product of so many people's direct and diverse energies, will probably remain merely "feminist-oriented", and that mostly due to Jan's and my editing and contributions.) However, the very existence of such a fanzine as Amanda's has added and continues to encourage thought and writing on very important topics.

The fact that there have been five excellent issues of *Watch* already contradicts the often-heard statement that too much has been said on the topic already, that the ideas are all fairly obvious (or ridiculous, depending upon who is passing judgement) and that interest will all soon die down.... As a feminist and as a person who has always loved science fiction, it has been very important to me in recent years to discover a connection between the two types of worldviews. For a while, I tried to separate the two, saying to myself that SF was sexist for the most part, yes, but then I could always identify with the active male protagonists, etc. (i.e., that whole cop-out). I avoided or found myself "excusing" my interest in SF to women I know, unable to explain why I maintained, still, such a great degree of excitement for a literature that I could not help but admit was mostly degrading to most women. Conversely, I made only the most superficial of disparaging remarks concerning the sexism in SF when I interacted with fans, couching in humor my confusion with regard to a desire for a positive/active approach to tie the two, feminism and SF, together. Finally, however, about the time I became involved with *Janus* and began reading *Watch*, it also became necessary to explore my feelings and to find or make a connection between feminism and SF in my mind, or to divert energy from one to the other. In fandom (writing for and working on *Janus* especially) I found the outlet for the energy that I wanted to expend in creative work. But my heart and interests were still very much attached to feminism. Lacking the excitement for political activism, and knowing myself to be more inclined to literary/artistic activity, I have finally found the doorways into the rooms where they coexist.

For people concerned with sexual roles in our society, and for people who have also been heavily involved with the SF world, and/or fandom, making this connection is an awfully important and necessary process to go through, I think. For myself,



I've found and am continuing to find connections based on the potentials of SF for giving us a stage on which to try out our dreams—as feminists—for a better world. But there are a lot of ways to find those connections as well as other reasons to need to make them (... and, as will perhaps happen to a degree in the feminist panel at WisCon, find new room for growth as SF writers/fans and people).

To make connections, to build upon those connections. A community of people interested in these processes has begun to grow. Certainly, a focal point of thought and interaction has been Amanda Bankier's *The Witch and the Chameleon*. In her five issues to date, she has published a large amount of really good fiction (Racoon Sheldon's poetry and the stories by Vonda McIntyre, Kris Fawcett, Gale Netzer, and Catherine Madsen come to mind immediately). There have been some challenging articles and reviews about the newest and best of SF dealing with feminist themes. Vonda McIntyre and Suzy McKee Charnas have both been reviewed and

reviewed other works themselves. Ursula K. LeGuin, Andre Norton, Marion Zimmer Bradley, and Pamela Sargent have all been reviewed in depth at one point or another. Plans are underway to do an entire issue devoted primarily to the writings of Joanna Russ. However, one of the most exciting and amazing things about the zine's history has been the lively correspondence among Marion Zimmer Bradley, Vonda McIntyre, and Joanna Russ. Testing out their identities as women, as SF writers, and as feminists, the exchange has been thought-provoking and stimulating—and deals intimately with that question of connections between SF and feminism, in this case, how we can/should use fiction to project new visions of female and male roles.

Still hiding your SF bookcovers behind those of different books? (—Not from your parents, now, but from women friends.) Need to make connections and come out of the closet as a feminist/fan? Try *WatCh*....



**A REVIEW
OF EXTRAPOLATION,
By PETE BROWN**

The kingpin of the academic journals on SF, *Extrapolation*, could be called our most serious fanzine. The academic reaction to SF, sometimes hard to measure, can be more easily identified by perusing the pages of *Extrapolation* than by any *Loose* poll that you might cite, or any pseudo-overview found in, say, the pages of the "New York Times Review of Books". Let's take a look at the latest ish of *Extrapolation* and see where the academicians are coming from and going to.

The first thing that you might notice while scanning the biography page of the December issue is that all but two of the contributors are members of some department of English at some institution of higher learning. Of the other two, one is a communications professor and one is a self-avowed "feminist" (George Fergus). This preponderance of formal scholars might indicate a certain amount of wordiness and a dabbling in issues clearly labeled "academic", and sure enough, most of the articles won't shock you by their controversial handling of controversial material. Sure, one must publish or perish, and all that, and the usefulness of the published product is another consideration. But don't forget, it isn't like this magazine is one among many. It is virtually the only widely-circulated publication dealing with the subject of serious SF criticism. The imprimatur of the MLA might just be a costly item, intrinsically speaking.

Among the new horizons which are drastically

expanded on in this issue of *Extrapolation* are: "Fred Saberhagen, Cybernetic Psychologist"; "A Touch of Difference, A Touch of Love" (nothing like a catchy title) which is subtitled "Theme in three stories by Ursula K. Le Guin"; and an earthshaking "Speculative Fiction, Bibliographies, and Philip Jose Farmer". That bane of the scholar, the lack of proper indexing material, is frequently cured to excess in *Extrapolation*. Another listing of titles can be found in the issue under the heading "This Year's Scholarship in SF and Fantasy, 1974". This is all fine and good and useful if one doesn't draw lines of exclusivity too narrowly. There is also, in this issue, a "Checklist of SF Novels with Female Protagonists", by Fergus, which brings up another issue, but what I'll point out here is the fact that in this listing there is no mention of Lessing or Nabokov, but you can find Tanith Lee. Zap. The line has been drawn. Of course English professors would draw those lines, they do it all the time as the departmentalization of knowledge continues (funding battles and all that stuff, which department has jurisdiction over what area), a fine example of which can be seen in the insane maneuverings of our own English and Comp. Lit. departments here at the UW over just which department can use which authors in its curriculum. Strictly ridiculous; still, I can hope for more someday, can't I?

Well, let's take a look at another issue mani-

fest in the pages of *Extrapolation*. The first three articles of this particular issue deal exclusively with the growing feminist faction in SF. The first article in particular, "A Feminist Critique of SF" by Mary Kenny Badami, informs us as to the sexist nature of the old sword and sorcery stuff, surviving even to the present, as written by those mothball-brained old chauvinists from the early Twentieth Century. We are informed that "women have *not* [italics the author's] been important as characters/fans/writers of sf." Oh. I would think that in AD 1976 this statement would be the equivalent of saying, in 1810, "the governments of Europe have all been tyrannical monarchies." Of course they were! And there would continue to be the same kind of repressive governments, just as there will continue to be Shake 'N' Bake mentalities in the middle and upper classes of our country (both male and female; cf. the "Total Woman") for a long time. That's reality. But what was also reality for those imaginary people of 1810 was that their world had already been changed, changed utterly. A new wave was already born, and any amount of maneuvering by a Metternich could not stop it. Our society today is changed, has been changed, and there are still anachronistic people around, but they will die off. 'Tis time to get down to the next thing about equality, people, and a harping upon the obvious will become counterproductive. Boring, even. Do you, reader, really want to be caught in between space-opera rot for male, high-school, future engineers and a femfan faction which only rehashes the history of sexism in useless future fables? There has to be something more waiting for us around the corner, and the changes just might sweep right by SF in its carefully-delineated little ghetto. Sure, I agree wholeheartedly about the sexist nature of SF past. But you would probably find me just agreeable about the theory of evolution, and even though there are some passenger pigeons out there who don't believe in the theory of evolution, we sure as hell won't persuade them by recalling the Scopes monkey trial, just as we won't convince them by citing the proper scientific sources.

Back to "A Feminist Critique of SF". Old wave SF, Ms. Badami says, is scientific with "straight narratives with plot above all and hard science as the ideational source". And new wave is "more experimental in style, with character stressed rather than plot..." (p. 10). And old wave SF, then, is a prime source of sexism: "Blatantly pander[ing] to an audience which thrills at the imagined degradation of a woman by a man, a perversion of sexuality which is based on power and cruelty...foster [ing] a rape mentality..." This is Jane dandy as far as it goes, but after mention of the grouping of SF into new wave and old wave, it would not seem out of place to go a little bit beyond this to explore the historical factors which dictated the particular types of literature coming out of each age. In the 1950s in America we had McCarthy and world dominance, Madison Avenue sexuality and Elvis. In the sixties, we saw Chicago and its violence, conglomerates and pollution and Vietnam, etc. In each era, we would have an attendant literature, and the politics and prevalent moods are particularly obvious in forms of popular literature. Like *Mad* magazine, and like SF. This is a brief explanation, of course, but we don't even get a shimmer of such exploration in Badami's article. "A Man's world"...that seems to be enough to say.

Badami goes on to a celebration of the rising women authors, and mentions U. K. LeGuin's incident with *Playboy* (those nasty men thinking something like "only male authors can write competent SF") as

an example of the female SF authors' past sad state, but inexplicably quotes LeGuin herself as saying, in regards to the incident, "it was the first (and is the only) time I met with anything I understood as sexual prejudice, prejudice against me as a woman writer, from any editor and publisher." If you speak of sexism in SF, you necessarily have to speak of its descent from the society which fostered the attitudes. Edgar Rice Burroughs is yesterday; but those Gillette Foamy TV ads are today. Those ads will do infinitely more harm to the establishment of a real equality in our society than any cultural barriers demonstrated in the writings of a Heinlein or an Asimov.

Extrapolation December 1976 is what we are left with. The magazine is an excellent looking-glass; we see academia doing its dance, scutely conscious of Affirmative Action, bibliographies, and the search for Little Bits of Knowledge. But as far as an accurate, adequate perspective on modern speculative literature—forget it.

Permit me to leave you with a little scholarly excerpt that might be of use when exploring or extrapolating from modern speculative literature. "The distinctions that concern us here are not those between stylistic 'techniques' in the formalistic sense. It is the view of the world, the ideology or *weltanschauung* underlying a writer's work, that counts." George Lukacs was the writer, and he goes on in the essay I'm quoting from (*The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*) to discuss content in relation to style and form, among other things. You might never see him in *Extrapolation*. Too much thinking is dangerous to the institution, don't you know, and academia *in toto*, in the Big Time now with billion-dollar budgets, don't like waves.

[Those of us who are intimately involved with SF can forget that there are a lot of people, academics included, who have only very distorted ideas of what this type of fiction is all about. I wanted to add this note to point out those aspects of SF in academic circles, which *Extrapolation* appeals to, that Pete had perhaps not considered.

[We all know that women have often been unequally represented in SF, as they have in a lot of other fiction (T. H. Lawrence, James Joyce, Henry Wordsworth, just to mention a few). But to intimate that Ms. Badami is the beginning of a wave of counterproductive and backward-looking criticism because she has set down a definitive article on the subject is just a little excessive. Many of Pete's objections to the hidebound nature of academia are justified, but attacking the work of individuals who must operate within this for succeeding at it is not quite fair. In criticizing the work of Ms. Badami (and George Fergus), we must remember for whom they write. I am not speaking of their editor, for part of an editor's job is to know his audience. I am speaking, I think, of those academics who become acquainted with SF through the pages of such journals as *Extrapolation*. One thing that you cannot criticize about it is its thoroughness. It is not a simplistic overview of SF. If one is tempted to criticize its seeming conservatism, well there is an alternative publication, "Science Fiction Studies", which is more definitely politically oriented.

[Now there are several reasons to write about SF in an academic context. They have to do with making it a better reflection of the world around us. We do not live in some idealistic future when anyone can write and be published so that his or her work will be read. We live here and now and, believe it or not, the academic community is one of the path-

ways to general readership. Pete has some very valid objections to the academic way of approaching reality, in this case SF literature. He is right to try and nudge us all forward, but this movement forward can happen only after we have a firm grasp of where we are now. Besides, you'd be surprised how helpful such work as Mary's and George's is if you ever need such information in an academic context, or even to give credence to a disputed point.

[By the way, we will get a chance to discuss the article and these issues when Ms. Badami comes to WisCon to participate in the feminist panel. Her extensive experience in lecturing and the communications field (she is a Doctor of Speech Communication), as well as her feminist orientation, should help to make the panel an interesting event. —Janice Bogstad]



Amor 11 and 12 (October and December 1976). Susan Joan Wood, Dept. of English, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6T 1W5. A three- or four-page personalzine. Susan relates odds and ends ranging from a recipe for German potato soup to the visit of Harlan Ellison and David Suzuki (Canadian television) to her science-fiction class. Most interesting.

Ashwing 20 (November 1976). Frank Denton, 14654 8th Av. SW, Seattle, WA, 98166. A genzine containing reviews, an article on caricature in science fiction, two very pleasant pieces of amateur fiction, and half of a rather long day-by-day notebook by Rick Stoker.

Boowatt 12, 13, and 14 (October and November 1976). Garth Danielson, 616 Edison Av. #415, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R2G 0M3. 25c/ish or \$2/year. A personalzine which I think has improved since 9 and 10. The reproduction is a bit shoddy, and there is an abysmal number of typos, but the content is of fair interest. 12 contains a long WindyCon report, and 14, a review of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

Fanzine Fanatique 22 (September/October 1976). Keith and Rosemary Walker, 2 Daisy Bank, Quermore Rd., Lancaster, Lancs., England. Available for the usual or 3 for \$1 in cash, no checks. A fanzine

reviewzine. This issue is a rush job to catch up with the backlog of fanzines to be reviewed. Most of the fanzines listed are in English.

It Comes in the Mail 23 (July/August 1976). Ned Brooks, 713 Paul St., Newport News, VA, 23605. Available for the usual. The name of the fanzine describes it admirably. Ned lists what he found in his mailbox in the period preceding publication. Letters and fanzines paraphrased and reviewed, respectively. One notable development is the description of publicity photos from Rankin/Bass's animation project, *The Hobbit*. It seems they are using foot-high, winged elves and frog-faced hobbits.

Mangus, Vol. 2 No. 1 (December? 1976).* Eric Batard, Rue Kléber, 3700 Chinon, France. *Mangus* comes with a two-page English supplement called "Bullet-Inn" which approaches the possibility of an international APA. Sign me up, Eric. *Je ne peut pas écrire en Français, mais je peut lisez votre fanzine*. The zine is an informal description of conventions, SF novels in French, and fanzine reviews. There seem to be a lot of SF fans and fanzines in France.

Outworlds 28/29 (October 1976). Bill Bowers, Box 2521, North Canton, OH, 44720. This ish \$2.50; subscription \$5, contribution, or printed LoC. After 10 months of silence, Bill returns with a double issue that was well worth the wait. Articles by Andrew J. Offutt, Poul Anderson, Robert A. W. Lowdes, and Susan Wood, a ribald song by Joe Haldeman, poems and art by dozens of well-knowns, and nearly flawless layout characterize what will be my nomination for this year's Hugo. This is a quality product. Good job as always, Bill! Highly recommended.

Requiem 12 and 13 (October 1976 and December 1976/January 1977). Norbert Spehner, 1085 St. Jean, Longueuil, PQ, Canada, J4H 2Z3. \$1/ish or 6 issues for \$5 (1 year). In French. As always, fine issues. 12 contains articles on EuroCon 3, Tolkien, and Lovecraft. 13 features space combat, Jack Vance, the Garnets of Cthulhu, and many more articles. The only French-language fanzine in North America.

Simulacrum 3 (October 1976). Victoria Vayne, Box 156 Stn. D, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M6P 3J8. Available for the usual or very reluctantly for \$2.50. Victoria's genzine has some of the most beautiful mimeo reproduction around. You'll find art on almost every page. Some of the more unusual articles: "The BNF of Oz", "The Golden Guide to Sex", "Opinions on Religion", and "Myths: Mirrors of Man". 80 pages. Recommended.

Tangent 6 (Winter 1977).* David A. Truesdale, 611-A Division St., Oshkosh, WI, 54901. Available for \$1.50 or the usual or 4 for \$5. Dave has put out a massive and artistically impressive issue. Includes interviews with Ben Bova, Alfred Bester, and Joe Haldeman; photos of fans and pros; and, of course, book, movie, and fanzine reviews. I like it.

*Reviewed by Janice Bogstad.

