

# THE MUSHROOMS



ERIC WILLIAMS

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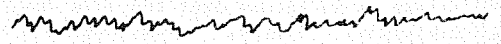
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**when**

I first entered fandom, in the mid '60s, I noticed two things. First, I thought I had met my kind of people, at last. They talked to me, seriously, about books, politics, ideas. They did not (for the most part) play silly sex-role games, those games in which I was a misfit "girl" in the "real" mundane world. They accepted me as one of themselves.

They accepted me as an Honorary Man.

The second thing I noticed was that, in this period, people (= males, writers and editors, and the "femme" fans who were their acolytes) were devoting a lot of time, verbiage, emotion, and hostility to something called "The New Wave". As I perceived it, this was a literary movement (if one could call it that) designed to introduce such matters as style and characterization into the cardboard-and-wiring-diagram realm of traditional North American pulp escape-reading SF.

I liked the New Wave. I liked to have my SF literate, experimental, and humanized.

I liked being an Honorary Man, too.

Now, I'm still in fandom, in the late '70s. There's a new movement, bringing fresh ideas, fresh concepts of what people can be and do and how they can relate to each other. It's affecting North American society. With the usual time-lag, it's affecting SF and fandom. It's affected me.

It's called, generally, the women's movement. And because of it, I call myself a woman.

Because one of the tenets of this movement is that the personal and the political are inexplicably related, I want to talk about my involvement in "women's programming" in SF fandom—preferably, people's programming—in terms of my change from Honorary Man to Woman Fan.

It's been a slow, sometimes painful journey, to new awareness for myself, new friends, a new pride, and a new sense specifically of what this thing we call science fiction can do to show us new models for the future. On the way, friends who liked me when I laughed with them at anti-woman jokes now dismiss me as "bitter" and "crazy". No: I and many women like me are finding a new joy and sanity, based on self-respect. Other ex-friends urge me to "stop knocking fandom" or stop trying to "destroy" fandom by erecting "barriers" (which are already there). Things, they say, are worse in the Real World; change that (and leave us alone).

But fans are educated and have a vested interest in their self-image of being enlightened and aware. Shouldn't we really try to live up to that (often false) image, not hide behind it? What, I'd like to know, does the spectacle of an almost-naked dancer, carried onstage bound hand and foot, to perform for the drooling masters, have to do with science fiction? Or with adult behavior in 1977? At this point, I walked out of the 1977 WesterCon Masquerade in disgust; and a famous pro jeered at me for being uptight, repressed, and "over-reacting". If this is "normal" entertainment for an adult audience of SF readers...if my protest is "wrong"... then the fandom I love is pretty sick.

Ten years ago, I'd've stayed, and silently squirmed. This year, I spoke my disgust—and became, publically, not an Honorary Man, but an Emotional Woman. Possibly a Strident Feminist Bitch. Welllllll...uppity women, unite!

What do I mean by "honorary man"?

Well, I mean "human being"—sort of.

In the 1960s, an honorary man was a female person whom you did not treat

either as a silly nuisance or as a sex object. If you were a teacher, you complimented her (unfeminine) intellectual ability by saying, "Susan, you think like a man!" If you were a young male, you traded your math homework for her English homework, lent her *Analogue*, and treated her as an equal...almost. You let her do the dirtywork in the chem lab (because she was more deft), the pasteup on the newspaper (because she was neater), and the shitwork on the fanzine (because she had more time). As a reward you said, "Gee, Susan, you're just like one of the guys," meaning "How nice it is to avoid all the complications of sex!" and "How nice it is to talk to you. You aren't silly, like Those Other Girls."

And it was nice. Even in 1967, I knew that "You think like a man." wasn't a compliment; I knew that my women friends were intelligent and trying to hide it; but I knew, too, I wasn't a "girl". Whatever class they taught flirting in, and how to apply eyeliner, and play dating games—I missed (and so did my friends). Student newspaper work, and then fandom, were wonderful worlds to me. I want to emphasize this; I was, and am grateful to fandom because it let me talk to men and women, as equals, without those games that go on between the sexes-as-aliens.

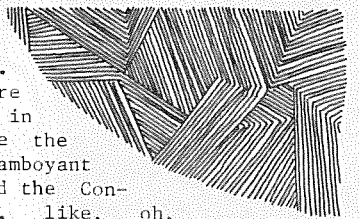
Or so I thought. It helped that women were a comparative rarity in "my" fandom: there were the "trekkies", the flamboyant WPSFA femme-fannes, and the Conspicuous Overachievers, like, oh, Juanita Coulson, (Hugo-winning co-editor with husband Buck), Elinor Busby (Hugo-winning co-editor with husband Buz and friend Wally), Lesleigh Luttrell (co-editor with Hank), and Joyce Fisher, now Katz, whom I will always revere because she showed me that women can do their own fanzines. Joyce: who doesn't trust her own talent, and cooks instead of writing her beautiful words these days.

It helped, too, that fairly soon after entering fandom at large at St. LouisCon, after several years of limited local activity, I became Partnered and then Married: as a woman (= "sexual being") I was neutralized, safe. I could talk to men, without them, or their partners, feeling I was a Threat. I became a reasonably well known fan, as an appendage. Never mind that mail to the co-edited fanzine tended to come addressed only to the male editor...and etc. Never mind that, if I wanted to discuss something serious, I was told to play with my own little zine; and never mind that I was so convinced of my own inferiority that I was truly amazed when anyone read it.

What did matter was the reaction I noticed when I started acting or talking as a person who was also a woman. Admiring someone's discussion of mimeo techniques was OK; trying to discuss my feelings of frustration at the male domination of fandom was "boring", "irrelevant", and "crazy". Writing an article about social reactions to breast size (we all have our unliberated moments) was funny, ha ha; but aren't you making a fuss about nothing? Talking about teaching SF, at conventions, was OK, "people"



## People's Programming



behavior; complaining about dirty-jokes panels and strip-tease acts at those same conventions was "crazy libbers" behavior, "making a fuss about nothing" (again), and terribly "uptight". Saying that fandom was one big happy family earned me a couple of Hugos. Saying that fandom, like the rest of North American society, was sexist and did not necessarily treat women as individuals unless they denied the existence of sexism and denied their womanhood, earned me abuse. (Despite, or because, of some of this, I also won another half-Hugo. I'm delighted and a little puzzled.)

An honorary man is a woman who is accepted as "an individual" provided she does not, ever, remind her companions that she is a woman too. Unless she comes on to them as a sex object, but that's a whole other trip. (And in this new "liberated"

society, women aren't allowed the privilege of saying "no".) The woman/individual is accepted provided she does not even complain that her situation as a woman is rather less than equal or ideal. Even in fandom.

Yes, I know men have problems too. You work on them. I'll start helping you if, and when, you show some signs of being willing to help me. OK?

In your fandom—the fandom of 1978—

there are people whose identity rests, in part, on the fact that they are men, socialized in certain patterns, reacting to those patterns. And there are people who are women. They meet, as individuals, at conventions like this WisCon; and they find some programming which deals with these differing identities and how to break down the "barriers of gender" that already imprison us! They find what is mis-named "women's programming". Programming which deals with the human condition. Programming which seems traditional, inevitable. "Saturday, 4 p.m., the Usual Women's Panel, with Terry Carr *in absentia*". Programming which only got started, in the fannish consciousness, in the early '70s.

Women's organizations in the '50s in fandom withered. In the early '70s, the women's movement was only beginning to make an impact on the SF community, chiefly through the fiction and criticism of Joanna Russ, seconded by Vonda McIntyre. They pointed out that North American SF reflected, and reinforced, a white-male-supremacist worldview. In general, its portrayal of women was sexist and stereotyped: blond victims, housewives in galactic suburbia, or evil temptresses. They pointed out that few women were, therefore, encouraged to read this stuff, which purported to portray alternate futures but really reflected North American 1950s social attitudes and pulp clichés. (And yes, that kinda limited the men's minds, too.) They pointed out that very few women were encouraged to write the stuff, unless—and you can name the Notable Exceptions—they either bought the male adventure-story norms and became "honorary men" or wrote ladies' magazine fiction with terribly intuitive but helpless heroines.

Vonda and Joanna said these things circa 1970 to '73, when I was really just discovering feminism

and rediscovering myself. Hostility erupted and blood flowed, in the SFWA *Forum*, Dick Geiss's fanzines, and elsewhere, while I stood on the sidelines and felt a little afraid of fandom. They said these things publically—Vonda was on a panel in "Women in SF" at PghLange in 1970. ("And I got into a shouting match with Lester Del Rey about women.") I remember a talk Joanna gave, I think at the Toronto Secondary Universe conference in 1972, wittily reversing sex role: woman makes rite of passage into adulthood by killing bear, etc. I fell down laughing when I heard that passage later in *The Female Man*.

Joanna, Vonda, and a very few supporters were roughly trashed for being bitter, vicious, feminist bitches. One small but vocal trashing minority (like most of them, a man deeply afraid of women) cornered me at a party in Vancouver honoring Judy Merrill. He asserted, sniggering, that the only way Judy acquired the stories for her famous Year's Best series was by having sex with the authors.

"First of all, how do you know that? And second, why do you assume that about a woman editor, and not about a man? Or do you think Don Wollheim and Terry Carr sleep with their authors, too?"

"You mean, you're one of those crazy libbers too?" the man stuttered. "But you're a fan. You won a Hugo!"

"Two," I retorted. "And I'm not crazy, I'm a woman, you're a pig, and I'm angry." \*click\*

Joanna, meantime, retreated from the fray into teaching (which takes up as much energy as any of us has to spare) and fiction writing. Vonda put her energy into constructive things: "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand", *The Exile Waiting*, "Aztecs", *Dreamsnake*. Meantime, their courage in speaking out first helped a lot of us to find our identity and courage. Thank you.

The 1973 worldcon, TorCon II, did not (as far as I remember) have a women's panel. It was (as far as I remember) the last of the old-style worldcons, where women had comparatively little visibility. I went to none of the programming, being absorbed with running the All Our Yesterdays fanhistory display. The con chair was unmarried, a First Fandomite, and women either just weren't part of "his" fandom or were appendages. I was appreciative, and singularly honored, when he started to treat me as an honorary man, a real fan who could be trusted with responsibility for a project dear to him. I had two able helpers in the (female) persons of Lindas Bushyager and Lounsbury; I gained much assistance from Juanita Coulson; but it wasn't until Elinor Busby came up to me and said, "Why didn't you mention *Cry* anywhere?" that I began, dimly, to realize that "All Our Yesterdays" was a display of all men's yesterdays, plus a photo of Joni Stopa in a fountain in a bikini.

When Alexis Gilliland asked me to moderate a panel on "Women in SF: Image and Reality" for the 1974 worldcon, I said yes. I had begun to make personal connections between feminist writing, my life, my self; I had begun to learn that women were interesting. I was told that Quinn Yarbro and Katherine Kurtz would be on the panel...with me as moderator. I made a point of seeking out Quinn, trying to plan the panel. I knew a "women in SF" panel had to be not just good but excellent: interesting, well-run, supercompetent, with absolutely no rough edges to criticize. Katherine Kurtz declined to be located, but I did get five minutes with her before the panel, to establish biography and some working questions. The preceding panel, of course, ran



overtime. Then, just as (trembling slightly) I was about to step onstage before a couple thousand people, Joe Haldeman said to me, "Oh, by the way, we've added a couple more people." Betty Balantine and Leigh Brackett, as I recall...someone else? Memory fails. I do remember insisting I be given a few minutes to talk to the panelists so I could at least introduce them properly.

Well, "Women in SF: Image and Reality" succeeded, sort of. Not surprisingly, the older women—who had made their peace with the male-dominated field—said that women suffered no discrimination; and men suffered too from character stereotypes. True, but... Kurtz, wearing an evening gown at 2 p.m. and being very beautiful and flirtacious, said much the same thing. Only Yarbrow addressed herself to the real problems: image and reality, breaking down the stereotypes, introducing strong women characters, dealing with editors, finding time as a woman for that most selfish of pursuits, writing. Because of the delays, we had 45 minutes, not an hour, and almost no time for audience questioning. I winced when Jennifer Bankier, a Toronto feminist, started to make an angry challenge against the calm assumption that there was no discrimination against non-conformist women writers or non-stereotyped characters in SF...and against the fact that we were being hustled offstage so that the (all-male) artists' panel could go on. On one hand, I could not accept some of the assertions being made. On the other hand, I felt uncomfortable, still, about being part of anything "controversial".

And then the real learning began. As we left the stage...so groups of women, many women (and some men), talking animatedly, left the Park Ballroom with us. In the hall, in the lobby, for, literally, hours, we stood, talked, argued, were excited, moved, angry. Women suddenly came together to discuss their roles as women. Catalyzed by that panel. Catalyzed even by knowing that their discomfort and their dissatisfaction with stereotyped characters and Queen Bee women who implied "Well, if you aren't successful, it's because you aren't talented, beautiful, sexy, and super like me." were shared.

And me...catalyzed by standing, talking seriously, passionately, almost for the first time, with Quinn and some others...about our lives, our very lives...and a Well-Known Male Pro walked past Quinn, patted her on the fanny, and said, "Caught your panel. You were cute." \*click\*

From DisCon II, I learned many things.

•First, I learned that the "women in SF" panel meant something, to the women who participated and the women who attended. It meant new ideas, a new sense of womanhood/personhood/individuality shared, a new sense of protest aired. The people grouped in the halls...we needed discussion space, small group space such as some worldcons had already been providing for informal seminars.

•Second, I learned—and I mean no disrespect to Alexis Gilliland, who is an open-minded human and did an excellent job arranging DisCon II programming—that the women concerned with these ideas needed to take control of "their" programming: at least to the extent of picking speakers who would talk directly about the topic and have real things to say about establishing women's presence in the male pulp fiction world.

•Third, I learned that I wasn't happy to be a token man anymore. I would have to talk with other women, and not fear that either they, or men, would condemn me. The alternative was to be patted on the fanny, called "cute"...and dismissed.

I also noticed how few women were on the program. But then I (like most fans) skipped the program anyway; there was nothing exciting on the program (axiom); I went to cons to see my friends. I

sold AussieCon memberships, and had a great time.

At AussieCon...well, Ursula Le Guin was Goh, and she seemed to be on half the program. I was half the Fan Goh, and a Tame Academic, and I seemed to be on the other half. There were also all sorts of women on panels; and interviewing us for radio, TV, and papers; and helping me to run the con; and.... Fandom felt more human, somehow. Natural. Fun. For me; that con represents an ideal: the sense that the tribe of science fiction includes sisters as well as brothers (Hi, Valma! Hi, Sally, Christine...) talking together about a truly human future. If I work for "women's programming", "alternate programming"—that's what I want.

OK. The time is now July 1976. The place is Berkeley, a small regional con with the Traditional Women's Panel. Again: the sense that the ideas presented here are new, exciting, to men as well as women. The audience is attentive, and the discussions (about breaking down stereotypes, recognizing our assumptions and prejudices, in our lives, our fiction, our view of the future) proceeds with energy. Mistake: seven women overcrowding the panel, and not enough preparation.

September, 1976. The panel I proposed and planned myself, on "Women in Science Fiction" for MidAmeriCon is organized. I spent three months writing to women, asking for participation and suggestions, feeling part of a growing network of women all newly conscious of identity and common purpose: "No, I'm not coming, ask so-and-so, she's a good speaker." Example: I have a beautiful 3-page letter from Virginia Kidd, describing her transition from untroubled woman-in-man's-world to woman-writer, woman-agent, agent of new women writers very conscious of new identity and purpose. Letters, letters...and problems with some of the MAC people, the least of which is the fact they want to cancel the panel, or run the dirty-jokes panel "to give the men equal time." (The men have the whole rest of the convention!) I politely explain, over and over, that since no one on my panel is under 14, it is inappropriate to refer constantly to "the girls' panel." I insist on—and get—the right to use a smaller room for two hours as a discussion room, after the 1½-hour formal panel.

I chose a feminist fan editor (Amanda Bankier), two articulate women writers exploring unstereotyped characters and situations (Marta Randall and Suzy McKee Charnas), and an established, articulate writer whose excellence is finally being fully recognized (Kate Wilhelm). They lit up the room.

The audience, some 300 or more women and men, sat, and listened...attentively. None of the to-ing and fro-ing, the drifting in and out and chattering, that happens in most convention-panel rooms. These people wanted to be with us—not in the main hall, listening to the Big Draw, Jerry Pournelle (who felt called upon to put us down publicly). And afterwards, a hundred people or more crowded into the hot, tiny discussion room, and talked, and talked...and talked at the parties, and talked to me, and talked to each other. Victoria Vayne had brought the fliers for the Women's APA, so we could keep on talking. (OE, Janet Small, 94 Avenue Road, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5R 2H2)

From my mistakes, I learned. For the 1977 WesterCon in Vancouver, with the help of the chair, Fran Skene, and programmer Allyn Cadogan, I organized some "alternate programming"—alternatives to the usual four male scientists building a world, or four male pros bragging. First, a lounge, A Room of Our Own, for serious discussion about sexism, etc. It became male-dominated. (We'll get to women's space in a moment.) Funny how anything involving a woman author became "women's programming" as if men were somehow exempt from attending (but the ones who care

about human liberation came, and learned); or as if some women could avoid it, saying, "Oh, women bore me" or "Oh, I know I'm liberated; I don't need that radical stuff; come on honey, let's screw."

We had some programming on Saturday, in the Room and a separate area, with Suzy Charnas reading, and an important panel on "Alternatives to Patriarchy", organized by Paul Novitski, that I'd like to see done more tightly, and done again...and again. After the Women's APA party Saturday, we opened Sunday with Suzy, Quinn, and Lizzy Lynn (as I recall) discussing their creations of non-sexist worlds, non-stereotyped characters, true alternate worlds—and their problems getting editors to publish the new ideas. People participated, suggesting alternate sources of inspiration: Indian cultures, Oriental cultures. Then followed Allyn's formal interview with Special Guest Kate Wilhelm ("I think any woman who is aware has to be a feminist.") in the main hall. Allyn's publishing it in her *genzine Genre Flat*. Kate held a 2-hour informal discussion in the Room of Our Own about her problems as a wife/mother/woman/writer (No, it isn't easy.), and her writing techniques. Then Lesleigh Luttrell and Jeanne Gomoll talked about setting up a feminist SF con, the WisCon...and here we are at the second one. We had more than seven straight hours of programming for women and men. For me, it was one long, exhilarating consciousness-raising session of a genuine human community. I was no longer an honorary man, tolerated only if I kept my mouth shut about what mattered to me.

Women's programming? People programming? What do I want? That community, truly. Fandom pays too much lip service to the idea of being a tribe of equals, friends. SF pays too much lip service to the idea of being a literature of new ideas, soaring visions of human potential. Let's make it true. And let's honor the new authors and the fans (especially the women) who are making it come true.

#### SOME SPECIFICS

##### 1. Womenstuff, Temporary

(a) *The Traditional "Women in SF" panel.* This still has a place, I think. I hope it will soon cease to be needed, but at the moment we still need to show new women fans (and perhaps old honorary men like me) that women do have a distinct, proud identity in fandom. At SunCon, the "traditional" panel split into "Women in SF", "Women in Fandom", etc. This focussing seems valuable; new ideas will come forth, and the "old" ideas will reach new ears.

(b) *Women's space.* This is a lounge area, or hospitality suite privately funded so that women can discuss anything at all, free from the pressure of explaining to/teaching/defending ideas from/being told how to be "better women" by/etc. men. This is something I've discussed fully elsewhere: the need at this time in male-dominated fandom, as in male-dominated society, for a small area of private women's space. I want to stress again that this is temporary; I hope it simply won't be necessary in five years. I am proposing that women contribute money to rent such a suite or room at IguanaCon, the 1978 WorldCon; that it be open to all women during the day (and women and their invited male guests during the evening), for Women's APA parties and the like. I am, furthermore, volunteering to collect the donations and do the organizing. See the notice elsewhere in this issue.

##### 2. Alternate Programming People's Programming, Ongoing

(a) *Convention program.* The best moment of the whole high that was my 1977 WesterCon (with women,

men, gay people, straight people all discovering their community and their humanity) was on the last evening, when Curt Stubbs, programmer for IguanaCon, the 1978 WorldCon, came up to me and said, "The alternate programming was great. Tell us how to do it." Hilde Hildebrand and Sharon Maples, c/o IguanaCon, Box 1072, Phoenix, AZ, 85001 are actually doing the organizing. They have my 2¢ worth; they need yours. Panels on alternatives to patriarchies. Speculations on non-mammalian birth. Feminism and the English language, our tool. What do you want to talk about? Write to them. Organize discussions for your own regional convention. Let's keep the excitement that we've found in programming (I, an Old Fan and Tired, am spending all my time at the programming! Wow!) by really speculating about the social, biological, and other revolutions going on right now, in our world.

(b) *Discussion groups.* The most important thing I've learned from programming is the need to provide some semi-formal structure for debates in specific ideas: perhaps a room open to all convention members, set aside for "alternative programming" discussions, with one or two formal speakers or a moderator. Ideally it will provide comfort, an informal atmosphere, and no smoke in the air.

(c) *A Room of Our Own.* Ideally, this would be separate from the above, with no set programming: a lounge open to all members for serious discussions: not the bar, not the Dungeons and Dragons room, not a place to bullshit or get drunk...but a lounge to talk in (with no cigaret smoke!). So many people found A Room at WesterCon valuable that I really hope it becomes a permanent feature of larger conventions, a meeting place in the crowds.

(d) *Affirmative-action Programming.* You don't put on a token "women's panel" and hope "the girls" will go away and shut up. You actively search for articulate women authors, women scientists, women social scientists to replace the same hacks we see year after year spouting the same clichés. Ctein did it for MAC. Terri Rapoport's editorial, "Tunnel Visionaries", in the June 1977 *Analog* shows what the "woman's point of view" adds to a discussion of a hard-science topic like space colonies. It becomes a human discussion—and the material for SF.

(e) *Human dignity action.* No more belly-dancers brought onstage in chains. No more striptease acts, making sexuality into something ludicrous for 12-year-olds to snigger at. No more dirty-joke panels. No more masquerades that serve only the exhibitionists and the chauvinist photographers. Yes, I was persuaded to be in a masquerade group once, in sheer chiffon "and leave your bra off." The discomfort I felt grew as I watched the other women participants: it was 1974, year of the naked slave dancers and chained women of Gor. Putting on fancy dress is fun; so dress as a proud, beautiful queen like Sandra Meisel, or a joyous Free Amazon like Amanda Bankier and Devra Langsam at MAC. No more chains! We are adults, and it is not "adult" or "liberated" behavior to use our conventions to degrade human beings, or exploit the beauty of the human body.

As I was drafting this piece, Harlan Ellison called me, to read the statement which, I hope, will appear in this issue.\* Think about what he says. The days of the fan as social misfit, coming to the con to escape the human relationships of the "mundane" world, are over. Let's live up to the self-image we treasure, as responsible adults concerned with the world...not pimply-faced adolescents in a pulp-fiction escapist dream.

I couldn't fly to SunCon, but I keep hearing of women's, people's, pride, happiness, sharing of ideas. I keep hearing, too, of a new spirit at east-

\* His statement appeared in last issue, *Janus* 10.





## Vonda N. McIntyre

I was raised in several East Coast states but became an adopted Northwesterner when my family moved to Seattle, Washington, in 1961 when I was 12. In 1970 I got a BS in biology at the University of Washington, then went on to graduate work in genetics. However, I quit grad school after a year and a half. Having been in school for nearly 20 years straight by then, I was academically exhausted; also I had begun to realize that as a scientist I made one hell of a science-fiction writer. The summer before starting grad school I attended the Clarion writers workshop in Clarion, Pennsylvania, and received a good deal of encouragement for my writing. I had sold several stories already, to Edward L. Ferman and others, and during the workshop I sold several more, to Damon Knight, Harlan Ellison, and Marilyn Hacker.

I organized and ran the Clarion/West writers' workshop, in Seattle, but folded it after the third year; it's extremely difficult to deal with university red tape and bureaucracy when you have no formal faculty position, as I did not. After the 1973 workshop I vanished into the Oregon woods and did not re-surface for some months, thanks to Ursula and Charles Le Guin, who loaned me their mountain cabin. I fin-

ished my first novel, *The Exile Waiting*, while I was there, and sold it to Fawcett Gold Medal. During that time, too, Susan Janice Anderson and I were co-editing *Aurora: Beyond Equality*.

More recently I finished and published a couple of novellas, "Screwtop" in Silverberg's *The Crystal Ship*, and "Aztecs" in Bryant's *2076: The American Tricentennial*. Both stories received decent reviews and instantly went to novella heaven. (The local distributor claims *2076* does not even exist.)

In early 1977 I went to Australia to help teach a Clarion-type workshop in Melbourne; the students were so good that I fully expect the next generation of SF writers to hail from the southern hemisphere.

This summer Houghton Mifflin bought my second novel, *Out of the Dead Land*, which will be published in the spring of 1978.

After WesterCon XXX I threw a party at which Jeanne Gomoll talked me into being GoH at WisCon, a part I fear I'm little better suited to playing than that of rising young scientist. But I'll do my best. *V*

Vonda

[...Vonda was here Tuesday and Wednesday and as you see, we jointly produced a sort of a kind of a like biography? Just be glad we didn't do the one we thought of that would have been a huge list of the kind of things that men writers always have done like driving jeeps in Saudi Arabia and slinging hash in the Bowery and herding yaks and building super-tankers and on and on for a whole paragraph, and we were going to make this huge list of things she had not done. But it got boring. They always do....  
—URSULA K. LE GUIN]

## URSULA K. LE GUIN

*Produced by UKLeG by dint of Sitting on VNMCI at Intervals Over a Period of Two Days and Slowly Squashing Little Dribbles of Information Out of Her*

Early in the autumn of 1948 a small two-seater airplane named, possibly, the *Enola Which?* took off from a little-known runway in Louisville, Kentucky; gaining altitude, it flew off towards the northeast. Several hours later it approached an even lesser known runway in Nahant, Massachusetts, from the southwest, received permission to land, and landed.

Aboard this plane—it is now known—was a six-week-old child.

The name of this child was Vonda N. McIntyre. If you leave out the N. her mail goes to her mother, and if you call her Wanda she will bite you. She lived in Nahant till she was seven, then the family moved to Fayetteville, New York, and got snowed on for two years; then to Rockville, Maryland, where she got her first horse, a pony named Missie; then to the Netherlands for a half a year, and then to

Seattle where they have stayed put since. McIntyre attended Sammamish High School, an experience she describes succinctly as "fairly ghastly". She went on to the University of Washington, majoring in biology, and started graduate school there in genetics. She spent a year making starch gels ("like making oatmeal, only it burns even easier") and performing unsuccessful experiments. ("I was cloning a teratoma that summer—I was never quite clear why I was supposed to clone a teratoma—that was my central problem as a geneticist; I think.") McIntyre's mind had begun to wander. She went on leave from the graduate program in 1971; she is still on leave, and shows no signs of getting off it.

Her horse Grey is past riding now, but he's out to grass and happy.

Her mind is still wandering.

It began wandering wordwards in its teens: McIntyre became editor of the high-school literary magazine, and wrote stories for it. Her first SF



Don Simmons  
& Jeanne Gomoll

VONDA MACINTYRE TEACHING A WRITING WORKSHOP  
OR: WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW (AND  
SUSPECTED ANYWAY) ABOUT CLARION PREREQUISITES

convention was a decisive event: "I discovered that there were Fans and Pros—Readers and Writers—and that Writers were human beings too." (She has not modified this opinion despite subsequent experience.) In 1968 she started submitting her stories to the professional markets. Ed Ferman rejected her first one with a "try-again" note; having the extremely literal mind of the born SF writer, she tried again, and her second submission was her first published story (February 1969).

Some subsequent high points: she attended Clarion, when it was in Clarion, Pennsylvania, in the summer of 1970. "A very good experience: both positive and good negative feedback—and I sold stories." She was the director of the Clarion West workshop at the University of Washington all three summers of its existence (1971-73), and turned out to be a superb administrator; her mind wandered, her clones died, but her workshops were terrific. It

was during this time, in order to relieve incessant stress, that Ygor appeared (McIntyre's Hyde-side). Ygor hasn't been around much lately (he can't keep up), but now and then he leers jovially out. In 1976 McIntyre gave a two-week SF writing workshop in Portland State's Haystack program at Cannon Beach, Oregon, and taught with Kenneth Rexroth, Tom Robbins, and Madeleine DeFrees at the Port Townsend, Washington, Centrum Institute. In February of 1977 she went Down Under to teach in the second Australian Science Fiction Workshop.

Her first Nebula award (1973) was for the story "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand." It won't be her last.

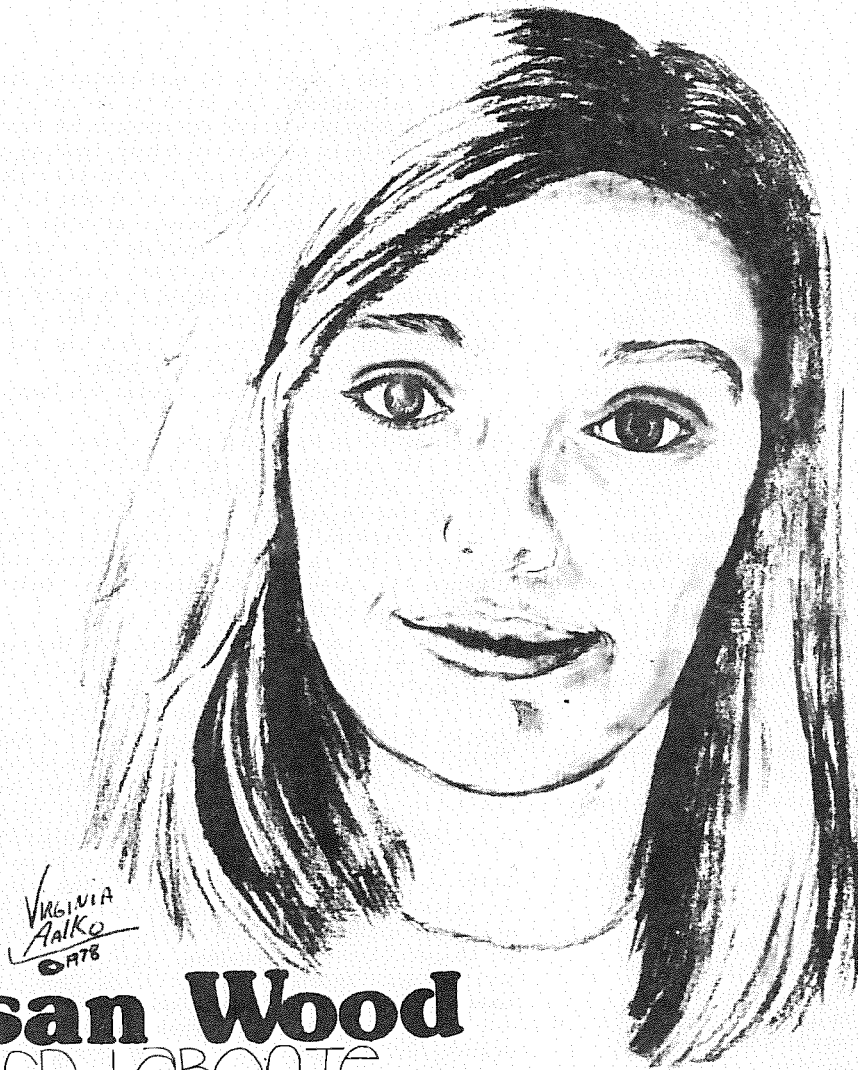
She stands 13 hands at the withers, and can take any fence. ☺

Ursula Leg

# A Vonda McIntyre Bibliography

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# Susan Wood

## RICHARD LABONTE

What is best in my world is often what is constant; Susan Wood is one of those constants.

Ten years ago, Susan was fighting Ottawa's city government to have ice and snow cleared from steep steps leading from an overpass down to the Carleton University campus.

Last year, Susan and her neighbors were fighting builders abetted by the government of British Columbia in an attempt to take over low-cost housing near the University of British Columbia campus.

Like all of us, she is older. Like enough of us, she is wiser. Unlike many of us, she has not aged. Susan can still be impassioned.

In 1967, when we shared desk space and deadlines for Carleton's weekly student newspaper, Susan cared: about icy steps, about the quality of her education, about the vitality of Carleton's science fiction club, about—even then—her rights as a woman.

Now she is a university professor who frets about the quality of her student's education; a science fiction fan and scholar who cares to study and enthuse about the best of the field; an activist who has joined with other women and some men to bring a new sensitivity into science fiction and fandom.

To all these passions, Susan brings what surely must be the most highly-tuned sense of appropriate hysteria ever manifested on the North American continent.

It's also an effective hysteria.

Back at Carleton, it got the ice and snow cleared off those steps; it also got the Department of English thinking about setting up science fiction

courses—a trail of which Susan has scattered across Canada in her moves from university to university.

Susan was in town—in Ottawa, my town, her mom's town—for the past Christmas. Her appropriate, effective hysteria was a tonic.

Two days after she arrived, we joined some old friends at a Christmas Bash, with live music supplied by Ottawa's Great Sneezey Waters.

There was Elizabeth Kimmerly, a den mother dear to us all who introduced Susan to co-operative living a decade ago; Rosemary Ulliot, once and perhaps future chronicler of our fannish lives; Gina Clarke, whose husband Norm was on-stage making the music sweeter with his saxophone; and Susan: four women in all, and me.

I'm not much—though, lately, more—of a dancer; but Susan is, and Elizabeth is, and the music was irresistible. So Susan and Elizabeth, the former respectably divorced and the latter happily married, danced. Hysterically. Soon, I did too.

Susan has that ability: to make people do what's good for them.

It's her strength: non-stop talking and no-end writing and never-finished laments about career, classes, and cats are the surface Susan.

Luckily for us—and for me—there's another Susan under the professor overworked, the administrator subverted, the scholar frustrated, the citizen betrayed.

Our Susan can still dance, and sweep us off our feet when she does. *R*

*Rich*



OLI COHEN

I guess it's just that she has more energy than most normal human beings.

For instance, consider Susan Wood's career as a science fiction fan: she has engaged in a staggering variety of fannish activity, fanac which has included such diverse examples as publishing a fanzine, being on a WorldCon committee, joining the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, "smoothing" with Bob Tucker, dropping out of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, and liberating a hotel swimming pool. She was co-editor (with Mike Glicksohn) of *Energumen*, which won the Best Fanzine Hugo in 1973; at the same time she was publishing her own fanzine, "a journal of heavy raps and light natters" called *Aspidistra*. After *NERG* and *Asp* folded, in 1973, she began producing a profusion of articles for other fanzines, and at the 1974 WorldCon she was awarded the Hugo for Best Fan Writer.

Meanwhile, she had begun the *Amor de Cosmos People's Quietrevolutionary Susanzine*, a "letter-substitute that got out of hand". She shared (with Mike Glicksohn) the position of Fan Guest of Honor at the 33rd World SF Convention (held in Australia in 1975), which gave her an opportunity to invent Daffodil Fandom, and instigate a rowdy chorus of "Waltzing Matilda" during the Hugo banquet. She did "The Clubhouse", a fanzine review column in *Amazing*, from 1974 to 1976, all the while writing a regular column for *Outworlds*, and articles for fanzines like *Starling*, *Granfalloon*, *Kratophany*, and *Xenium*—and at the 1977 WorldCon she tied for Best Fan Writer, making her the only person in the world with 1½ Hugos. Oh yes, somewhere in there she also found time to participate in six APAs; do a regular column for *Algol*; set up the TorCon II "All Our Yesterdays Room" (devoted to fan history); and appear on and/or run a dozen convention panels.

Susan has certainly had a very distinguished fan career (and I haven't even mentioned her "Hogu" award for Sexist Fanzine Cover of 1975); perhaps I have made my point about above-average energy.

But.

While she was doing all of that, she also: got a PhD in Canadian literature, for which she wrote a 400-page thesis on "The Land in Canadian Prose, 1840-1945" (her dissertation, by the way, wrecked three Xerox machines and a car, destroyed my typewriter, and disabled two typists. Ask Susan about the thesis-dybbuk some time.): moved five times; graded in excess of 3,000 term papers and final exams.

You see, when she is not throwing daffodils at hapless Australians, Dr. Wood is an assistant professor of English at the University of British Columbia. She puts on her efficient-looking professorial suit and sallies forth to transmit culture and basic writing skills to swarms of semi-literate students; little do they know that underneath that professorial suit she is wearing her Captain Canada T-shirt (or her Carter the Great T-shirt; or the one that says "Alcoholism: Australia's Worst Drug Problem"; or the one with the *Planet Stories* cover from "The Thing of Venus" or.... Susan has the world's largest collection of weird T-shirts.)

Not that all of her classes are concerned with the joys of Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush* or the evils of dangling participles. She has also had a fair chance to teach Our Literature. In fact, she has convinced university English departments from Ottawa to Vancouver to let her teach science fiction courses. (At the University of Regina, where she taught for two years, her SF course had to go through six levels of administrative review before it got final approval.)

In her copious spare time, she has written a 32-page critical paper on Ursula Le Guin (for Tom Clareson's *Voices For the Future*, Vol. 2), an introduction to Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Heritage of Hastur* (for the Gregg Press edition), a paper on "Women in SF" (delivered at a seminar on popular literature at UC-Berkeley), and numerous book reviews for *Locus* and *Delap's F&SF Review*; she is also editing a collection of Le Guin essays for Putnam/Berkeley.

The sheer range of her writing is astonishing. Critical essays on SF and book reviews could perhaps be expected of an English professor. But her fan writing includes articles on Dorothy L. Sayers, teddy bears, tuna-fish recipes, visiting a Zen monastery, and buying a life-size papier mâché lion. (Susan made me promise not to mention "Breast-Fetishists of Sol III", so I won't.) I guess the quality of her writing is best indicated by the 1½ Hugos for Best Fan Writer.

Incidentally, she also grows the tallest avocado trees west of Jon Singer.

If I didn't know better, I would think she had found the secret of cloning herself. As it is, if she gets sick for two days, she gets a week behind.

So. Meet your Guest of Honor, the amazing Susan Wood. Maybe you can ask her how she does it all. Me, I get tired just writing about it. ☺

# A Susan Wood Bibliography (selected)

## selected by Susan Wood

When Jan and Jeanne (sounds like a '60s folk duo) asked for a bibliography, I demurred. First, do you really want to know all about my scholarly publications in Canadian literature, including my doctoral dissertation, *The Land in Canadian Prose, 1840-1945* (University of Toronto, 1975)? No, I thought not. Second, when I looked at the neat collection of file boxes filled with 10 years' fanac (10 years' sentences!) I realized... I had seven boxes of Stuff, much of it ephemeral from smudgy

fanzines, some of it of which I'm proud, and almost all of it unavailable. So: some selections.

The writing of which I'm still most fond is, mostly, found in *Energumen* 1-15, Feb. 1970-May 1973, and *Aspidistra* 1-5, 1971-July 1973. Not only are these issues out of print, I am looking for file copies; if you have any for sale, write to me, please! My favorite column, I think, is "Zen: Centre" in *Kratophany* 10, which is also out of print. "Wild's of New York" from *Kratophany* 7 is available in Bruce D. Arthurs' *Fanthology* '75 (\$2.50 from 4522 E. Bowker St., Phoenix, AZ 85040). Recently I had material in *Genre Plat* 1 and 2 (\$1.00 each from Allyn Cadogan, 28 Atalaya Terrace, San Francisco, CA 94117). I am also still proud of my material in *Outworlds* 3, 4, 19, 21, 24, and 28, some of which may still be in

print (from Bill Bowers, Box 3157, Cincinnati, OH 45201).

In my fanzine-review columns in *Amazing* (June 1974 to June 1976) and *Algol* (Summer 1976 to the present), I've tried to present theme columns, dealing with some specific aspect of fandom: APAs, academic magazines, Aussiezines, and the like. I tried to do the same sort of overview for my article in the Mid-AmeriCon program book, "fan dom (fan'dəm) n., a way of life." I also have done book reviews for *Starling*, *Unearth*, *Delap's F&SF Review* (pretty regularly from July 1975 until its troubles last year) and, especially, for *Locus*, since 1975.

Scholarly SF stuff? Well, it's pretty informal:

● "A City of Which the Stars are Suburbs", *The Other Side of Realism*, edited by Thomas Clareson, Bowling Green, Ohio: Popular Press, 1971. I wrote this when I was 19, fergoshsakes. Last year, a student of mine found it, and pronounced it "not bad". Argh.

● "The Poison Maiden and the Great Bitch: Women in Comics" (a monograph), Baltimore: T-K Graphics, 1974. I hear rumors this is out of print. I sent T-K \$2.00 in September, for an extra copy for a friend, and haven't heard a word.

● "The Martian Point of View: The Poetry of Margaret Atwood", *Extrapolation* Vol. 15, No. 1 (May 1974). My first attempt to unite the worlds of Canlit fandom and SF. I still think it's OK, and those of you interested in feminist author Atwood should enjoy it.

● Introduction to the re-issue of *The Heritage of Hastur*, by Marion Zimmer Bradley, Boston: Gregg Press, 1977. Long intro, about MZB and all the Darkover books.

● "Discovering Worlds: the Fiction of Ursula K. Le Guin", forthcoming after two years, or so I'm promised, in *Voices for the Future: Volume 2*, edited by Thomas

Clareson, Bowling Green: Popular Press, 1978. This is the one that took seven drafts, a summer's work, and much joy; I can't wait to see it in print.

As for my Canlitcrit, Westerners especially might be interested in the ways I discuss pioneering and compare the Canadian and American frontiers, and our societies' assumptions, and in my introduction to *The Homesteaders* by Robert J. C. Stead (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973); "Ralph Connor and the Tamed West", in *The Westering Experience in American Literature*, edited by Merrill Lewis and L. L. Lee (Bellingham: Western Washington University, 1977); and "Reinventing the Word: Robert Kroetsch's Poetry", to be published in (I think) the Spring 1978 issue of *Canadian Literature*. I also did the entry on "SF in Canada" for the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of SF* edited by Peter Nicholls.

Most of the writing I do these days, though, goes into APAs, and a letter-substitute (small circulation, no, sorry)... Actually, it goes into copious comments in green ink, on/all over students' essays. I'm trying to find time to edit a collection of Ursula Le Guin's essays on SF and fantasy, for Berkley Books. Watch for it.

Otherwise...well, I write to my Mum every week....

Susan

## For the Women in Science Fiction

Leave us a place to dance out our songs,  
we'll carve comets of moon-breath  
for our kind,  
deriving new ways  
to penetrate the darkness  
between suns.

We've hugged rocks long enough, talking  
wheat and rice —  
hungry for tomorrow, now.  
Mountains aren't high enough, these days,  
we want to dip our words in stars.  
Leave us some Space  
and we'll fill it.



Terry Gareu

copyright 1978 by Terry Gareu

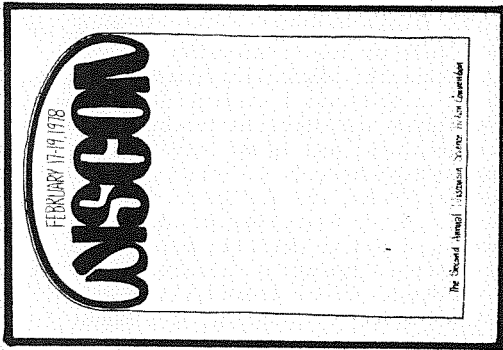
## PEOPLE'S PROGRAMMING/WOOD CONTINUED

ern and midwest conventions, a new energy with its focus in A Women's APA and AWA parties, and its effects spreading everywhere...in questioning, in pain, in joy.

Jan and Jeanne wanted me to write about my experiences with women's programming. What I seem to have written about is the growth of a new SF community, in which women and men share love, rage, frustration and tenderness in their struggle to be free people. In which men are learning to hug each other.

In which women, once merely tolerated as asexual beings, then welcomed as sex objects, are now (perhaps) able to relate more honestly to men and women as friends. In which, especially, women are discovering that other women are damn interesting people. In which WisCon is possible.

And that, my friends, is how I stopped being an Honorary Man, and became my own person...by becoming a woman. I've changed, and my fandom has changed. I hope you can share my joy in that growth.



# WISCON

## PUBLIC ACCESS ROOMS

WisCon features three public access rooms in which, along with formally scheduled mini-events, members of the convention are welcomed to sign up for and produce their own presentations or otherwise investigate meetings of small special-interest groups. Outside of each room there is a sign-up board, blackboard, or bulletin board to facilitate spontaneous scheduling. Keep an eye on it during the convention.

### ▶ public access room #1 ◀

In this room, a series of readings, discussions, dramatic presentations and events having to do with written science fiction will take place. The theme for this room seems to be (so far) unpublished (and almost-unpublished) works by women.

### ▶ public access room #2 ◀

In this second room, a series of demonstrations, discussions, and events having to do with the visual arts and science fiction will be scheduled. Remember the game you used to play as a child (or maybe more recently than that) in which your friend would make a scribble on a piece of paper and you would do the same, and then you would exchange scribbles and do your best to add enough details to the scribble to convert it into a recognizable drawing? Well, we're going to try to recreate that situation at WisCon

**Will the REAL  
James Tiptree, Jr.  
Please Stand Up!**



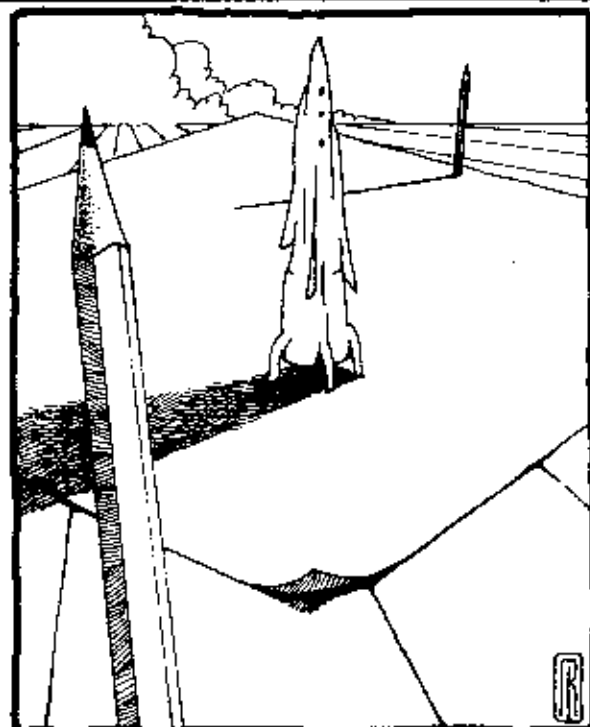
# PROGRAMMING

among the attending artists and see what metamorphizes from the scribbles they receive from other artists. This will be the "Scribble War."

Another series of attractions will consist of a number of artists who will demonstrate aspects of their artistic techniques. Most of the demonstrators will also have artwork displayed in the art show. Among the demonstrators are Steven V. Johnson and Eric Wallner, who will discuss and display their individual approaches and techniques with the medium of air-brush painting. Robert Kellough and Jeanne Gomoll will similarly discuss and demonstrate their different techniques and philosophies in the area of fanzine illustration. These demonstrations/discussions will be extremely informal and are open to other artists who would like to say their felt-tip's worth.

► *public lounge room #3* ◄

This room is open to general discussion (and retreat) for women and their friends attending the convention who wish to meet and talk with other persons about sexual roles in SF, in fandom, and in society in an atmosphere conducive to such discussions. Persons wishing to continue talking after the several feminist-oriented panels have concluded in the larger meeting rooms will probably be directed to this room.



This event will actually be a re-run of a similar production done as a MadSTF group meeting last November. At that time, four pretenders to the name of James Tiptree Jr. (two women, one man and a cardboard cut) were grilled by a panel of five keen-eyed, critical cross-examiners. Each contestant was asked question after question testing his or her knowledge of the titles, story-lines, and chronology of Tiptree's writing, as well as aspects of Tiptree's (until recently) less public life.

Interrupting this lively farce (when enacted at WisCon) will be several equally farcical "commercial messages", produced by the director of the 1977 WisCon's dramatic presentation ("Galactic Banana Dealer"), Deemie McGinley.

The style of this discussion turned out to be a uniquely appropriate one for the discussion of (or introduction to) the writing of James Tiptree, Jr.,

who was unveiled earlier this year as being not quite the person most people would have guessed. For so many years Tiptree has remained a mysterious figure, and now the works of this author are being re-examined from the point of view that the recent revelation has suggested. Following the presentation, you might wish to discuss the ideas and stories of this incredible author in more depth with others, for certainly the implications are exciting.

As for the person who will actually stand up when the final question is posed by the intrepid announcer, "Will the real James Tiptree, Jr., please stand up?", it might be interesting to keep your eyes on the audience rather than the fakers on the stage, just in case.... However, if the miraculous does not occur, I'll put my bet on the contestant who wowed the questioners in November—the Orange Cat.



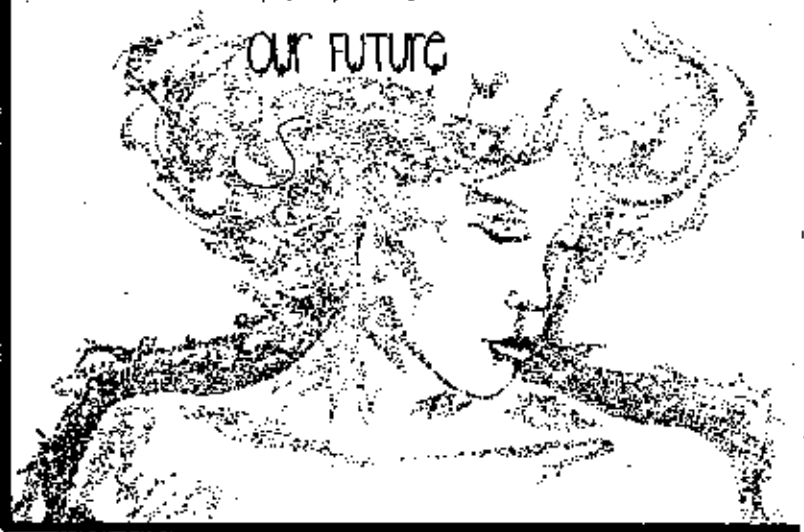
## WOMEN'S APA SUITE

This room isn't just for members of A Women's APA, and it isn't really a suite. Other than that, it's just what it sounds like: a room for members of AWAPA and their friends; a place to retire to after the post-discussion sessions after the discussion sessions after the panels on feminism; a haven for women when the con/the men/the world are too much with us. Men will not be forbidden, but we ask that you enter in the spirit of solidarity and friendship —Big Sister is watching!

This room (#604 in the Madison Inn) will be open Saturday afternoon and evening only, unless we get an unexpected transfusion of money. It's being financed privately, not by the convention. There will be a donation can at the registration desk for those who wish to contribute. The money collected will be used to pay for the room and some sort of refreshments. The sumptuousness of the sustenance will depend on the magnitude of your munificence. At the very least we will have tea, coffee, soda, and munchies. Contributions in the form of either munificence or sustenance will be welcomed.

One last request: please don't smoke! We love you, but not your ash.

FEMINISM: TO GRASP THE POWER TO NAME OURSELVES  
SCIENCE FICTION: TO GRASP THE POWER TO NAME



At this point in the history of the feminist movement, we are all working to break down old stereotypes of what men and women are expected to be and do so that we can find out what we are really all about as human beings. This sort of breakdown, which will soon become a rebuilding, is going on in science fiction also. In the panel on sex and gender, we will discuss the problem of distinguishing between sex and gender in the human community from a sociological, political, and literary standpoint, seeking to discover trends which already exist in science fiction and possibilities for its use as a part of the on-going struggle.

Last year, the one feminist panel at WisCon was rather ambitious in its attempts to cover all of our feminist interests in a few short hours. It may have been a little chaotic, but it also provided us with a lot of ideas for both focusing and expanding this year's feminist programming.

The remark which formed the basis of this year's panel was made by Mary Badami, professor of communications arts at UW-Milwaukee. It was she who first outlined the difference between sex and gender as they operate in modern American society. She

pointed out that, while sex is relatively easy to determine in a physiological sense, lack of clarity among members of the sociological and psychological communities means that nobody is really certain of the significance that gender has in our society. The characteristics that Freud associated with human beings according to their sex seem actually to be present to some extent in all humans, male or female. Each human being chooses her or his own combination of these characteristics as s/he grows up so that there are really several genders or character-types loosely associated with physiologically distinguished sexes. This is the aspect of sex and gender, as it appears in SF characterizations, which Iary will be able to discuss.

The problem of bringing the existence of these different gender combinations to one's attention is interesting in itself, but another interesting problem arises when one attempts to translate this knowledge into characterizations in literature, that is, in science fiction. We are fortunate to have two SF writers on our panel—Vonda McIntyre, our CoM, and Ann Weiser—who have experimented with non-stereotypical male and female characters in their writing.



## CHILDREN'S ROLE MODELS IN JUVENILE SCIENCE FICTION

Children form impressions of what they would like to do with their adult lives from many sources: not only the adult individuals they meet in real life, but also those they confront in their reading, influence the kind of futures they plan and mold for themselves.

There are various theories about the relationship between what a child reads and the kind of life s/he chooses to carry out. These include differing attitudes about the ability of children to identify with non-stereotyped characters in their fiction. This brings up many questions which could fruitfully be explored in a discussion of children's role models

As was the case with the civil liberties and anti-war movements in the 1960s, the women's movement has had tremendous impact upon the arts. When a group of people are in the process of dramatically changing the parameters and definitions of their roles—that is, moving to a different place within society and having to change that society in order to get there—a lot of creative energy is produced. Right now, women's work in many areas of artistic expression produces the most dramatic and important individual works, as well as providing the main source of energy and impetus toward change in those areas. Dance, music, sculpture, photography, painting, architecture, poetry, drama, and prose writing; all these are undergoing incredible and marvelous metamorphoses because of the work of women who are expressing themselves as women, drawing from their stores of experience and knowledge gained from growing up female in this culture.

This panel of the long, long name, then, will be devoted to the discussion of how the explosion in the arts with respect to women's contributions has been felt in the area of science fiction. The people participating on the panel all have some connection either as artists themselves or as critics of the arts and will be able to comment knowledgeably as well as personally upon the phenomenon under discussion. For the discussion has to be a personal one, full of as many "I's and "you's as "she's and "them's. The art, the stories, the dances, being created today are not being created so much for the sake of art itself, but rather (or at least for the additional reason) because these expressions are of personal value, even necessities, for the artists themselves. To rename ourselves, to rename our future, definitely involves the necessity to imagine ourselves in that future first. And that is what women's art is today.

both through experimentation with pronoun gender and with more complex issues in characterization.

Take the problem of pronoun usage. It is not just a question of using generic or non-generic pronouns in such cases as those where standard English uses a "he" to represent both sexes. The problem is more complex because the formation of a characterization is a very subtle process. For example, if a feminine pronoun is associated with a character from the first time it is mentioned, the reader, almost unconsciously, associates certain characteristics with that character. On the other hand, as one writer explained at last year's world-con, if one tries to avoid all gender references, one's reader may just assume that the character is male.

This complex interplay between reader expectation and the writers' attempts to be creative with their characterizations can be fruitfully explored as being made up of non-stereotypical combinations of characteristics. Thus the author not only represents life as it really is rather than as it has been in the fiction of the past but also has the possibility of developing new character combinations as potential futures towards which we can work.



in juvenile science fiction. For example, does a child really need to see certain well known character types performing the usual tasks in order to understand and empathize with these characters? Could it rather be that effective SF provides a child with more than just enjoyable escape and can be a vehicle through which the child is provided with as many different role models as possible, allowing her or him to explore alternative life-styles while deciding upon a personal one?

Of course literature cannot directly create our future for us, but it can provide us with ideas different from those we encounter in our everyday lives. Can science fiction fulfill this promise for children? Does it ever meet our expectations as the most forward-looking, creative, and possibly revolutionary literature available? Perhaps as much, can it actually be part of the construction of creative futures, providing children with the raw material

for imagining and then bringing these futures into being?

These are some of the questions that will be explored in the panel on "Children's Role Models in Science Fiction." With the help of the Cooperative Children's Book Center, on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus; an editor of the Marxist Literary Group *Children's Workshop Newsletter*, Tom Moylan; and Goh Susan Wood, we will be looking at role-models offered to children in juvenile science fiction, both old and new. The meeting will take place in a room near the book center, which will have a display of juvenile science fiction for the entire month of February and will also provide interested members of the discussion with an annotated bibliography of recent juvenile SF. The three of us, as well as a few other interested parties, hope to engage you in a fruitful and profitable exploration of children's role models in science fiction.

## THE SILMARILLION

*The Silmarillion*, J. R. R. Tolkien's prequel to *The Lord of the Rings* as edited by his son and literary executor, Christopher Tolkien, was finally published in September 1977, some 60 years after Tolkien began work on this compilation of myths and legends of the early ages of Middle-earth. The book was, of course, a long-expected party and has been heading best-seller lists since its appearance. We can expect to see many studies of this rich work in the months and years to come, but this panel will be a preliminary, rather free-wheeling discussion of as many aspects of *The Silmarillion* as possible in the time we have: the publishing phenomenon; its place in Tolkien's oeuvre; its relation to *Lord of the Rings*, both in the background it provides and in what it leaves unsaid; its use of myth; and with some special treatment, maybe, of a few individual stories of particular worth, such as that of Beren and Lúthien.

The panel is not yet complete, but will include Roger Schlobin, associate professor of English at the West Central Campus of Purdue University; Richard C. West, editor of *Oronist* and author of *Tolkien Criticism: An Annotated Checklist* (Kent State University Press, 1970); and Gregory G. H. Rihn, University of Wisconsin Law School.



### ORATORIC READINGS/DISCUSSIONS

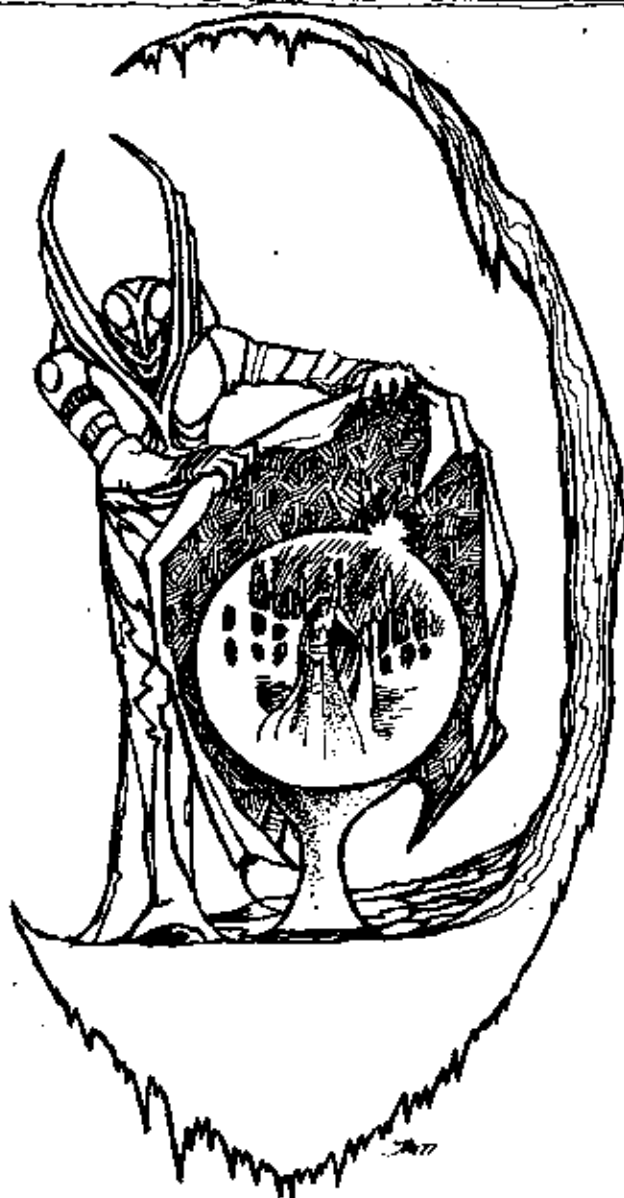
- Elinor Busby, *CRIB FROM THE SUN* (short story)  
 Gina Clarke (novel excerpt read by Elinor Busby)  
 Phyllis Ann Karr, *PERROW SANS* (poetry)  
 Elizabeth Lynn, *THE WINTER COUER* (novel; Berkley, 1978)  
 Vonda McIntyre, *ORONSNAPE* (novel excerpt; Houghton Mifflin, 1978)  
 Jessica Amanda Salmonson, *LIFE OF ANNE BONNER* (stories)  
 Ann Weiser, *WHY DON'T WE JUST KILL THEM?* (play)

## DUNGEONS

Have you ever dreamed of being a hero? Of having desperate battles with evil clerics and chaotic wizards over the fate of worlds? Of rubbing elbows with elves and dwarves and hobbits? Of finding untold treasures, the only obstacle to which was a tribe of goblins? Of riding a pegasus or talking with dragons? Of using magic? Of creating your own destiny, and the destiny of an entire civilization as well?

Who hasn't?

Well, if you really tried to do anything about these dreams of yours, you'd probably be locked away for the protection of society. Instead, why not try Dungeons and Dragons? All of the foregoing—and more—will be taking place in Room 605 of the Madison Inn throughout the convention. You will get to play the role of a character in a fantasy world, and to a large extent you will be the one who determines what happens



## 5 DRAGONS

to your character. The game will be going on constantly—around the clock—as relays of Dungeon Masters conduct you through the perils of this alien universe. You can drop in or out at any time, though the room is limited in capacity.

You should be aware of some of the conditions here, though. This universe has long ago discovered the wisdom of the metric system, and it is used exclusively. It has also been discovered that surgeons are much better qualified than most humans to inflict painful and lingering diseases on others (through such mystical means as filling their lungs with tar and their blood streams with poison), so smoking has been—and will continue to be—unknown. And, of course, this is an equal-opportunity universe, so don't be surprised—or inhibited—if you end up playing a character of the opposite sex.

## FASCISM & SCIENCE FICTION WORKSHOP

Inspiration for this workshop came from the writings of Albert Speer. In reading *Inside the Third Reich*, it became clear to me that an integral part of the ideology of national socialism dealt with the restructuring of both the present, on a specific scale, and the future, on a more abstract and monumental scale. This monumental view of the future was expressed in both the architecture and the political objectives of the Nazi party, objectives which were implicitly anti-humanistic in nature. For example, shortly after the Nazis came to power in Germany, Speer had the problem of dealing with a particularly disreputable-looking group, World War I veterans, who, I suppose, looked much like the sort of men we might see in a drunken Saturday-night gathering at an American Legion convention. These were not your typical blond-haired, blue-eyed *Hitlermen*. They had to pass in review for Hitler, but no one really wanted to look at them. Speer's answer was simple: give them torches and let them mill around at night. He circled the stadium where this event was to take place with a ring composed of 200 searchlights, the beams from which reached 20,000 feet into the night sky, proclaiming the power of the party. The then British ambassador to Germany was so overwhelmed by this effect that he later referred to it as the cathedral of ice.

It is my hope that we can explore the contradiction between the monumental visual effect that Speer thus achieved and the tawdry human reality which he, only barely, succeeded in negating. I feel that Speer's anti-humanistic vision is also found in much science fiction, and this is the reason behind the proposed panel discussion on fascism and science fiction.

In a very real sense, much of science fiction causes us to look up and away from ourselves and our fellow women and men. It is not that a vision of the future must of necessity be anti-humanistic. It is, however, the intention of this workshop to identify the basic trend as it manifests itself in imagery which appears over and over in SF films and fictional works. We also intend to look quickly at comics and art.

The major text for the workshop will be the film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. It is hoped that, if you want to participate in this workshop you will first see the film (This can easily be accomplished at a low-priced matinee performance in Madison).

Some of the participants in the workshop will be Hank Luttrell, Tom Moylan, and me, Phil Kaveny, but we are purposely structuring it in an informal fashion so that anyone may actively participate.





Some may think that a Parade of Cats is a strange program event for a science fiction convention, but cats play an important part in MadSF activities. Some of us are "fur" them and some of us are "agin" them; hardly anyone is neutral. We devoted a whole monthly meeting to cats in October. And on New Year's Eve the Luttreills and I did a radio show on WORT-FM featuring Cats and Comedy. (It was also supposed to be about Calendars, but that got bumped in favor of more Cats.)

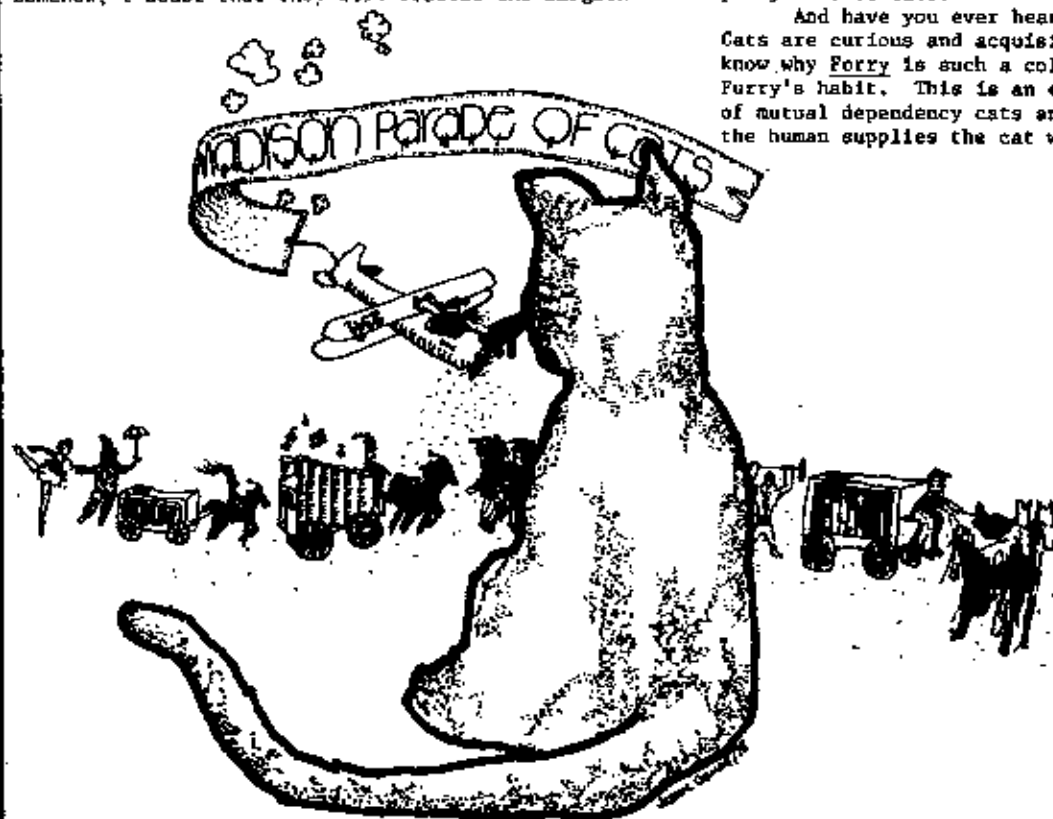
Aside from their extraordinarily magnetic personalities (Ever try to brush cat fur off your clothes?), cats have made significant contributions in the field of science fiction. Not too many people know this, as cats tend to write under pseudonyms. For example, the real name of the woman who writes all the novels about the Dragonriders of Purrin (her original title) is Anne McCattifurry. Why do you think she hides in far-away Ireland? Imagine the surprise of the X-Con Committee this June when they find they have raised all that extra money to bring over a cat. Somehow, I doubt that they will realize the bargain

they've gotten.

Another reclusive feline author is James Cat-tree Jr. Now there have been some rumors that he is actually a woman named Alice Sheldon, but that is only another diversion, like the "Tiptree" one or "Racoon Sheldon". This latest "unveiling" was cleverly designed to throw us off the track permanently. But take note: when our committee asked "Alice Sheldon" if she would be able to attend Wis-Con, she begged off, saying she would be in the Yucatan. A thin excuse. Like so many cats who write, she fears the SF world is not yet ready to accept cats on their own merits, so she feels she has to hide behind a human, and hence more acceptable (and lucrative) pseudonym.

Some feline writers have had their true natures hidden for years, not always by choice. It's certainly not surprising that Andre Norton's books have all been written by her cats. In fact she has a veritable stable of them, all writing under one name. No wonder "her" books show so much insight and sympathy towards cats.

And have you ever heard of Furry Ackerman? Cats are curious and acquisitive by nature. Now you know why Furry is such a collector—he's feeding Furry's habit. This is an extreme example of the kind of mutual dependency cats and humans have. Normally the human supplies the cat with all its creature com-



## MAGIC LANTERN TRIPLE FEATURE

The Magic Lantern Triple Feature Slide Show will cover a range of topics as varied as the colors of the spectrum.

I, Philip Kaveny, will be doing a Wells'-eye-view of the life and times of that great writer of science fiction. It was said of this particular feature, by M. G. Duckfoot, a media coordinator for a large public school system, that Mr. Kaveny's presentation was the worst that he had ever seen in his life. Nevertheless, everyone does not look at the world through Duckfoot's eyes. Take H. G. Wells, for example. He had his own particular attitude towards elitist orientations to art. While it is true that there are a few thumbs in the margins... well, how does one hold down the pages of a book to photograph the pictures otherwise? So, despite the criticisms by the aforementioned eminent critic of

slide technique, the Wells presentation is back again this year, with two interesting companion performances to lend it balance.

Greg Rihn has promised to titillate us with a survey of the comic book from the 1930s to the present. He will be emphasizing the work of particular artists, and graphic technique in general, in these comics. I might note that words can only limit the vividness and coherence of Mr. Rihn's presentation, so the description will end here.

Jim Blair's presentation offers both a visual insight into *2001: A Space Odyssey* and a rather controversial interpretation of the underlying meaning of the film. His technical competence in working with the slide medium is an interesting contrast to the earlier slide-show feature.

forts, and the cat gives the human psychic income (egoboo). In the case of Furry and Furry, this cat must really be something special!

Though cat's stories are better accepted in the publishing world nowadays, this was not always the case. Many is the time that an editor has suggested a slight title change and/or internal revisions to edit out references to cats. This happened to James Blish (What an obvious pseudonym!) twice, once for the novel *A Cat of Conscience*, and once for his famous series, *Kitties in Flight*. In one of Harry Harrison's novels, not only was the feline protagonist changed to a human one, but the very reference to catdom was replaced by the metaphorical use of the name of one of the cat's arch-enemies, changing the whole tone of *The Stainless Steel Cat*. Another example of editorial prejudice occurred with what Isaac Asimov had intended to be a novel in his series about robots--*Cats of Steel*.

The Madison Parade of Cats intends to take you to the homes of Madison fans, to acquaint you with their very faannish cats. (Yes, by definition, cats who live with fans are also fans themselves, often a simple act of self-preservation.)

Here are some of the feline fans you will meet:

- **Chuck**, the Incredible Electric Rubber Cat. Chuck is famous for his alternating periods of extreme activity and utter relaxation. During the former, all you can see is a furry orange blur. But when he's relaxed, he's very relaxed, to the point where you can hold him upside down by his hind feet and he will hang there, limply purring.
- **Lottie**. It's hard to believe that this youthful creature is the mother of four (including the incredible Chuck). True, her once sylph-like figure has taken on rounder proportions, but her kittenish purrsonality has never changed.
- **Maya**. The somewhat unwilling housemate of Lottie (also known as The Usurper). A striking, Junoesque beauty with a melodious voice, Maya made her radio debut on WORT-FM on New Year's Eve. (Actually, Lottie was on the show too, but Maya doesn't like to talk about that.)
- **Miserlou**. Facetiously surnamed "The Brave", Miserlou is a timid soul who prefers intellectual purrsuits. She is a voracious reader whose hunger for knowledge causes her to practically devour books.
- **Muffin**. The Esther Williams of Madison catdom. Her bathtub exploits are awe-inspiring. Muffin also opens doors, and is taking a course in lock-smithing at the local technical school.

Be sure to watch the message bulletin board for the gathering time and place of The Madison Parade of Cats. It will be an afternoon you'll never forget.

## WOMEN IN FANDOM

Saturday morning at WisCon will open with this non-feature attraction which has purposely been left unstructured so that there can be no leaders or followers in the discussion of shared experiences of women in fandom. Don't expect anything but comfortable, interesting, and informal conversation (to which you will be expected to contribute) as we discuss and learn about each others' sojourns in the fan world.

## REGAINING A SENSE OF WONDER: THE TEACHING OF SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY LITERATURE

Participating in this panel on Education and Science Fiction will be Martin Greenberg, Ken Zahorski, and Robert Boyer. The panel will deal with science fiction in the classroom, the problems of definition in science fiction and fantasy, teaching methods, and team teaching. Says Ken Zahorski:

Bob (Boyer) and I have been team-teaching our "Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature" course for approximately five years now, and have reached a clearer understanding of both genres through our juxtaposition of them in our course. Actually, this will be the focus of our panel. We [will] begin by giving a very brief history of the genesis of the course, and then discuss genre definitions, assigned readings, teaching techniques, student projects (There have been some very interesting ones.), and the overall reaction to, and effectiveness of, the course.

Martin Greenberg's method of teaching SF, being somewhat different than that of Ken Zahorski's and Bob Boyer's (tending to emphasize idea over literary focus), should provide the basis for some lively discussion and exchange of ideas.

What is a science-fiction convention without parties? There may be an answer to this age-old fannish question, but we won't be looking for it at WisCon. Here's how we hope the con suite will work. It isn't actually an entire suite, just a large hotel room (#606 in the Madison Inn). Since we can't fit the entire convention membership in the con suite, we are encouraging folks to stop in anytime, meet some other convivial people, and go off and start your own party. The con suite will be liberally stocked with soft drinks (also known as "mix" to those of you who BYOB) to lubricate the good times. It will be open all night, or as long as the last con-committee member can hold out. (In case you're worried about that being a limiting factor, we refer you to the stalwart James A. Cox, who made it through last year's WisCon on a total of two hour's sleep.) The main objective of the con suite is to meet people and have fun. Whoopee!

Everyone is welcome in the con suite. This includes smokers. However, we ask that you not be smoking at the time. The alternative to a smoke-filled room is to open the window, and this will be February in Wisconsin.

CON SUITE



# WISCON



SNOW QUEEN

BARBARELLA

**Barbarella** (1968) Italian/French; directed by Roger Vadim; screenplay by Terry Southern and many others; starring Jane Fonda. Based on the erotic comic strip by Jean Claude Forest. In the distant future, our heroine, faced with deadly dangers, must save the earth from destruction. "According to Vadim, in *Barbarella* Jane Fonda is supposed to be 'a kind of sexual Alice in Wonderland in the future', but she's more like a saucy Dorothy in an Oz gone bad." —Pauline Kael.

**Bride of Frankenstein** (1935) Universal; directed by James Whale; story and screenplay by John Balderston and William Hurlbut; starring Boris Karloff, Elsa Lanchester, Colin Clive, and Valerie Hobson. The sequel to *Frankenstein*, also starring Karloff and directed by Whale, is indisputably one of the greatest of all horror/science-fiction films.

**Curse of the Cat People** (1944) RKO; directed by Robert Wise and Gunther V. Fritsch; produced by Val Lewton; screenplay by DeWitt Bodine; starring Simone Simon, Ann Carter, and Kent Smith. Don't be fooled by the title of this one: allegedly a sequel to *The Cat People* (1942), this film has little to do with cats or curses—the studio forced the title on Lewton. In fact, this film is closer to being a fairy tale than a horror story. It tells of a six-year-old girl whose loneliness is relieved by the visits of her dead mother. This is a fine film which never found its proper audience because of its title and promotional campaign.

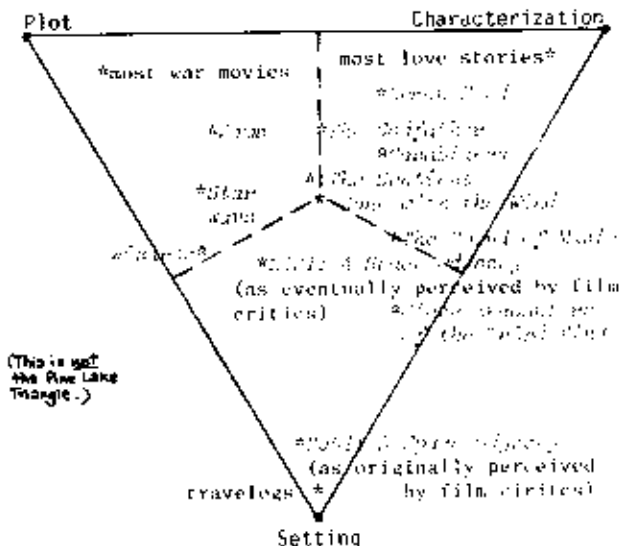
## MOVIE DISCUSSIONS

Looking back over 1977, one can see that it was a very good year for science-fiction and fantasy films. The front bookend was *Wizards*; the back bookend, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*; and the big fat epic *Star Wars* was played smack in the middle of a host of lesser works. *Demon Seed*, *The Sentinel*, *Audrey Rose*, *Exorcist 2: The Heretic*, *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, *Innervation Alley*, and *Oh, God!* put in appearances as legitimate F&SF theater films, with varying degrees of artistic success and public reception. The drive-ins got their share, too, with *Demon*, *It's Alive*, *White Buffalo*, *Tentacles*, *Squirm*, *Empire of the Ants*, and *Hoby*. *Wizards* was joined in the ranks of animation by *Fantasia Animation Festival* and *Allegra Non Troppo*, plus the nth go-around of *Fantasia*. Last (and probably least) there were several movies with quasi-F&SF elements, depending on how far you want to stretch your definitions: *Network*, *The Little Girl Who Lives Down the Lane*, *The Cassandra Crossing*, and *Twilight's Last Gleaming*.

Movies are kind of interesting in one respect: they have a much wider audience than books, and it is legitimate to presume that virtually everyone (in Fandom, at least) will have seen *Star Wars* or *Close Encounters*, while it is not necessarily true that the average SF fan will have read the latest installments of Farmer's *Riverworld* series, or McCaffrey's *Dragonrider* series, or Zelazny's *Amber* series. Thus virtually everyone will have achieved the major prerequisite to discussing the movies: having seen them.

And, as Diane and I have discovered from the feedback to our movie-review column, virtually everyone has her or his own ideas about the films we write about, and they often differ from our own. (Not to mention how widely we often differ between ourselves.)

Hell, why not? As we said in our first installment of "Show and Tell", "...neither of us makes much pretense of being a film critic, cinema buff, or anything fancy like that. Hence the [column's] title: we go to the show and tell you about it—the plot, the characters, and how well we thought it all came off." And, as we added in a later issue, in response to a letter of comment, "Different people look for different things in movies. We could—and occasionally do—look at whether the movie presents a viewpoint we agree with, or whether it's part of a discernible trend, or whether it typifies its genre.



# FILMS

**I Married a Witch** (1942) Paramount/United Artists; produced and directed by Rene Clair; screenplay by Robert Pirosh and Marc Connelly, based on the novel *The Passionate Witch* by Thorn Smith and Norman Matson; starring Frederic March, Veronica Lake, Robert Benchley, and Susan Hayward. A very funny comedy in which a witch who is accidentally freed from her imprisonment returns to haunt the descendants of the man who imprisoned her 300 years ago.

**Last Woman on Earth** (1960) Filmgroup; produced and directed by Roger Corman; screenplay by Robert Towne; starring Antony Carbone, Betsy Jones-Moreland, and Edward Wain. Three people on a tropical island are the only survivors of a world-wide disaster. On-location photography in Puerto Rico enhances this project by Roger Corman, who also gave you *Little Shop of Horrors*.

**Snow Queen** (1958) Soyuzmultfilm/Universal; directed by Lev Atamanov; English-dubbed version produced by Robert Faber; with voices of Sandra Dee and Tommy Kirk. An animated version of the Hans Christian Anderson fairy tale: the Snow Queen magically turns a boy's heart to ice, causing him to become selfish and evil. His girl friend must try to rescue him after he is taken away to the Snow Queen's palace. This Russian-made film features beautiful animation.

► For the comfort of our movie viewers, we have divided the movie room into two parts: the left side will be reserved for non-smokers, while the right side will be the "no smoking" section.



Some images of "women" from SF films.

But these are incidental approaches. What we look for consistently are credibility (whether the film is believable, or, perhaps more importantly, whether it makes you want to believe it), production qualities (lighting, audibility, editing), and overall enjoyability (subjective, therefore not easily defined—and certainly not universal)."

So what? So everyone is generally qualified to discuss movies, a lot of people want to, and the primary obstacle is finding a time and place to do it. What better time and place than a science-fiction convention?

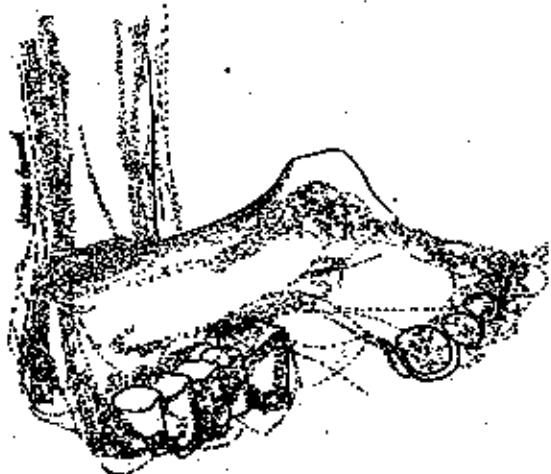
The general approach in the discussion room will be to start out with *Star Wars* (for obvious reasons) and move on to the other movies of 1977 as needed. This is simply a catalyst to get things going; it isn't expected that there will be any trouble keeping the discussion rolling once it's started. For example, it would be most surprising if someone didn't mention *SOB* or *The Thing*, or if we didn't get into the books that inspired the movies (or vice versa), or if we didn't have the discussion room subdivide into smaller groups who were more interested in, say, rapping than in analyzing. This is also a good opportunity to discuss some of the WisCon movies, which have been selected to show how women have typically been treated in F&SF films of the past.

No one's really in charge, although I'll get the ball rolling with a brief introduction of the analysis triangle shown at the left. I've included a few sample points as illustrations. Those who want to get into this further are free to do so, but that shouldn't inhibit the main purpose of the session, which is free and open discussion of F&SF movies.

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16	Feminism: To Grasp the Power to Name Ourselves; Science Fiction: To Grasp the Power to Name our Future . . . . .	Jeanne Gomoll
16	Sex and Gender in Science Fiction . . . . .	Janice Bogstad
16	Role Models in Juvenile Science Fiction . . . . .	Janice Bogstad
18	<i>The Dismantling</i> . . . . .	Richard C. West
18	Dramatic Readings/Discussions . . . . .	Jeanne Gomoll
18	Dungeons and Dragons . . . . .	Emerson C. Mitchell
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21	Regaining a Sense of Wonder: The Teaching of Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature . . . . .	Gregory C. H. Riba
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22	WisCon Films . . . . .	Perri Corrick-Rest and Rick White
22	Movie Discussion . . . . .	Richard S. Russell

# MUMBLES FROM CONDENPILLS



on them by birth." That philosophy is certainly reflected in this story (one of his first published, I believe), and all the others.

The story is set on the Moon, 214 years after the occupation of Earth. The protagonist is Fox, 12 years old. He and his mother, Carnival, have been arguing, because he wants to get a Change, and she won't allow it. (They are also sometimes lovers; they speed-up puberty; Fox has been sexually potent since he was seven.) A "Change" is a change of sex, which they can purchase about as easily as we buy a change of clothes. Early in the story, Carnival goes off with the man she is living with. But first she takes her feet off and puts on "peds"—hands for the end of your legs. (They're useful in free-fall.) Fox complains that she left her feet lying in the middle of the floor.

There are many advances in the biological sciences postulated in this series—more than many authors have been willing to suggest. These range from some interesting genetic engineering of plants ("eggplants" that grow eggs; breadfruit trees that grow loaves of rye or whole wheat; and other plants that grow honey, cheese, bacon or steak), to the major but routine modifications of the human body. It may not be quite so easy as just changing your feet. (I'm starting to worry about the nerve hook-ups, besides all the muscles.) But with the help of special equipment and the skills of a medic (or "medicanic", as he says in one story), it may well be possible. Stranger things have come true....

Anyway, shortly after Carnival leaves, Fox's pal Halo shows up. Except that now he's a young woman. This is a bit unsettling for Fox, and to ease the pressure he feels, he suggests they go on a picnic—on Nearside, the side of the Moon facing Earth. No one has lived there for about a hundred years. However Fox and Halo meet Lester, a hermit who was born on Earth, but did not join the emigration to Farside, primarily because of his objections to current mores. Lester belongs to an old religious cult (Christianity), and Varley uses the opportunity to take some (well-deserved) gibes at it. Things don't go exactly as planned, but in the end, Fox grows up a little.

The end of childhood is a recurrent theme in Varley's work; his protagonists are often young. In an interview by Daniel DePrez (published in *Science Fiction Review* 22), Varley says:

An awful lot of my stories deal with young people between the ages of 12 and 17, and crises that they run into as they're growing up. I've wondered why I do that. I'm not sure.... I always start a story from a picture, and most of these pictures that come into my mind involve a child trying to deal with something which is awfully hard to deal with, and I get a story out of it pretty quickly.... [A] lot faster than I do if I see an adult trying to do something, because then the situation becomes more complicated, the issues become more complicated.

The society on the Moon is totally nonsexist. Is this purely a result of the easy sex-changing? (Because almost all adults have been both female and male.) Has Varley taken the easy way out? In the

This past summer, I was doing a lot of reading, having no regular (and not much irregular) employment. At one point I was wading through a terrible novel (*The Second Experiment*; see my review in the last issue), when some relief miraculously appeared in the mail: *The Ophiuchi Hotline*, by John Varley. I had ordered it from the SF Book Club on a whim; the name "John Varley" meant nothing to me. But it certainly looked interesting, so I jumped right in—and was glad I did. (More about later.)

About the same time, I was looking over the Hugo nominees—and there was "The Phantom of Kansas", by John Varley. That issue of *Galaxy* was sitting on my shelf, largely unread. (That's not unusual for me.) I read it and enjoyed it; but more importantly, it reminded me of another story I had read a few years ago, which had impressed me greatly, but whose name and author I had forgotten. I looked it up; it was "Picnic on Nearside". I kept looking, and found some more of Varley's stories—a whole future history. (See *JAMS* Vol. 2 No. 3 for a discussion of future histories.) Then I raided some friends' libraries (Dick Russell's and the Luttrells', to be specific) and now have a baker's dozen of novelets and short stories to talk about. (There are about seven others published, which I haven't read; they appeared in places like *Vertex* and Damon Knight's *Orbit* anthologies). But first, a little background.

Most of Varley's stories deal with a future history in which settlements have been established on the Earth's Moon, and on other planets and moons. Sometime after the settlement of the Moon, the Earth is invaded by creatures from another star system, who inhabit a planet like Jupiter, and are vastly superior to humans. (Jupiter, it is revealed, harbors similar creatures.) The Invaders came to Earth to save the intelligent species (dolphins, sperm whales, and orcas) from human civilization (which now has been destroyed on Earth). (This future history, as far as I know, has no name, so I shall refer to it as the "Invaded Earth Series".)

In a biographical note before "Picnic on Nearside" (*F & SF*, August 1974), Varley says: "I am 26 years old. I belong to the following minorities: whites, males, Texans, southpaws, Very Tall People. I am also that much rarer bird, a male feminist. I believe that people will all benefit when any group is allowed to break out of the limitations imposed



# THE WORLDS OF JOHN VARLEY, OR WHO LEFT THEIR FEET LING AROUND HERE?

same interview he said: "I've wondered if that's ducking the issues of feminism, which I want to confront...." But, would people so readily accept sex-changing if it were a sexist society? Which came first?

Many of Varley's important characters are female. He says (same interview again):

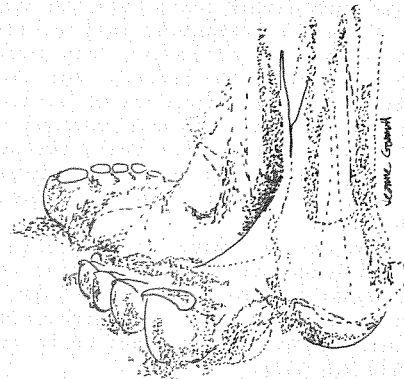
I enjoy seeing females in positions where they have to take action, and when I put any character into a position like that, I try to make them as awkward, and just as unprepared for it as I think they would be in real life, male or female, [My emphasis]

Varley's second story for *F & SF* was "Retrograde Summer" (February 1975). This one is set on Mercury, and here again people live in a hostile environment easily, in comfort. This is accomplished primarily by the implantation in the chest (in the place of the left lung) of a "suit generator". Besides feeding oxygen directly into the blood, this device generates a protective "null-field" around its wearer whenever he or she is in a hostile environment. It disappears when you step inside a building (which is protected by a similar field). This story also introduces clones into the Invaded Earth Series, since the main characters are a young man and his clone sister, separated at an early age and now reunited. One of the more interesting scenes is one of swimming in a pool of mercury, illuminated by glowing mercury vapor. This story is not as strong as "Picnic", but again touches on the theme of maturing.

"The Blackhole Passes" (*F & SF*, June 1975) introduces the "Ophiuchi Hotline", a huge laser beam bringing information from the star Ophiuchi 70. Why this information is being sent is unknown. Because it isn't aimed directly at the sun (and inner planets), one must be farther out than Pluto to intercept it. The story revolves around a neurotic man, Jordan, an "encyclopedic synthesist". He is all alone in a station, in the beam, trying to pick the 1% useful information from the 99% garbage. He has a frustrating love relation with Treemonisha, another listener in another station. They cannot touch, but only see each other as (three-dimensional) projected holograms.

The crisis develops when a blackhole (not as massive as a star, but too big to handle easily), which first passes in the vicinity of Treemonisha's station, later wrecks Jordan's station. (They are about three million kilometres apart, by the way.) There is nothing that ties this to the previous Invaded Earth stories, except the implication that the Moon (rather than the Earth), is the center of human civilization. I did not enjoy this story as much as the others, possibly because the situation seems more contrived. Also, Jordan seems to become well-adjusted a little too easily in the end. (Varley likes happy endings.)

The December 1975 issue of *F & SF* contained another Varley story: "In the Bowl". This one is set on Venus; the title refers to the fact that, because the Venerian atmosphere is so dense, light is bent such that one always appears to be standing at



the bottom of a bowl. The flaw in this is that visible light will not penetrate the thick atmosphere much more than a metre or so. Varley ingeniously gets around this by having the people on Venus use an implanted "infraeye" (in place of one of their regular eyes), which allows them to see infrared radiation. Also, because of the blandness of the environment, residents of Venus employ large numbers of holograms (of people, buildings, dragons, etc.). The story involves a man from Mars on vacation on Venus, and the scheming girl he is forced into taking on as a guide. They set out into the wilds (crossing a stream of molten aluminum, named the Reynoldswrap River), to find a peculiar kind of gem, the blast jewel. In the end, their lives are changed by a mystic experience with a jewel.

"Manikins" (*Amazing*, January 1976) is not part of the Invaded Earth Series. It's more of a thesis for an alternative biology than a story, but still very readable and enjoyable. Shall I give it away? There are only females and infested females—no such thing, really, as a "male".

The aforementioned "The Phantom of Kansas" (*Galaxy*, February 1976) is another story in the series, and a particularly good one. It starts out as a murder mystery, with basically one clue. The protagonist is Fox again, now 128. She has been murdered three times. Because of the technique of memory recording, when someone dies, a clone can be grown, and the memories played into it. There will be a gap in memories from the time of last recording to the time of death, but life goes on, sort of. (Fox finds that it really isn't quite satisfactory for the re-surrectee.)

Her fourth incarnation finally takes the police's advice and stays safely in her apartment. She is frustrated because she is an artist, an environmentalist—she creates weather and environmental happenings in the various disneylands (and she is one of the best). "Disneylands" are huge places on the Moon and other inhabited worlds which have been constructed to mimic areas of Earth. With the help of the Central Computer (CC) she is able to plan a new work, "Cyclone", for the Kansas disneyland. (Kansas is 250 kilometres in diameter, 5 km high, 20 km beneath the surface of the Moon.) This artform has a certain appeal for me: staging a scene, not a play or movie with a plot, but an intricate drama just the same. Anyway, in the end, the mystery and

the story are resolved satisfactorily.

Varley said in the *SFR* interview that he liked Larry Niven's work. Some of Varley's stories have a similar flavor, with respect to the science and such, but Varley has much better characters and more style than Niven. The end of "Phantom" made me wonder if there was any Asimovian influence. (You probably think I've got Asimov on the brain.) But the story concludes with a few words from the CC on the expediency of delegating authority and judgment to a computer. The tone struck me as being similar to that in some of Asimov's Multivac and/or robot stories. (The Central Computer seems to be Varley's version of Multivac.)

"Overdrawn at the Memory Bank" (*Galaxy*, July 1976) is a much weaker story. It's almost as if Varley had some notes and ideas left over from "Phantom" and turned them into a story. The protagonist has his mind interfaced with a computer, while others are trying to find his body.

The next story is set on Janus, the moon of Saturn. The protagonist(s) of "Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance" (*Galaxy*, July 1976) is (are) a symbiotic pair—a human (Barnum), and a plant (Bailey). The plant becomes sentient when connected to the human, so that they are two intertwined minds. Normally they live in orbit around Saturn, a self-contained ecology (with the addition of energy from sunlight). Pairs also tend to be great artists, and Barnum & Bailey have come to Janus to sell their music. Bailey seems to feel a little useless while they are on Janus, but they really love each other. They also fall in love with a woman, but it doesn't work out. They conclude that humans and pairs don't mix; their only common ground is art. A good story, it's unusual for Varley in that it doesn't have a (really) happy ending.

"Bagatelle" is set on the Moon, before the invasion of Earth (though it is, I assume, in the Invaded Earth Series). It is a fairly interesting story about the defusing of a terrorist bomb—but no ordinary bomb. An atomic bomb. With a human brain. The title is multiply ambiguous: in the story, there is a shop named "Bagatelle", but it obviously means more. It could refer to the "game" Birkson (the disarmer) plays with the bomb, or to something trifling, insignificant, which becomes important in the end. I was bothered at first by how Birkson starts out appearing as a rather distasteful character, but ends up a nice guy. But on rereading, it seemed more plausible.

I find it difficult to comment on "The Funhouse Effect" (*F & SF*, December 1976). According to the story the funhouse effect is seeing someone in a null suit, which has a mirror-like surface; thus, you see crazy, distorted reflections. Ah hah! (Upon writing that, I saw something else in that phrase.) The "funhouse effect" must also refer to the process of trying to scare yourself. I don't want to give too much of the story away, but the people on board "Hell's Snowball" (the comet on which the story takes place) are sort of distorted reflections of themselves.

"In the Hall of the Martian Kings" (*F & SF*, February 1977) is another preinvasion story, set on Mars. It is definitely in the Invaded Earth Series, since one of its characters shows up in *The Ophiuchi Hotline*. This is a typical Robinson Crusoe story—until the survivors start getting some help from a truly strange source (and I don't mean Friday). A subtheme this story shares with "Bagatelle" is someone having responsibility she or he doesn't want. In "Bagatelle", the police chief is relieved when she can put responsibility for the bomb on Birkson. In "Hall", Crawford has temporary control of the situation, because the captain has been stunned by

the tragedy of losing three fourths of her crew. He prods her back to action by deliberately making a blatantly sexist remark; he also feels relieved when she takes command.

The last two Varley stories I've read appeared in the same magazine: the first issue of *Isaac Asimov's* (Spring 1977). The first is called "Good-bye, Robinson Crusoe"; it is set in the uncompleted Pacifica Disneyland on Pluto. It again deals with growing up, though in this case, the child isn't so young. It also touches upon a fascinating point of interplanetary economics: the (finite) speed of light. This idea deserves a whole story to itself. (Maybe there is one, and I've missed it.) The second was published under the name of "Herb Boehm". (Herbert John Varley is his full name, and he's known as Herb to his friends; maybe Boehm is his mother's maiden name.) (I would have missed this if Jim Young hadn't told me that Varley had two in this issue; once I was looking for it, it was obvious.) This one is not in the Invaded Earth Series. The second time I read it, I was struck by the similarity to an idea I had mentioned in the first installment of this column (*Janus*, Vol. 2 No. 1). My idea was that a society of the future, whose air (or water) was really polluted, and which had achieved time travel, might grab clean air from the past, and ship back its own to replace it. Varley does the same basic thing—except his future society is exchanging people. It's kind of a scary story; but the people from the past would have died if not snatched; and, well, the replacement people from the future are barely alive anyway. I guess it would be more accurate to say it's a disturbing story.

Which brings us up to *The Ophiuchi Hotline*. ("Ophiuchi" is the genitive of Ophiuchus, a constellation on the ecliptic; thus, if astrology were to pay any attention to astronomy, it would tell you that if you were born in early December, the sun was in Ophiuchus, not one of the traditional "signs of the zodiac".) When I first read it, my only objection was that there were too many good ideas crammed into this one little book. Now I see it's all a natural outgrowth of the series. But the book stands on its own; even if you've never read another Varley story, you should like it. There's little else I can add to Karen Axness's review last issue. It's an astounding novel, set in a richly diverse universe. It deals with a situation (perhaps an epoch in our future) which has too often been overlooked: humanity living comfortably on many worlds in our solar system. Not struggling for survival; not spread through the whole galaxy; just at home in the solar system. *Hotline* caps the Invaded Earth Series; or at least this portion of it. I'd like to see more stories in the series, but I'm sure I won't be disappointed if Varley moves on to new things.

John Varley is an astounding writer. He has certainly set ripples through the science-fiction world, as can be seen by the flurry of articles about him and his works. For instance, in a recent issue of *Rune* (#50), Dave Wixon shows in his column ("As the Platen Turns"; subtitled "Pecking Order"), that Varley:

has broken new ground: he has created a Darwinian Universe... This makes Varley's achievement even greater: not only has he put together a splendid piece of entertainment, but he has done an end around the great racial chauvinism of SF, the prevalent expectation of humanity's ultimate triumph.

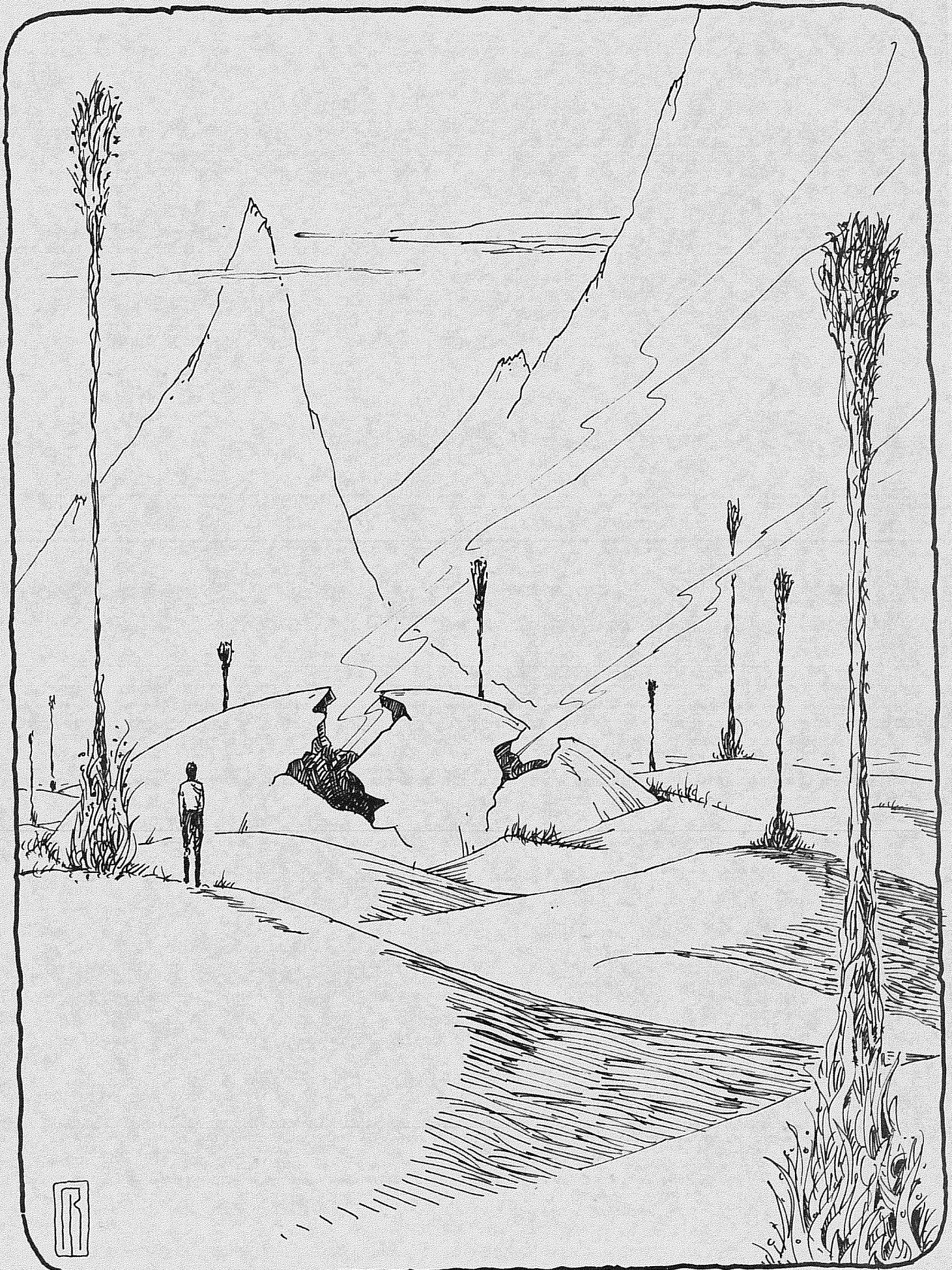
In other words, John Campbell would have hated John Varley's stories.

Varley has an anthology of his stories coming out in spring, and is working on another novel, both of which I eagerly await.

John

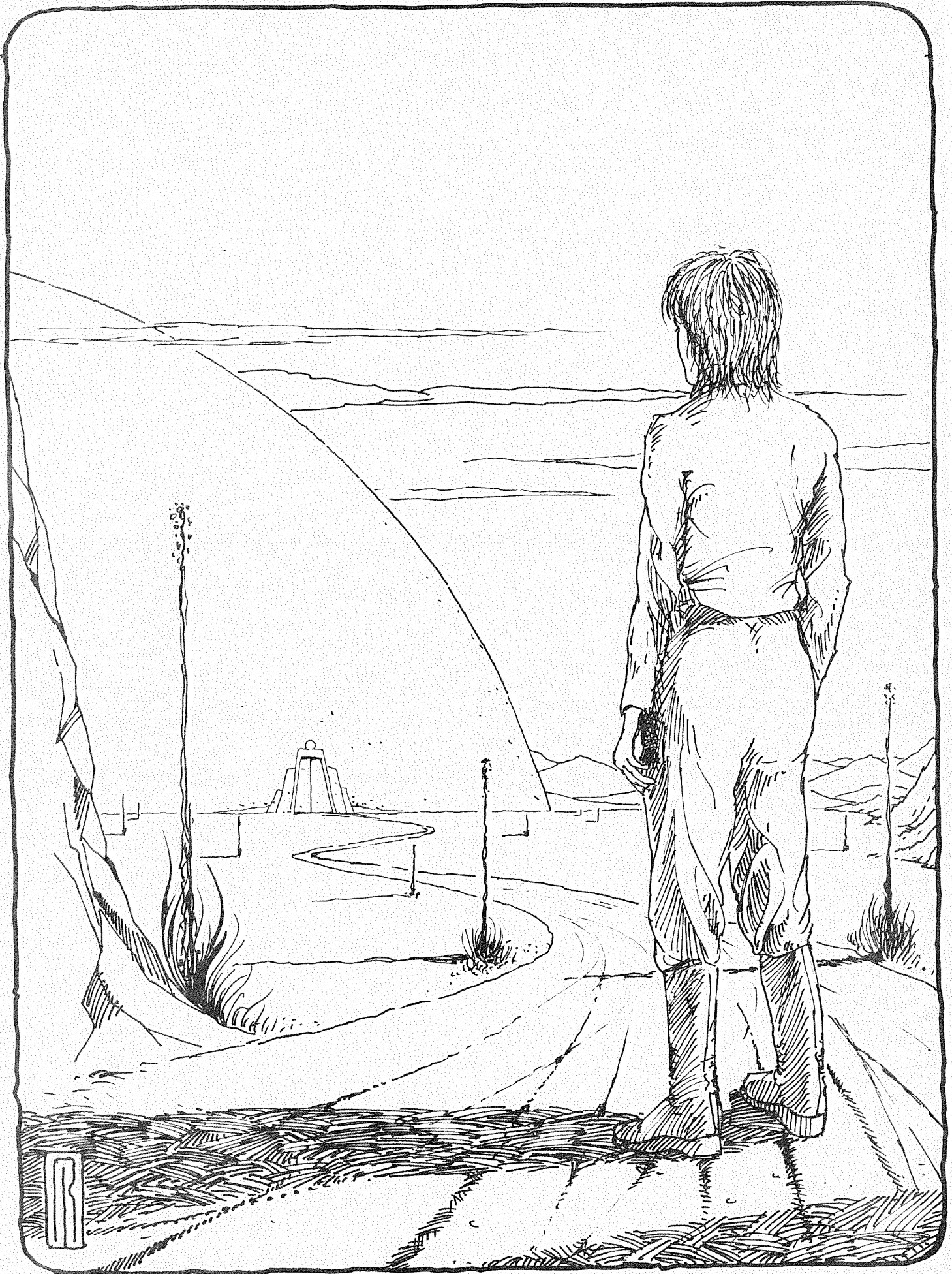
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DREAMSNAKE	ROBERT KELLOUGH
DREAMSNAKE	ROBERT KELLOUGH
"AZTECS"	VIRGINIA GALKO
"SCREWTOP"	VIRGINIA GALKO
THE EXILE WAITING	VIRGINIA GALKO
"OF MIST, AND SAND, AND GRASS"	VIRGINIA GALKO
"OF MIST, AND SAND, AND GRASS"	VIRGINIA GALKO



Dreamsnake



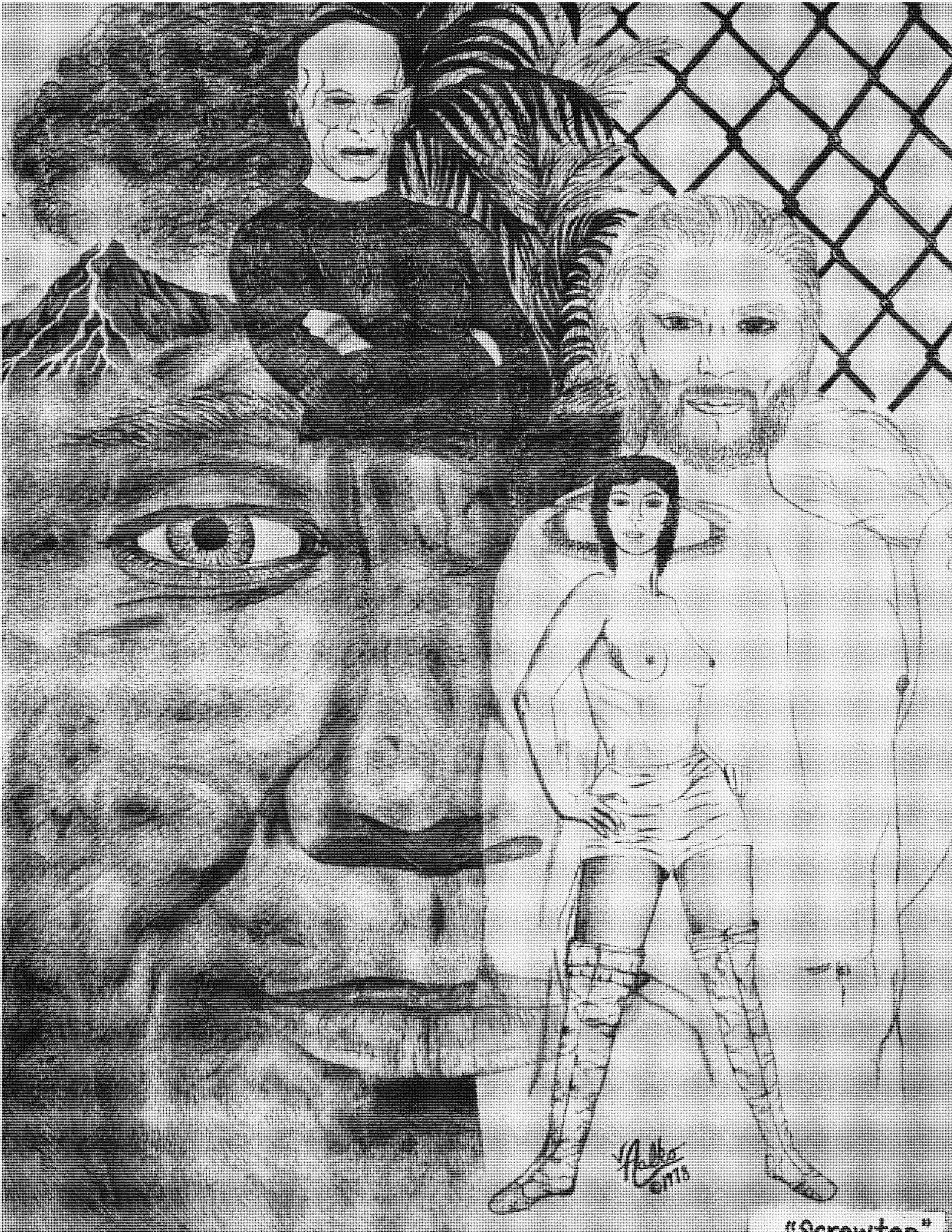


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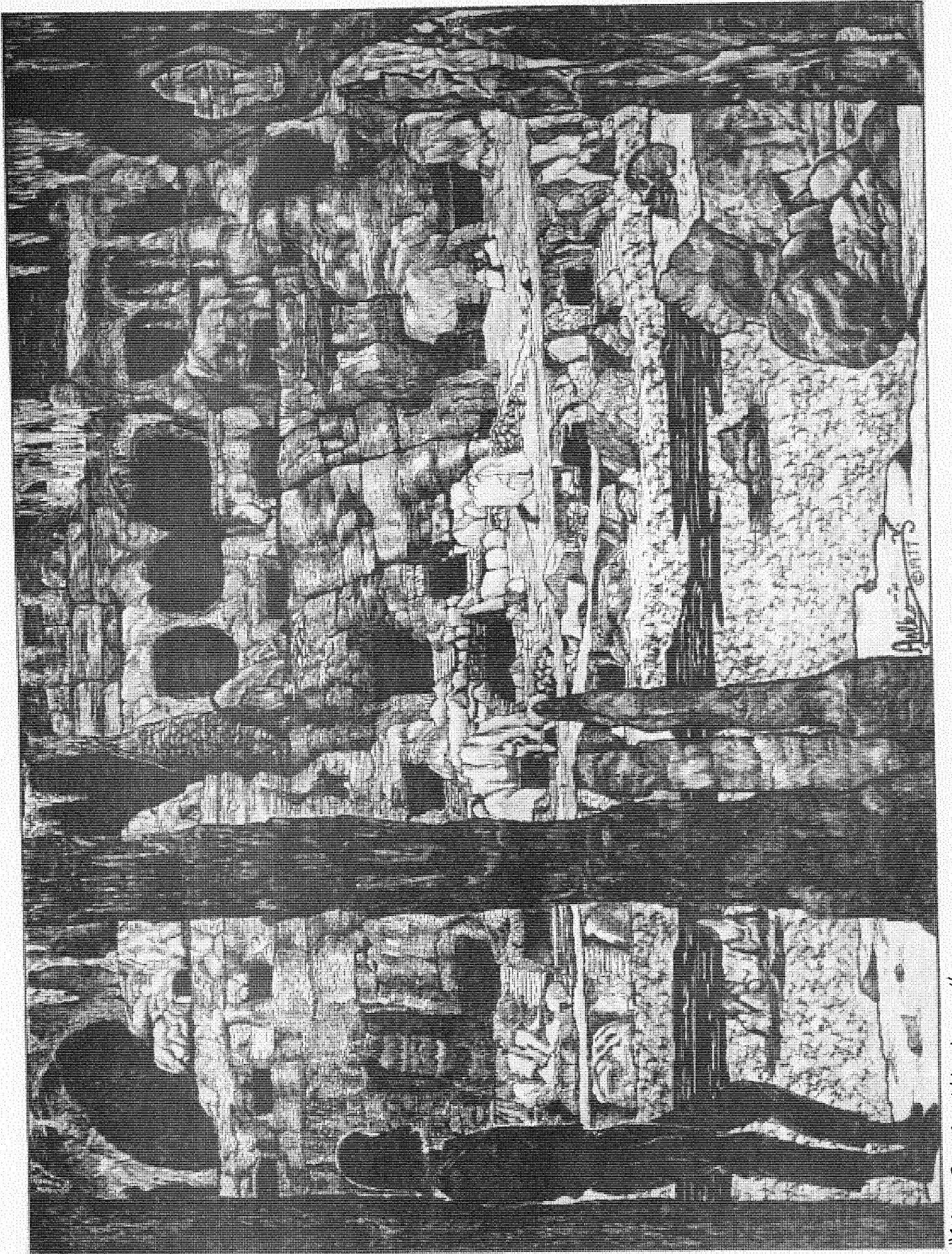


"Aztecs"

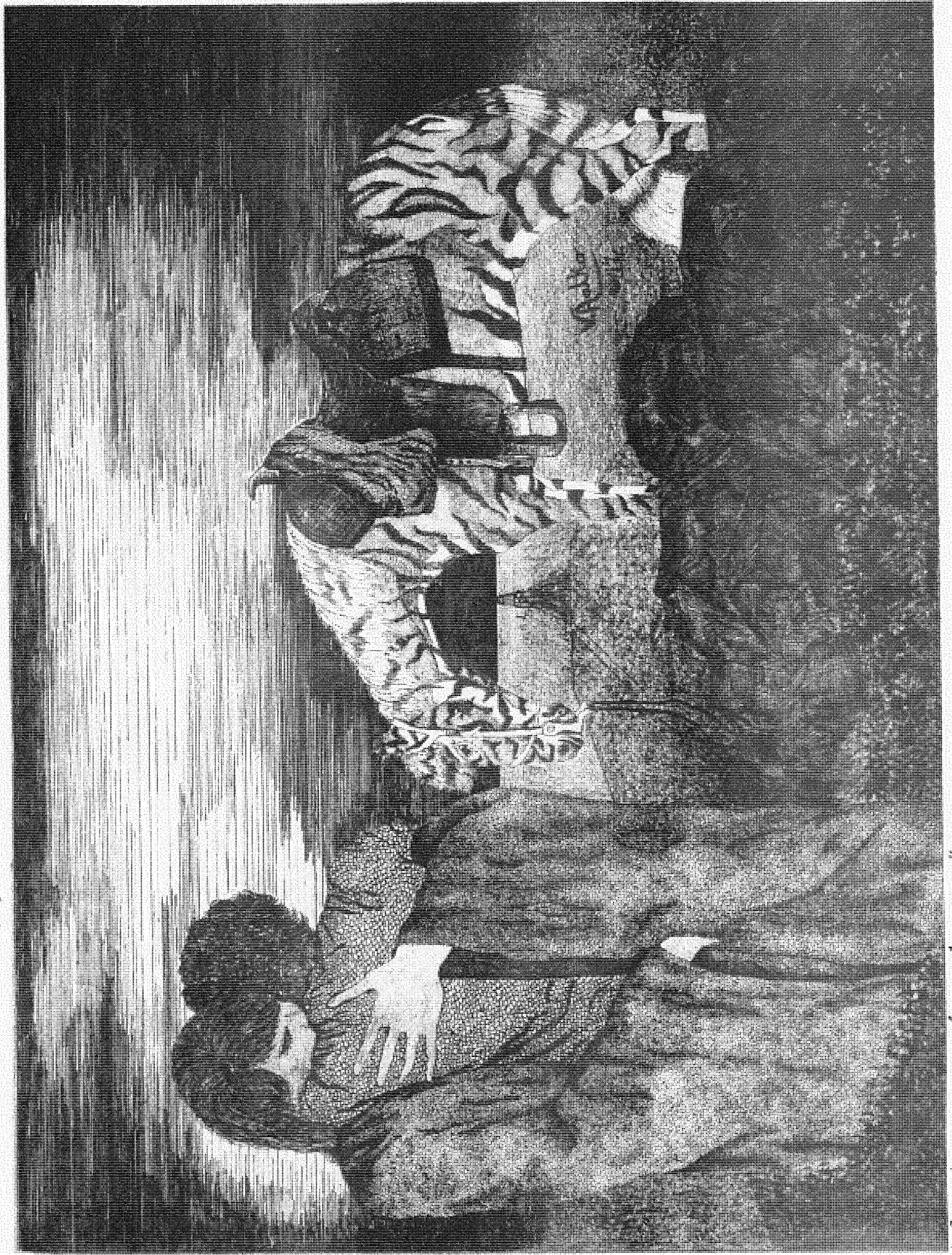


"Screwtop"



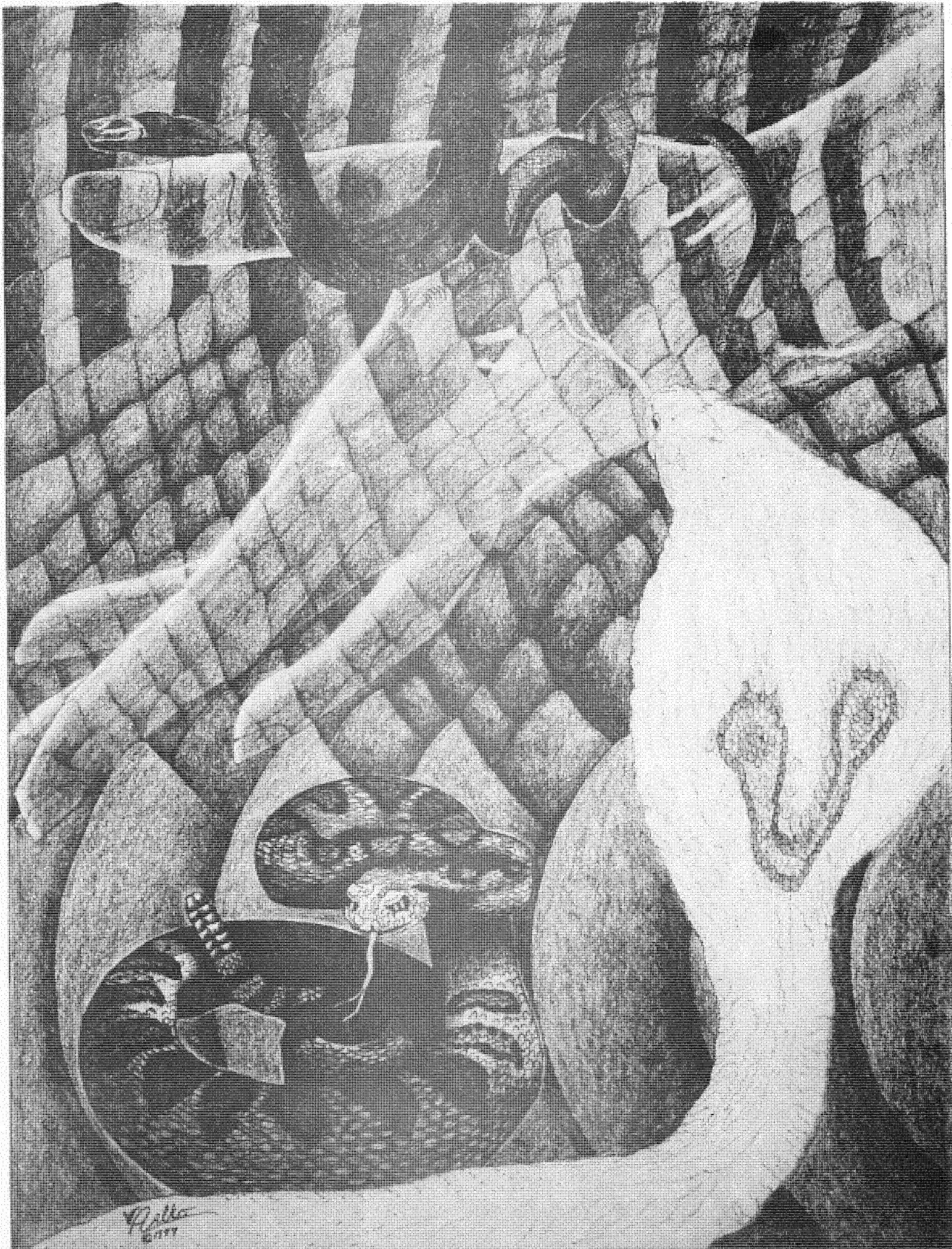


"The Exile Waiting"



"Infant and sand and grass"





*Pallo*  
6177

"of mist and Sand and Grass"



# HELLO

once again. I hope all of you are enjoying yourselves at WisCon (this is being written in sad anticipation of my absence.)

Under the circumstances, it seems that this column be devoted to fannish pursuits, the future of fan publishing, in particular. Hang on to your hats, though. This roller-coaster ride is going to be a little rough, and the destination may leave you a little breathless. I'd say that if this column doesn't induce future shock, you're pretty well immune.

In five years, the mimeo machine will be obsolete, although most fans will not be aware of that. In 10, it will fall into disuse. So far as fannish publishing goes, the mimeo will go the way of hekto, the printing press, and all the other specialized technologies which are limited to those who treat

printing as a hobby in itself and preserve the old ways for their own individual values and idiosyncracies. The faithful Gestetner, the spirit duplicator, the photo-offset machine are all going to be largely replaced by one technology both cheaper and vastly more versatile and flexible. It's called "the computer".

The driving force behind this literal revolution (pun intended) is economics. What will make it a true revolution are the unique qualities of the computer that no printing press could ever duplicate. I'll talk about the economics first; then we can look at those special characteristics that will make this so important. There may be items in here which will even surprise the computer freaks among you; some of what I'm going to say is very new, and not well publicized. But everything I describe is well grounded in current technology.

First, the economics (wherein I will sneak background material as well.) Computer power is getting cheaper by the day. By the time this column appears, seven weeks after I write this, the cost of computing power and memory will drop an average of 10% from what it is now. In a year the buying power of the dollar doubles...if you are buying a computer, that is, 20 years ago, computers cost millions.

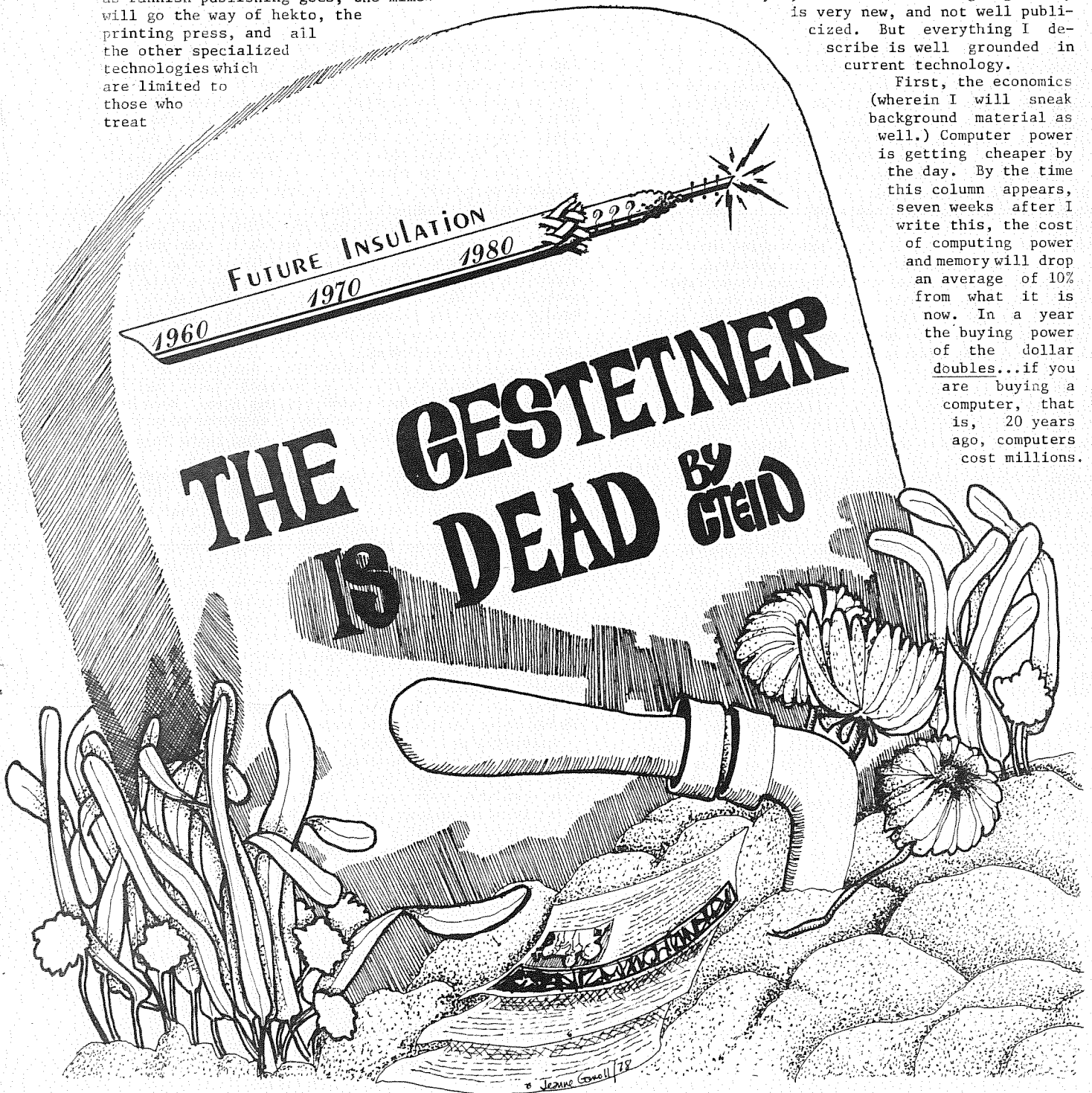
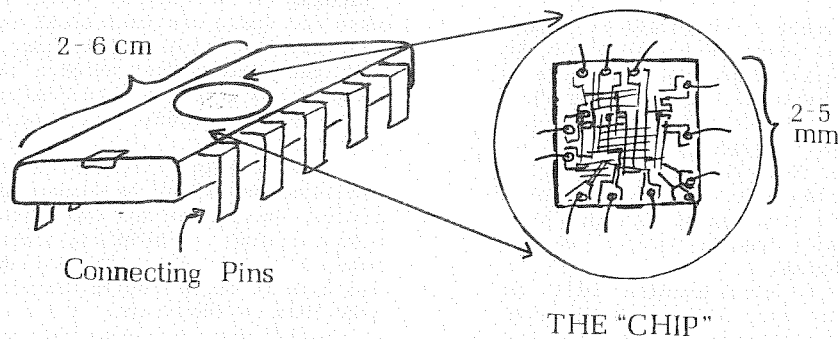


FIGURE 1

AN IC PACKAGE

There was even a time when the experts thought that no more than a handful of computers would ever be built, since that would satisfy any conceivable computing needs for the entire world. 10 years ago, computers had dropped in cost to the tens of thousands, for a machine much more sophisticated than the behemoths of a decade earlier.

Computers can now be bought for a few hundred, with features the big guys of 10 years ago only dreamed after. But with few accessories. Such a bare-bones computer won't do much. A completely naked computer is like a naked human being with amnesia. It needs arms and legs to do anything. It needs food and a nervous system to use those limbs—and to communicate with its senses, so that it may learn enough to figure out what to do with those limbs. And it needs a memory so there will be some place to put that learning!

A naked "electronic brain" can be bought for \$10-\$40. It is called a microprocessor ( $\mu P$  for short) and it is pure cortex. Usually, it comes as a single component called an integrated circuit (IC). (See fig. 1.) Hidden inside that plastic or ceramic package is a small chip of silicone (called, cleverly enough, a "chip") which has on it all the circuits that enable our "brain" to "think". Now if you want the circuits and interface connections to everything else (our nervous system), that may run you \$100 or more. You will also need to feed it (a power supply). More bucks, to hook up the senses (called "input devices"), the limbs (called "output devices"; collectively with input devices referred to as "I/O"), and the memory (called "memory"; surprise!). Adding a reasonable amount of memory can run you several more. And the I/O, which may include a keyboard, a TV terminal, and a printer, can run from the high hundreds into the thousands. They get ya on the "incidentals".

Still, you can put together a very nice system, today, for the price of a Gestetner. In fact, a year from now I hope to be turning out these columns on just such a system, for which Terry and I are saving our pennies. With such a system, you can do fancy editing and word-processing just as the big publishers do. Type in your copy, edit it, justify the margins, correct typos—all on a TV screen—and then have your printer type out camera-ready copy or stencils. You can even cut your repro costs by having the machine print out as many copies as you need. It isn't fast, but computers are patient and very cheap to run when you own them. The better printers have interchangeable type-faces, margin justification, and proportional spacing, and they can type a page a minute. Computer paper is also the cheapest available—about 0.2¢ for an 11x14 sheet. Such a system isn't particularly better than a mimeo. It lets you do fancy editing, but it is slow, and not too good about fancy graphics or multiple colors.

Of course, there isn't really any need for paper at all with such a system. Paper is just a convenient way of carrying words around so they don't get jumbled and lost, right? Computers have lots of other ways of carrying words. They can file them in their regular memory; they can store them on a magnetic disk or tape; they can even punch them on paper tape. There is no reason our fanzine has to be distributed on paper; it could be sent out on tape cassettes full of computer code.

So why don't we computerize zines? Well, there has to be an equally expensive system to read what your \$3,000 setup has "printed". This is a lot more expensive than today's standard equipment: a pair of eyeballs. I will get back to this problem; it is hardly likely that computerized zines will become popular until there is a cheap, widespread, and convenient way to read them.

Nor are the paper substitutes particularly cheap! A tape cassette stores several zines, and is reusable...if you don't mind erasing them. Even so, it costs several bucks. So does a magnetic disk, which looks like a 45-RPM record. And paper tape is silly, etc., etc.

There is another kind of memory called "semiconductor" (or "solid state", or IC) memory. This kind of memory is built from tiny circuits that have the odd characteristic that when you give them a signal they remember it, and can repeat it back upon command. An IC memory chip will contain thousands of these circuits; hence it can remember thousands of 1s and 0s (the only signal a computer understands, when you get down to real basics). For convenience in discussing memory sizes, most people clump eight of these 1-digit (or bit) signals together and refer to them as a "byte". This happens to be the amount of memory needed to store one alphabetic character, so they are convenient to use. Henceforth, I shall always describe memory in bytes or in kilobytes. (1 kilobyte, or "K", equals 1000 bytes.) Our tapes and disks can store hundreds of kilobytes. IC memories can't hold more than 2 K at the moment, and they cost more than tapes. There is a special kind of solid-state memory, called a "bubble memory", and it can hold about 12 K. It costs \$40.

Still, the future comes. I know of one APA (II) which will accept a zine for stenciling via a phone-line computer hookup. And I know of a fan who attempted to create a completely electronic fanzine among computer-owning fans, but not much came of it.

Nonetheless, you should have every reason to be skeptical of me. After all, I'm trying to sell you a fairly expensive computer system to make fanzines that can only be read on another expensive system, and that can only be distributed efficiently on very expensive paper-substitutes. "Why," you ask, "don't I simply print my zine on gold leaf and

impress people that way?"

To answer that, we must start to look into the future. This is very easy in the computer field. Every year, for over 20 years, the cost has dropped in half. Yes, a millionfold in 20 years! The industry expects the curve to continue this way until at least 1990, and that curve is so clean and straight it looks as if it were faked! We'll look at our paper substitute first, by comparing it to mimeo.

Mimeo paper costs about 1¢/sheet. Stencils for a sheet will run you 50¢. Add a bit for ink, and for a moderate run of 50 to 100 you are probably paying a bit more than 1¢/side. I don't know how much it costs to keep a Gestetner running, or how many copies you get before you need major work done. But at a \$3,000 price, if you can get ½ million pages out of a machine before it wears out, that adds ½¢/side to your cost. (It doesn't matter if I am off by a bit, as you will see.) Assuming the zine is to be mailed, it will cost ½¢/side, depending on the zine size. This totals to 2¢/side for our mimeozine. Given 500 words/side and 6 letters (bytes)/word, we have 3 K/side for 2¢. So our mimeozine "stores" 1.5K/penny, which is pretty cheap storage. By contrast, a bubble memory holds 12 K for \$40, which works out to only 3 bytes/penny. An entire IC can only hold about 2,000 English words. (But it is cheap to mail!) So it would seem our bubbles are too expensive. About 500 times too expensive! At least, that's true this year. But next year they will cost only half as much, and our zine is going to cost from 5 to 10% more, depending on inflation and the vagaries of the Post Office. So I'll pull out my handy-dandy pocket computer and ask what it all means:

- In 1980, computer memory will be 100 times too expensive.

- In 1982, it will be 20 times too expensive.

- In 1984, five times too expensive.

- In 1986, computer memory will cost the same as a paper zine!

- And in 1988, it will be four times cheaper!

- If you really care to consider 1990, the limits of safe projection, then paper is 20 times more expensive. Not, of course, if you're only using one sheet; that would require such a small memory chip

that it wouldn't be economical to try and sell it. The curve for any given product does bottom out eventually—it would be very difficult, for example, to make a pocket calculator that would sell for a dollar. It is much easier to keep adding features to a \$10 calculator, while holding the price. But for a fanzine of 10,000 words or so, this starts to become more sensible.

Now let's get back to the computer system. Precisely the same kind of economics apply to the printing end. Except that a mimeo already costs what a computer system does. In ten years, mimeos (if they are around) will cost \$6,000. But your computer will be well under \$500, and it will be able to run rings around the Gestetner. There is one IC company which will quote you for a micro-computer in five or six years that will do 1 billion operations in a second, has 120 K of memory, and has all the necessary circuitry (nervous system) to deal with the real world. All this on one chip, in one IC package. The price won't be exorbitant.

It would seem our computerized printing press isn't an economic problem at all. By the time memory gets cheap enough, the computer will be a real bargain. This leaves a small matter of reading the bloody thing! How about something the size of a pocket calculator, with a five-inch video screen in it? That would cost maybe \$50? How about \$25? How about if such a gadget were a true pocket computer, able to do everything a \$1000 machine does today? Suppose such a machine had a place to plug in auxiliary memory? Do you think that might do the job?

The above is only very slightly speculative. I can't give the precise specifications of such a machine, but every part of it is expected to appear in pocket computers within the next five years. There are very strong market pressures working to make sure it all happens. Of course, the initial price will be several hundred, but it will drop as fast as pocket-calculator prices have. All we need is patience, and not too much of that.

By now, you should be willing to believe that such a computer-publishing phenomenon is economically possible and eventually attractive. But what can it do? What makes this a revolution?

Suppose that Jan Fan has just given you the latest issue of *Atavism* at WisCon X. If you are like many fans, the first thing you want to do is scan it quickly for egoboo and personally interesting references. After you shove the chip into your pocket reader, you punch in your name, that of the local club you belong to, and maybe the names of one or two people or conventions of interest. In something under a second, the machine is displaying on its screen passages which contain these references. If you are clever, you stored the keywords a long time ago, and the machine automatically skims through until it reaches passages it "knows" will interest you. And if you are super-clever, and vain to boot, there is a program which looks for complimentary and uncomplimentary phrases, so that the only personal references you see the first time through are positive ones.

If you are a scholarly type, perhaps you are doing a study of fannish slang, and a fan bibliography of Susan Wood (who?). The computer is also checking to see how often the word "skiffy" appears. The frequency and location will be noted. Mentions of Susan's latest 18 monographs are also noted and filed in the proper category. Everything is cross-referenced (something a computer can do very easily), and when you get home, your pocket machine will update the massive (only in terms of data, not size—not when the Library of Congress can fit on 20 shelf-feet of videodisk!) comprehensive fan-topic index



Police raid on a printing press

you keep.

If you are an artist, then what excites you is the latest portfolio of full-tone graphics included with the issue. Next year, Jan promises to buy the color system (which doesn't cost much more anymore, but it came out two years later) and will start running full-color photos. You've heard rumors about moving pictures! No one has seen them yet, but they're coming eventually.

Jan told you that there would be a convention supplement appearing tomorrow. The machine that programs the chips is about the size of a portable typewriter. In fact, it looks very similar, except for the small video screen that lets you do editing and composing. Since it takes a second or two to program a copy, Jan will prepare about 200 copies in an hour, once the layout and text are finalized. An additional run of *Atavism* is planned, since the issue was very popular, so 100 more copies of that will be programmed.

These will be a lot of changes. I only have room to touch on them. Consider that the nature of the fanzine is now noncorporeal. The IC is merely the mortal vessel that carries the binary data, which is the zine. No doubt there will be collectors who save the original ICs, complete with zine. Sort of like collecting first editions (although how you detect a counterfeit is beyond me). Most people won't care; once they get a zine home, they will transfer it to a mass memory like videodisk, which is even cheaper and more compact. The IC can be recycled—No doubt fan publishers will give very substantial subscription discounts for people who return the chips for reprinting.

I wonder what fans will do when they can see their walls again? And don't have to spend hundreds of dollars on shelves? Probably use the savings to print more fanzines—some things never change.

For those of you who still like paper copy, the computer system will help out there. Aside from doing all your own typesetting and layout and editing on a TV before printing a word, there will be I/O devices that will give you capabilities you only dreamed of. There will be office-copier-like machines that hook up to your computer and turn original copy into computer data and vice-versa (besides actually making copies). They won't be terribly cheap—several thousand, like a mimeo, when they first appear in five years—but they will do B&W or color with a tonal quality and resolution only matched by the most expensive 4-color press runs. Imagine what it will be like to be able to produce Sierra Club Book quality printing, at about 5¢ a copy, including cost of machine, maintenance, etc. Or getting all that nice art in the last *Atavism* printed up for your walls (remember all that empty space?). This isn't as inexpensive as the other items I've discussed, but those who like a little luxury will be able to do a good a printing job as the big publishing houses. Because of the new computer revolution.

There will be more changes in our way of life (and this time I mean the USA, not fandom) than I can begin to comprehend. Personalized computer-based communication is likely to produce more fundamental changes than TV. All I did in this column was showed how a novel technology would invade our lives and habits. I barely scratched the subject of how it will change them. Fans are very book-oriented; this development strikes right to the heart of that. Think on it. Once it all sinks in, for you and me, we can explore some of the real social changes in more detail. That may take a while; I haven't absorbed the implications, and I am immersed in these developments up to my beard.

Future insulation? Maybe, but I'm a bit shocked by it all. I don't even want to guess what

it will be like after computerzines are obsolete. Maybe... ..?



For those who would like to learn about personal computers and what they can do with them, I will suggest some reading material. Everything here has been checked out by me, and I am not listing anything I don't read. So if your favorite publication isn't here, you might drop me a note giving particulars, and why you think it is good or bad.

• *Introduction to Computers*, Volume 0 by Adam Osborne and Associates, Inc., \$7.50. Available thru stores or by mail, Box 2036, Berkeley, CA, 94702. This is a great book to start a beginner with. You don't need to know anything about electronics, or much math beyond addition. Or anything about computers. It might be good to have a more knowledgeable friend to brain-tap, but this comes the closest to anything I've ever seen to being intelligible to a completely non-techno type.

• *People's Computers* bimonthly mag by People's Computer Company, \$1.50. Back issues are available at your local computer shop or by mail from PCC. A very good magazine on a largely non-technical level. I buy it. Unlike the book mentioned above, this magazine is not a completely general introduction to basics. It deals with real products and real programs and very real applications. It is also the only publication in the field which has a positive interest in feminism (All the others are uninterested or antagonistic.) and is truly responsive to the readers. PCC is trying to bring computers to everybody—not just male WASP technocrats. Nice dragons, too.

• *Dr. Dobbs Journal of Computer Calisthenics and Orthodontia: Running Light without Overbyte*, by PCC, 10 times/year, \$1.50. I didn't make this one up. And, despite the title, it is heavy going—for technically-oriented types only. It is a reference-type publication, dealing with small (i.e., cheap to set up) computer languages, new products, etc. The first year is available for \$13.50 in one volume. All issues are always kept in print. I recommend it

if you are up to it.

•*Byte* the class magazine of the field, monthly, \$2.00. A full-sized (150-page) magazine running articles of both technical and general interest. Clearly the best of the try-to-satisfy-everybody magazines. But you'll need to know the basics for most articles to be readable. Columns, product reviews, how-to articles, games, informational articles. A mixed bag. Sometimes not worth buying (but usually it is.)

•*Kilobaud* monthly, \$2.00. I buy this every month. I do not recommend it. Explanation: its politics irritate me. They irritate a lot of people in the field (if that is any consolation). The mag is aggressively anti-feminist; I have gotten steamed for days by one or two of their letters and editorial replies! It is a good-old-boys publication whose most enlightened remark to date can be summed up as, "You women shouldn't be getting upset; we're not intentionally putting you down." And that is very close to an exact condensation; I'm not adding any of my own biases! So why do I buy it? Because, unfortunately, it is the only really good hobbyist/how-to oriented magazine in the field. Its articles divide evenly between new products, games, and programming applications, and construction projects. If *Byte* is *Popular Science*, then this is *Popular Electronics*.

It is technically superb. I need it. But I don't have to like it. *Dr. Dobbs* has suggested that people Xerox what they need from *Kilobaud*. Sounds like a good idea, if you only want to keep one or two articles.

Well, that wraps it up for this column. Next time, I'll do the second cloning column, "If the Sons of All Men Were Mothers". Since my deadline isn't until mid-April, I hope to have all kinds of nice feedback from you on the first column to inspire (?) me. Lots of socio-economic blather next time. And how would you finance a child?

After that, there will be columns on time travel (you think it's impossible, hmmm?) and the biochemistry of behavior (new stuff that isn't even in the literature, yet; lotsa future-shock potential). After that, who knows? Maybe I'll have some ideas from you, by then. Ta ta! ☺

## a premature LOC AUGUSTUS T. SWIFT, JR.

The printing revolution is indeed on as Ctein describes it, and as anyone who is marginally involved in any sort of printing business can tell you. This is not a sudden or surprise revolution, but it will produce some surprising machinery to make both fans and printers a sort of extraordinary *deus ex machina*, so to speak. As I sit here writing this, I am staring (with wonder) at a Xerox copy. Not just any old Xerox copy, but a copy, in colors, of a color photograph. The new color Xerox copier is slightly hard to believe—one can control the primary colors to obtain variations on the shading of any piece of color artwork. The cost: 10¢. This of course was the demonstration cost; if you owned the machine (\$22,000) and made about 3,000 copies per month (not a large output by any means), it would cost you 10¢ for each. This machine also makes colored prints (Xeroxes) from color slides—and the color is truly amazing, the quality is astounding.

Anyone today can own a small computer editing system. If your credit is good, you can lease; if not, some are so reasonable they can indeed be purchased, providing you can do your own maintenance. The highly technological training to run such a system involves knowledge of typing...and that's about it. A good typist can pick up the specialized typing skills within a few days, while speed in typing re-

mains high. And, of course, proofreading, editing, and other corrections can be done at the computer keyboard. Press the button and bingo! you have a whole book right in front of your eyes, all ready to be taken over to the printer. From experience, this system is faster than present plodding and paste-up proofing and laborious layout techniques. One of the real advantages is that the author can set her or his own work and make corrections as she or he goes along, as well as extensive changes and additions. In fact, the author can directly compose work onto the computer screen without resorting to first and second drafts. Such extensive draft emendation can be done again sitting right in front of the screen.

Yes, the day will arrive when we will all be sitting in front of our personal telecomputer screens with the capacity for kilobytes, megabytes, and (yearly) even trilobites of memory. And the day will arrive when even the trilobite will become a fossil. The only problem that might arise in the future: what if the computers decide to eliminate the fans and start their own APAs? They could communicate between themselves with their binary language and hold a bin-APA, and in memory of their cinematic mentor, they might even have a HAL-APA time. ☺

11110 -

### THE BEANIE IN EARLY SOCIETY: PART 4

Medieval mosaics do show many saints with beanie-like headgear, blades kept rapidly spinning by miraculous power.



### THE BEANIE IN EARLY SOCIETY: PART 5

Modern research indicates that the early beanie is far more widespread than originally thought, and is known to nearly all societies. Shown: Tibetan monk with prayer-wheel beanies.





Oh what a miserable man he was; oh, what a dirty-old miserly man. He lived at the bottom of a foul lake, and only came out of it at night, grumbling about the freshness of the air, cursing the beauty of the moon and the midnight flowers, pained by the song of the nightingale. He swore a great oath to destroy all that was good in the world, for he was oppressed by kindness, and his tongue curled into a knot at the taste of honey, while music only grated in his ears. The people of the land knew he lived in the bottom of the lake, for he left a track of filth after every night's outing. Oh! What an unfortunate, misbegotten snail he seemed, leaving behind the gardens he had spoiled, and a trail of slime leading back to his putrescent waters.

No one had ever seen the miserable man before Anna. Anna was very small at the time, young and innocent. She had gone out in the morning and discovered her flowers smashed into the ground. She had helped her mother plant them, had watched them grow from seeds, and had cared for them every day. The sadness of their pointless ruin overwhelmed her and it seemed that she would cry. But then she caught sight of something very beautiful: a track of slime capturing the morning light, turning it into a rainbow. *How very lovely*, she thought, seeing it shimmering and shining beneath the sun: *how wondrously grand this feast for my eyes*.

Mother still slept when Anna began to follow the rainbow. She had never seen one fallen upon the ground before, and was rather startled to learn that rainbows stank. But it was as beautiful as when raised in the sky, and she wondered if it would lead her to a golden city in fairyland like the stories told.

It was a long way for Anna's short legs, but she came to the lake before noon. Dead things floated near its banks, and fungus grew big as trees. The lake was black and the wind sent terrible, forboding odors her way. But to Anna it smelled like cabbage stew—and she was the only child she had ever met who loved cabbage stew. Her mother grew big heads of cabbage, and cooked them fresh in cream and barley, and it was the best soup in the whole world even if it did smell something fierce. She thought it was too bad about the dead things, but she was not afraid of death. She was with her grandmother when she died, and it was not a terrible thing. It was a natural thing. As for the fungus, it was not ugly to her, but marvelous to behold, mushrooms big as trees, with blotchy pretty colors.

Something stirred beneath the surface of the black waters. Anna wondered if it were a magical fish. Her mother had told her a story about a magical fish, and Anna had ever since longed to meet one. She walked to the edge of the dark waters and called out: "Magical fish! Magical fish! I love you, magical fish!" The lake stirred vigorously, but if there were a magical fish, it did not answer.

"This is a beautiful place," remarked Anna, stroking the silky red fuzz growing on the trunk of a giant blue mushroom. Again the water stirred, more violently. When she asked of no one in particular, "Is this the edge of fairyland?" the water stirred yet again, and she knew whatever was in the lake could hear her. She sniffed the air and thought of her mother's boiling pot, and said, "It smells like stew. I am very hungry."

The magical fish, if that were indeed what it was, made the water splash and pop and gurgle as if the stew were on fire. "That's a very good trick," praised Anna. "Would you do it for me again?"

It was too much for the miserable man to bear.

# Anna and the Miserable Man

Jessica Amanda Salmonson



When Anna saw the miserable man standing there in the water she was immediately reminded of her grandfather's scarecrow. She began to laugh at the sight of the miserable man.

"Don't do that!" he insisted in a coarse voice. Anna fell immediately silent, thinking it was bad manners of her to laugh at the way another person looked. "I'm sorry," she apologized. "I think you look all right."

The miserable man screamed and splashed the black water with his fists. "I don't!" he insisted. "I'm mean and ugly and wicked and I eat little girls!"


"Ooo!" cried Anna, delighted. "That's a fine start to a story! Tell me the rest!"

The miserable man pulled at his hair and came splashing toward the shore. He said, "I have sworn an oath to destroy all that is beautiful!" And so saying, he picked Anna up and held her over his head, and threw her far out into the middle of the awful lake.

He burst up out of the water, beneath the light of day for the first time in untold years. He groaned and moaned and complained, shouting, "Stop it! Stop it!" with his hands over his ears.

Anna made a huge splash, and where she landed the water became clear. She giggled and swam about, marveling at how the blackness and stink drifted away from the strokes of her arms. In an ever-widening circle, the lake became purified by the ripples that grew away from Anna's body. The miserable man tried to leap out of the water, but he was too slow and the clean, clear liquid touched the hem of his robe. Cleanliness engulfed him. His dark raiment turned to white linen; his sooted, sallow face became pink and healthy. He covered his face with his hands, but saw to his horror that they were uncalloused and smooth hands. He tried to scream, but it came out a melody.

Anna had swum ashore and clambered onto the bank. She told the miserable man she was sorry she had spoiled his cabbage soup, but promised to bring him some of her mother's. That did not seem to cheer him. She left the miserable man there alone, knowing she must return home before her mother worried too much. Only once did she look back, and wondered why even then the man looked miserable and sad and funny like her grandfather's scarecrow. She guessed he was miserable for a reason.

But she never knew why. 

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*[Anna and the Miserable Man are both the same person, seeing double. The person is me, of course. I simply cannot figure out if everything is that ugly or everything is that beautiful—I'm convinced there is no in between, it has to be both at once or one or the other, but no happy medium; nothing is blah, it is either very beautiful or very ugly or both at once, never plain. Those who see ugliness in everything are absolutely correct. And those who see beauty in everything ugly are correct as well. I haven't figured out how to make the latter appear in everything always—sometimes it seems the cultural myths are set up to help us see only the ugliness.]*

—JASJ

*JESSICA*

## THE BROODING ICARUS

There is a prophecy that binds me  
to stone wings, to nothing but falling.

'A little longer you might have stayed,'  
said the Sand Man, ogre in his castle,  
over his head when under water.  
'Your choice might have been different.'  
What was my choice?  
Did I choose what I am?

If I write only about men,  
you might believe me.  
If you believe me,  
you won't read me.  
Is it that simple then?  
'Carry me unto my hazy dreams, Sand Man.'  
'I can only take you there. You  
must find your own way back.'

Don't ever love one of clouds;  
She smiled down at me, and I...  
I tried to fly to her with my stone wings.  
I felt that nothing could cause me to falter.  
Nothing could cause me to fall.  
But I faltered and fell with my wings,  
touched earth not half hard enough to  
give me...  
something. My senses. I am lost.

It is only in dreams that I name myself.  
But I must know that name to be true,  
and I can never bring it from that hazy memory.

'Sand Man, take me back!  
Sand Man, oh please, take me back!'  
He is silent, but I know he's listening.

Given the chance I will be woman.  
Men just can't understand that which  
women just can't understand.  
I want to misunderstand that way.  
I want to see you from your point of view  
not as a lover a rapist a father,  
but as indifferent observer.  
One who can feel no clutch at his sex  
One who can fall through those hazy clouds.  
One who can fall forever.  
But that is not man or woman!  
It is falling!  
It is my stone wings!

I loved one of clouds, I loved!  
And now I'm falling.

Neil Kvern  
January 31, 1978



# PARADISE

**ANITA** stood at the great pearly gates, gnawing on her fingernails. Had she been one to criticize the Lord she might have found fault now: the gold appeared to be peeling off in parts. It reminded her of some jewelry she'd had once, but no, impossible, that had been gold plated.

She pressed the buzzer again and finally a man in a bright pink shirt came to open the gate.

"Well, dahling," he lilted, "they really caught you at an inopportune time, didn't they? With your panth down, you might thay. Mutht be having quite a good laugh back on earth."

Thinking that even here good servants were hard to come by, she said in her most Christian tone of voice, "I beg your pardon! I am Anita Bryant. I believe I am expected."

Hearing this, he looked startled. "You mean to thay," he lisped, "you really are an Anita? You're not a queen?"

Flattered, she replied, "No. America doesn't have queens; we have presidents. I'm Mrs. Bryant, here to see the Lord Jesus Christ."

At this he looked even more startled. "But thath me!" he exclaimed, adding, "Although I much prefer to be called Gaylord, if you don't mind."

Unable to believe her eyes or ears, Anita assumed the only thing she could under the circumstances, that like mental institutions with their Napoleons, heaven was full of imposter JCs. She felt an overwhelming rush of warmth surging all the way down to her—well, never mind. What a wonderful place this must be to allow these poor souls their delusions. Any nervousness she'd felt about having claimed to be God's representative on earth vanished. Clearly he wouldn't mind.

Much more kindly she again addressed the young man: "May I speak to your Father, then?"

He looked relieved. "Oh, you mean God," he said.

"Yes," she said, disapproving of his casual attitude, but relieved to be at last getting somewhere with this queer young man.

"Oh, yeth, thertainly." Turning his head, he shouted, "Hey, Godfrey!"

At that Anita felt faint but it wasn't until God made his naked entrance that she actually fainted. She came to a few minutes later mumbling, "Good Lord."

"Yeth?" said the young man, bending over her concernedly.

"Oh my God!" she then shrieked.

"Yes," intoned a deep voice. And Anita came face to face with her creator. God was a middle-aged paunchy black man with a big pleasant grin on his face.

Waking up again later, she was calmed down enough to listen to explanations. "You see," God was saying, "while we don't want to kick you out if you really want to stay, we really feel that this isn't what you had in mind. We don't get many, er, women here and we feel you'd be happier with your own kind. So if you don't mind, we'll send you on to Mary. She'll take care of you." At that, Gaylord flashed Godfrey a leering grin.

Anita didn't really notice the grin, as she was too busy trying to grasp the implications. Separate heavens for women and men? She could see why, though, if God was going to be strutting around with nothing on. Glancing away from God she couldn't help but think of a vile line she'd heard once, about the Almighty Penis in the Sky....

Nevertheless, she wasn't going to take this lying down. She sat up, sticking her lower lip out at the same time. This was the time for decisive action.

"But, God," she whined. "I thought we were supposed to get wings and a halo when we got to heaven." Just because they'd let old traditions die here, it didn't mean the real heaven would have done so. And she was determined to arrive in style. She wasn't going to be made to look foolish again.

Godfrey looked taken aback. And well he should, Anita was thinking: it was time for him to be put in his place.

"Well," began Godfrey, "I don't..."

Gaylord interrupted. "We only have men'th thizeth, but thome of our men are rather wimpy. I think we can find thomething to fit you. Jutht a minute." A while later he came back, dragging two big wooden slats, and some rope. "Here you go. The lateth dethign in angel wingth."

"But," Anita complained, lower lip again protruding, "that's not what they're supposed to look like."

"How do you know?" Gaylord asked.

"Well, in the pictures..."

"Those weren't photographs you know, dahling. Anyhow, we changed the dethign. The old modelth kept ripping—and they have to last a long time. Only one pair ithued. Do you want them or not?"

"Oh, all right," Anita hastily replied.

"Okay, armth up." He slapped the boards on top of her arms, strapping them on with ropes. "There!" Gaylord said. "You're all thet."

But Anita wasn't budging. "Where's my halo?"

He seemed rather put upon, but so was she. He left, returning with a beanie complete with propellers. He stuck it on her head. "Jutht push the button when you want the proptth to thpin. It'th motorized. Now, off you go."

"But where is heaven?" Anita asked.

For the first time in a while, God spoke. And God said, "When you leave the gate, take a sharp left, then right at the first gas station, right again at the stop sign. And it's right there; you can't miss it. There are big dobermans at the entrance." All of this God said kindly, and Anita was feeling better. But then Gaylord, whom she had grown to detest, butted in:

"Jutht tell them we thent you."

God gave him a severe look and spoke again.

"Better not," he said. And when Anita was gone, Gaylord turned to God and God turned to Gaylord and Gaylord said unto God, "That was good."

###

Anita did all that she had been told and soon came to the gates of heaven, again. The dogs growled.

# CROSSED

SHERI L. FILE

But Anita wasn't afraid. She reached over and whopped one on the nose with one of her wooden wings.

"Hey, whatcha doin' with my dog," a feminine voice said. Anita looked and didn't like what she saw. Leaning on a crumbling picket fence was a woman. Or Anita guessed it was a woman. The hair was short, without even any hair spray to puff it up and give it some style. The face was tan, but it didn't look good. There wasn't any makeup on it. That was its natural color. The eyes looked bald without one-inch eyelashes glued on like Anita had.

The woman was wearing jeans and a plaid shirt like Anita's husband wore when he wanted to be comfortable. What was wrong with the woman? Didn't she know how ridiculous she looked? But Anita forced herself to be sweet. After all, this was her last chance; if men's heaven and then women's heaven didn't want her, where would she go?

"God sent me," she said, remembering too late he'd told her not to say that.

Immediately the confusion on the woman's face cleared. "Oh, that's what you are. Pretty funny. You guys really have a sense of humor."

"No, no, you don't understand. I'm to live here." Anita was whimpering, getting scared. The dogs looked concerned.

"Oh, no you don't. Enough's enough. You can go along home now, son."

At the condescending tone, Anita livened up. How dare this young upstart! But on closer examination she saw the woman was older than herself. But why the "son"? Anita's face changed color—naturally for a change—as it dawned on her that the woman thought she was a man dressed up like a woman. And then she remembered what Gaylord had said in the beginning. They both thought she was one of those horrible sick men who wear women's underwear and things. It was too much! Anita passed out for the third time that day—but this time her wooden wings worked as crutches and held her up. The props of her halo were still spinning, causing fresh air to blow into her face, so she wasn't able to stay out as long as she wanted.

When she came to she was still outside the gate. The woman was regarding her in an interested manner.

"Say, what are those things?" she asked, indicating the wooden wings.

Anita replied indignantly, "These are my wings. Latest design." Then, remembering that she had to prove herself to be a woman, she decided to soften her approach. On cue, she began to cry. There now, they'd see she was the weaker sex and let her in.

The woman continued to regard her, although less interested than she had been. The tears dried up. "God damn it! Let me in!" Anita shrieked.

"That's better. Come on in," her tormentor said, stepping over the white picket fence. Anita waited for the other woman to open the gate for her. When she didn't, Anita opened it herself.

"Okay: first I guess you'll want to wash up, get all that dirt off your face. You've got some funny black moss in your eyes. Would you like me to unstrap those boards so you can use your arms?"

"You mean nobody gets wings here?" Anita asked.

"No. We've done away with things like that. Confine the body too much. This is a reformed heaven."

Anita thought about that, deciding it would be all right. There were reformed churches, she knew, although she preferred good old fundamentalism.

After her bath Anita went in search of her clothes but found instead a pair of pants, a loose shirt, and a pair of boots.

"Where are my clothes!" she yelled at the top of her lungs. She was going to have to set these women straight! "Where's my girdle!" she yelled again through the empty room.

A woman appeared who looked just like the last one, as far as Anita could tell. Without hairdye and different shades of eye shadow, how could they tell each other apart?

The woman was dangling a padded harness, Anita's brassiere in fact. "Is this what you're screaming about?" the woman asked.

"No, but give it to me." She snatched it from the other woman.

"Well, what is it you want? A girdle? What's that?"

Anita was dumbstruck to find a woman so ignorant. "Why, it's clothing."

"But you have clothing right there."

"I want my girdle. It's to hold my stomach in."

The woman got a horrified look on her face. "Your stomach falls out?"

"No, the fat. To hold the fat in, and make me trim."

"You don't look fat, but if you are, why don't you quit eating so much?"

Anita was exasperated. "Besides I need it to hold up my nylons."

"What are they?"

"They're to make my legs look nice and smooth and tan."

"But, if you would quit covering them, your legs would probably get a real tan."

Anita sighed and gave up for the time being. "Let me see the Virgin Mary."

"The what merry?"

"The Virgin Mary!"

"What does that mean?"

Anita blushed, but explained. She felt sorry for this ignorant woman. "Virgin is a woman who's never been touched by a man."

"But we don't have any men here."

Anita stepped back, calmed herself down and tried again. "I would like very much to see Mary the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, please, thank you."

The woman's mouth had fallen open and she giggled. "Well, why didn't you say so, ma'am, yes, ma'am, right this way ma'am."

They went outdoors and through some fields. They came upon a group of women working among the crops. Her guide called, "Hey, Mary! This lady," she giggled again, "wants to talk to you."

Anita clenched her teeth and forced a smile. Well, the woman did look old enough at any rate.

# THE LUCK OF BRINN'S FIVE

BY CHERRY WILDER



a  
review

BY  
LAURENCE GOLD

"I will tell how we found our Luck, the great Luck of Brin's Five, and how, being found, it led us on to good fortune beyond all dream-spinning." So begins this enchanting tale, in the words of Dorn Brinroyan of the family, Brin's Five. The "Luck" is Scott Gale, who has come to the planet Torin as a member of an Earthly biosurvey team, and who has accidentally crashed a scout ship in the mountains where Dorn and his family live. Taken into this family, he soon becomes the object of a massive and ill-intentioned search, guided by the Great Elder, "Strangler Tiath", and his minions; Brin's Five must flee for their lives and at the same time search for their Luck's scout ship, with which he hopes to re-gain contact with the rest of his biosurvey team.

This is a novel of high adventure, with a skillfully worked plot winding in and out of minor encounters. The narrative is by no means rambling, but rather sinuous, and is designed to give the reader a vivid impression of the world of Torin and the society to be found upon it. From the very beginning, in which the non-human narrator describes the newly arrived Scott, and then introspectively tries to imagine what his own familiar and homey surroundings look like to this visitor of a different race, through the entire journey, we are given a detailed picture (albeit one which is limited to the direct experience of Dorn) of his world and his people; and they are very real. Conversation is natural and unstrained. Ordinary people do not talk like space-opera heroes or even like caricatures of ordinary people, nor do their everyday pursuits take on a heroic tinge to heighten the drama. Rather, we are shown the quiet dignity of the weavers whom Scott Gale joins, and the honor of three ancient scow-sailors, and we are told of one messenger that his "family have to do with a bean plot in Nedlor." The result of this restrained writing is that the reader becomes quickly and thoroughly involved in the lives of these all-too-believable people, and has a sense of living through the experience.

Among the novel insights which this book offers is the picture of a fairly advanced culture which does almost entirely without metals. We are not told whether this is due solely to customs and prejudices or whether this planet is metal-poor, but we are shown how much can be accomplished with stone and wood,

## PARADISE CROSSED/FILE continued

Her breasts were hanging, as were many of the others', Anita couldn't help but noticing. Why couldn't people keep themselves decently covered? Anita felt smug about it, though. That's what they got for not wearing bras.

The older woman was staring up at her. "New here, eh? Well, do you want to start work now or later?"

"What!" Anita shrieked. "Do you think I worked so hard doing the Lord's work all those years only to reach my heavenly home and work some more?" In her anger she was stuttering.

The woman waited for Anita to calm down, then said evenly, "This is a socialist state. We all do several hours of work a day. And I don't know what all this 'Lord's Work' crap is, but you won't get by with doing that here. We're atheists, and there is no 'Lord's Work' to be done. Now: you can either work or leave."

Anita turned white as a Kluxer's sheet. "If you think I'm going to live with a bunch of commie

pinko atheists, you're crazy! Call me a cab!"

###

Anita stepped outside the gates feeling a little put out. Behind her the rickety white picket fence's gate squeaked to a close as one of the women gatekeepers kicked it shut with her little toe, all the while committing abominations upon the person of the other gatekeeper. Anita shuddered at the close call and instinctively bowed down.

"Thank you, Jesus, for saving me."

Just then a big white Grand Prix drove into the circular driveway. Anita sighed contentedly; a little flashy, perhaps, but then the minister of the little congregation she used to attend had had a bright red one. After all, it wasn't the color of one's car that mattered...the big white one pulled up, interrupting her thoughts.

The passenger door was pushed open and a rough masculine voice grunted, "Get in." Again she thanked Jesus as she looked at the driver of the car. It was a real honest-to-God virile-looking man—not a rough-sounding woman or a little pansy of a man. Perhaps



glass and cloth, leather and clay. Sharpened shells serve for knives; a "silkbeam" is apparently a cloth-and-wood camera of sorts; tall spires of wood and stone and glass rise in the city of Rintoul; even the panes of stained glass windows are set in rims of hardened rope. When we do encounter metal "engines", as a steam-driven ship or (just barely believable) a steam-powered biplane, the shock of recognition serves to remind us how quickly we have come to accept the scarcity of metals in somewhat the same manner that reading *Dune* could leave one disbelieving in rivers and lakes.

The idioms of speech also draw us into this other culture, one in which cloth is an important measure of wealth. Ancients "follow the old threads"—although they may sometimes "weave those threads in their own patterns"; and if they do, then it is best to try to "avoid their webs and fly to the skein of one's own choosing." Best of all are the gender-neutral names and titles and pronouns which have evolved in a non-sexist society. The people (Moruians, as they call themselves) are often left wondering about the sex of someone they have met, for one cannot distinguish by rank or title or profession, or even by clothing, except in the case of vented robes worn by women carrying children in their pouches. Oh yes: the Moruians are marsupials (more or less), and when this becomes clear it explains the initial puzzlement of the people at Scott's navel.

This last touch is one which sets Cherry Wilder's writing apart from that of American authors, although her fine handling of language and fertile imagination certainly set her work above that of most authors, of whatever nationality. For she is originally from New Zealand, and her native land has (she readily admits) served to inspire many of the creatures and much of the scenery which she describes. Mind you, she is not describing New Zealand: rather, her background leads her to imagine a different un-Earthly world than would be conceived by someone from elsewhere on the globe. The difference is refreshing.

There is room for much, much more good reading about Torin and its inhabitants, and the ending of this story leads one to hope that we may indeed hear more from Cherry Wilder about Brin's Five. Her next book is eagerly awaited, and when it does come out, well, won't that be a three-comet year? ☞



### Grebe Song

This is my true voice,  
whistling purity to the wind;  
this is me, I mourn  
this is me, I giggle,  
I am the only true grebe in the world  
and this is my only true voice . . . .  
the only one that proves me to me  
the only one that parts the tules  
so I can see the open water.  
I am the only true grebe in the world  
and this is my voice.

Terry Garey, 1977

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this meant she was getting closer to the real heaven.

The man was big and had on the right clothes and wore his hair the way God had meant it to be: parted down the left side and combed back away from the forehead with, mind you, only a minimal amount of Vitalis. The sideburns were perfect, being only an inch in length. There was a moustache and a small goatee that at first turned her stomach, but she reminded herself that times were changing and tried to overlook it. His suit was brown, his shirt white, unlike that character she'd met before, who'd had on a perfectly passable suit but had given himself away by wearing a flaming pink shirt with it. Discreetly she turned to look at the tie. No naked anything on it, just stripes. Next she looked at his feet and was a little startled. Black shoes. Oh well, probably he didn't have a wife to color coordinate for him, and men just weren't very good at those kinds of things, she knew. In pictures of Jesus as he really was, in paintings back on earth, she'd noticed that even he wore belts that didn't match his...dress came back to mind, but she quickly

suppressed the thought. One had to be constantly on guard against the devil's intrusions.

All in all, this was a fine man. The only thing that was the least bit unusual about him was that his head was lumpy. She could clearly see two rather large protrusions with hair matted over them. But his face definitely had character. The aggressive slung-out jaw indicated a real man who would take care of her in any situation, combined with the slight sneer proving that he knew his and her place in life. The heavy overhanging brow was that of a thinker, although, heaven forbid, not an intellectual. The nose: normal. The eyes weren't quite as wide set as her husband's or Pat Boone's, but then Dick Nixon's had been on the small and squinty side and you certainly could trust him.

Driving through the gates, opened for them by a man looking exactly like Godfrey except for being younger and thinner, Anita relaxed for the first time that day. She sank down into the seat of the big white Grand Prix, sighed, and began humming the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." At last she was home. ☞

# Susan Wood

DISCUSSING—



**doug barbour**

[This essay is an edited form of a longer article first submitted to Locus. The longer essay reviewed the SF anthology 2076: The American Tricentennial, edited by Edward Bryant. Briefly (according to Susan), "Susan didn't like many of the stories, hated the Vardeman, praised some of the women's stuff [in particular the Emshwiller and Piercy stories], then launched into a praise of 'Aztecs'." That praise follows. —JEANNE GOMOLL]

Vonda McIntyre's "Aztecs" is the best science-fiction novella (or possibly novelette) I've encountered in 1977. Unfortunately, you probably won't be able to read it.\*

The story appeared in 2076: The American Tricentennial, an anthology of original material edited by Ed Bryant, published by Pyramid in April 1977 (255 pages, \$1.95, LC:77-74713). Uncle Sam, on the cover, has stylized circuitry where his face should be... but the year ended for Uncle Sam, future styling or no, on December 31, 1976. The book, limited by its very topicality perhaps, has received little or no distribution; McIntyre couldn't find a single copy in her home city, Seattle, where her story is set a hundred years from now. 15 visions of the (United States of) American future—11 original stories, one speculative essay, an excerpt from a novel, and four poems—have simply vanished. Ironic, isn't it?

\*Reviewer's addendum: I was just talking to Vonda, who just received a contract for reprint rights in Terry Carr's *Best Science Fiction of the Year #7* (hardback and paperback). The "editor with impeccable taste" must've been reading over my shoulder...

Vonda McIntyre's "Aztecs" is more than just the best story in 2076: *The American Tricentennial* (ed. Edward Bryant, Pyramid Books, 1976, \$1.95); it is one of the most fully realized science-fiction stories of the past year. Now I, who tend to prefer SF, that open-ended term, said "science fiction" back there for a reason. McIntyre's story stands or falls by the centrality of the "science" therein. A similar story could be written as fantasy or, perhaps, even present day "realism", but it would not really be the same; its premises would be of a different order of imagination. Of course, "Aztecs" is not simply a science fiction story, it is an SF story of great emotional power and a really good example of how SF works as metaphor.

"She gave up her heart quite willingly." This, the first sentence, is the story: beginnings (not in plotted time but in the language) are important. How willingly "quite willingly" finally is is the burden of the rest of the tale. For Laenea has asked to be cut off from "a basic human rhythm" in order that she might fly awake among the stars. "'She has the need'" to be a starship pilot, as one of the first-generation pilots puts it later, but, interestingly, this is not the story of her first trip as a pilot, nor are we told of the glories of "transit" except for one short passage: "She could not, of course, imagine transit, for it was beyond imagination. Language or mind was insufficient. Transit had never been described." Pilots never talk about it, except perhaps to each other, and, as Laenea discovers, becoming a full member of their small community—a community cut off from the rest of humanity by more than the loss of a heart—includes that first transit. So "Aztecs" is not a rite-of-passage story in the usual sense that we often find in SF: the young apprentice on her first flight, learning the ropes from the older, experienced crew. But then Laenea has been "crew", and "crew", time-bound by their hearts, must "sleep" during transit. Yet it is a rite-of-passage, for during the story Laenea learns the true meaning of what she has done and something of the human cost she had not reckoned with.

I am of course writing this for those who have read the story, for what I want to talk about is not

The real excitement in *2070* comes from "Aztecs". "She gave up her heart quite willingly", writes McIntyre, introducing Laenea Trevelyan. She is a space-ship crew member who renounces the mini-death of drugged transit, renounces too her human mortality. Then, having given up her organic heart for a pump, her natural biorhythms for conscious control of all her body's functions, she must give up her mortal humanity. The physical changes serve brilliantly as a metaphor, when Laenea loses her heart too late, to a young man who worships her, who has followed his ministering angel out into space.

On one level, McIntyre's "Aztecs" is stunningly effective science fiction. It extrapolates from two possibilities, the developments of space travel and of medical technology, to explore the human results in the pilots who have total control of their bodies, total freedom from the rhythms of blood, earth, and time. The pilot and crew societies are convincingly drawn, as are the physical locales, notably an underwater port/city.

On another level, "Aztecs" is stunningly effective science fiction. It extrapolates from the timeless tendency to reach out, explore, seek control over the unknown and freedom from time and mortality, to explore the human results in a woman who willingly cuts herself off from human limitations—and humankind. It's a story about Laenea, who gives up her heart.

"what happens" but how what happens happens. For example, there are no expository lumps as such in the story, yet an immense amount of contextual information concerning this future is provided. Some of it is ordinary description: the space port off Seattle slowly takes on solidity as the characters move through it: it assumes a character of its own, as any major city will, yet it is only ("only!") an imagined city, an SF vision of a possible future, a totally manufactured "place" where nevertheless a couple can "walk to the point." More important is the way Laenea's continuing acclimatization to her mechanical heart is handled. Nearly every time it is mentioned, another bit of bio-/techno-logical information about it and the complexities of operating it is added. Yet, as the following passage demonstrates, such expositions appear as part of the narrative movement of "Aztecs".

All three pilots laughed together. Laenea felt light, dizzy; excitement pumped adrenalin through her body. She was hot and she could feel tiny beads of perspiration gather on her forehead, just at the hairline.

Quite suddenly the constant dull ache in her chest became a wrenching pain, as though her new heart were ripped from her, like the old. She could not breathe. She hunched forward, struggling for air, oblivious to the pilots and all the beautiful surroundings. Each time she tried to draw in a breath, the pain drove it out again.

Slowly Miikala's easy voice slipped beyond her panic, and Ramona-Teresa's hands steadied her.

"Relax, relax, remember your training..."

Yes: decrease the blood-flow, open up the arteries, dilate all the tiny capillaries, feel the involuntary muscles responding to voluntary control. Slow the pump....

"It's all right," Ramona-Teresa said. "The adrenalin works as well as ever. We all have to learn more control of that than they think they need to teach us."

Even this early in the story, we have already been sufficiently engaged by Laenea as a person that we respond in this scene to the tension, the potential danger to her, rather than to the information. In

"Aztecs" is, moreover, a story told in clear, effective language that sometimes flashes into brilliance:

"Tests and questions and examinations devoured several days in chunks and nibbles."

"Her face laughed well but would not do for coyness."

"Laenea stands above 3 former friends, crew whom she had kissed goodbye. Crew always kissed goodbye, for they slept through their voyages without any certainty they would wake again. They lived in the cruel childhood prayer: 'If I should die before I wake...'"

"Laenea is now free... to watch over their drugged sleep, their possible death. Invited, she moves (literally, symbolically) down to their level, to discover unwanted distance remains. "Each of them was next to the other: Laenea was beside none of them."

"Aztecs" does involve some scientific fictional fudging with its space travel, which apparently involves no time-displacement, even though to wake in transit means death from old age, the "body bound to normal time and normal space." Still, I'm willing to accept the mystery of transit, given the convincing portrait of the woman who wins her right to experience it. Laenea is convincing, and unforgettable.

"Aztecs" is an impressive SF story. I hope someone reprints it in a "best of the year" anthology, so you can read it too.

fact, the information is very important not simply because it tells us a bit more about the bio-/technological nature of the change Laenea has undergone but because it subtly prepares us for similar moments of adrenalin-charged loss of control later when she makes love with Radu. At which point, Ramona-Teresa's final comment takes on a near tragic finality for Laenea.

"Aztecs" is, of course, a love story of sorts, which concentrates on the developing relationship between Laenea and Radu Draevl of the planet Twilight. I don't want to go on about characterization; suffice it to say that it is solid throughout and that both Laenea and Radu emerge as three-dimensional characters. His reserve—neatly made both a personal and a cultural characteristic, for we learn a fair amount about his world through him, and through Laenea's memories of it—is matched by his intelligence and courage. Yet he stands in plain contrast to Laenea in her great, indeed passionate (She likes the "intrusive energy [and] Dionysian flavor" of "her favorite room in Kathell's apartment".) "need" to live fully, which finally for her is to be a pilot.

Of course, Laenea, as protagonist, is the character we come to know best: she is strong, thoughtful, committed, yet also capable of great giving, both emotionally and imaginatively. This is evident for example when Radu tells her why he loves her and she responds to him now, not simply to the boy whose life she long ago helped to save.

Again, although his explanation is part of the emotional development of the story, it carries, subliminally as it were, some of the scientific development within it. He is now old enough to be her lover because she has made so many trips as "crew" since she visited Twilight and time-dilation aboard the starships has slowed her aging. Nothing is said of this; yet it is the reason they can meet as they do. Vonda McIntyre is of that generation of SF writers for whom it is utterly natural to assume great scientific and technological changes in order to tell a story about people first and foremost.

I'll just add here that I think McIntyre has imagined a basically positive future in this story: the ways in which Laenea uses voice and touch to connect with other people is but one sign, albeit a

"Screwtop" by Vonda N. McIntyre, one of three novellas in *The Crystal Ship*, edited by Robert Silverberg, Pocket Books, 1977.

In "Screwtop", Kylis, a spaceport rat, comes to accept the value of trust and vulnerability. McIntyre writes of a woman, independent and self-sufficient since childhood, who has learned to survive as a stowaway from planet to planet. Kylis has been arrested on Redsun, where deviants from the highly controlled society are sentenced to work camps. Many die of disease or in accidents, clearing the fern forest and drilling the shafts for construction of a geothermal power station. Attempts at escape lead to death in the volcanic mountains or in the deadly marsh that surrounds the sites.

When Gryf arrives, he somehow broaches her defenses of solitude and suspicion. He is tetraparental, genetically engineered for high intelligence and intended to function as part of a group. When he asserted his individual freedom, he was sentenced to the camp until he should decide to return docilely to his team. Kylis allies herself to his resistance. When Gryf comes to the aid of Jason, so obviously ill-equipped to survive in the camp, Kylis experiences loneliness, until she shares Gryf's respect for him. Jason is an intellectual and an idealist, a philosopher of freedom and personal responsibility who would never be released if the authorities of Redsun knew his identity.

They care for each other, even though that care makes each vulnerable. Their bonding is part of their resistance to authoritarian Redsun. When Kylis extends her trust to Miria and confides in her, she thereafter



## AZTECS/BARBOR CONTINUED

most important one, of the relaxed social and cultural modes of being this future allows. On the other hand, the existence of pilots and even crew means that a particular kind of elitist "class" structure has emerged within this civilization, and Kathell's wealth indicates that it is in some way or another a civilization in which personal riches still count, that is, some kind of capitalist economy.

Shortly after she has met Radu, while he is still simply a mysterious stranger to her, Laenea is called an "Aztec" at Kathell's party. She refuses to accept the classification: "'The Aztecs sacrificed their captives' hearts,' Laenea said. 'We don't feel we've made a sacrifice.'" Yet the story is titled "Aztecs". Why? Because she is about to learn that indeed a sacrifice—of the heart—is necessary? This is what I mean about SF as metaphor: the scientific center of the story is the heart operation; the loss of her human heart in that operation and its replacement by a machine makes her a pilot, makes her, as she doesn't yet fully realize, a different kind of human, something new and utterly changed. When Ramona-Teresa finds her with Radu, the older pilot tries to warn her but Laenea won't listen to her. She must learn this (bitter?) lesson on her own, but then such behavior is Laenea, a person who can say that crew and pilots are different before they become crew or pilots, and who doesn't yet believe that there is an even greater distance between pilots and crew that between crew and ordinary people. She learns this lesson in love. Especially in love-making. At first she thinks the changes in their love-making from what she's known before is due to the fact that she cares for Radu more than for any other partner,

but the suddenness of her climax and her brief inability to breath suggest it has to do with her change. Then, in sleep, she loses control of her heart, a loss of control which is biomechanical within the realistic context of the story yet beautifully metaphorical as well.

Later, after another surprising bout of love-making, they sleep, and two occurrences teach them that perhaps there are extremely compelling reasons, reasons almost of life and death, which force pilots to keep apart from the rest of humanity. First she wakes up from their embrace with a sense of something wrong. "The beat of a heart pounded through her." She can't stand this and moves "quietly away from him, away from the sound of his pulse, for it formed the links of a chain she had worked hard and wished long to break." The metaphor here beautifully encapsulates her search for freedom, which was for her to become a pilot, yet this freedom, she now discovers, is purchased at a higher cost than she had previously reckoned on. This becomes especially clear when Radu tells her what his terrible nightmare was about:

Her system and that of any normal human being would no longer mesh. The change in her was too disturbing, on psychological and subliminal levels, while normal biorhythms were so compelling that they interfered with and would eventually destroy her new biological integrity. She would not have believed those facts before now.

In some ways this is the emotional climax of the story, yet the language here is scientific, cool and precise. But, of course, this passage occurs in the midst of a highly emotional confrontation, of the two of them



has reason to suspect her of being a spy. The camp's supervisor, known only as "the Lizard", enjoys tormenting the prisoners. Instructed to break Gryf's resistance, he desires both to test the limits of Kylis's strength and to possess it. He cannot comprehend the extent of her loyalty to Gryf; she cannot and will not betray herself while supporting him.

A novella may be called feminist if the central character is a woman who possesses strengths and abilities which allow a self-determining woman to survive. Kylis need not depend on anyone. Capable of defending herself from physical threat, she is also adept at certain physical and mental disciplines. She may enter a trance state to calm herself and can prevent conception at will. Kylis suffers sensory deprivation and refuses an offer of preferential treatment without yielding. Even the love of men does not weaken her. Gryf, Jason, and finally Miria help her to learn that trust and love need not be incompatible with self-determination, and that she can endure loneliness.

The issues of freedom and personal responsibility are central to "Screwtop". Although Kylis, Gryf, and Jason resist the brutal persuasion of the camp, there is no assurance that they, or Miria, will "live happily ever after". McIntyre does allow us to hope they will survive.

In an essay about culture ("Toward a Womanvision", *Amazon Quarterly*, Vol. 2 Issue 2), Laurel Galana links feminist writing with hope—not a "saccharine optimism", but a belief that change is possible. Writing of despair and ugliness, as Vonda McIntyre does, in such a way as not to perpetuate them, permits us a vision of successful resistance and growth.

with precisely "those facts."

Radu's courage emerges when he tries to apply to be a pilot, but as earlier incidents—his time-sense in particular—have implied, it is humanly impossible for him. So they make love "a third, final, desperate time, exhausting themselves against each other beside the cold blue sea." This is fine writing, the verb and preposition suggesting the inevitable clash they have discovered exists between them and the final phrase allusively and romantically calling up images of mythic doomed unions between mermaids and men, silkies and men, and others.... So he leaves her as he must and she goes off to join the pilots "to live apart with them and never tell their secrets." Apart: that is the burden of this story, the burden of that first sentence and all that followed; Laenea was pulled apart to lose her heart and pulled apart again, apart from a possible love, to learn the lesson of her choice and its finality.

Without using words like "great" or "masterpiece", I would still like to suggest that "Aztecs", along with last year's "Screwtop" and the Nebula-winning "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand", shows Vonda McIntyre to be an SF writer of real skill and emotional depth. The protagonists of these three stories are women, yet the most important feminist point to make about them is that this fact is not especially important within the cultural context of the stories. McIntyre is one of the SF authors who is imagining non-sexist futures for us and for that, as well as the fact that her stories are moving, complex tales of people we would want to know, we can be grateful.

I'd like to live forever in sequoia tunnels,  
 saving the oil of my skin from sun.  
 Ocean still whispers its lives to me,  
 crabs, mussels, seagulls send  
 along the evening air scents of salt.

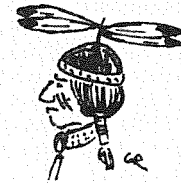
Now I'm making baskets, in among the  
 redwoods,  
 scraping down white roots, soaking  
 long grasses overnight.  
 I stay close to the ground  
 making baskets for acorns,  
 baskets for thoughts, baskets  
 with redbud.  
 Didn't know I could make baskets  
 with these webbed hands.

Terry Garey

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#### THE BEANIE IN EARLY SOCIETY: PART 6

Evidence of beanies in the New World reinforces theories of broader contact than normally proposed. Were they introduced by Vikings? Shown: War Beanie of the Norskie Indians of upper Minnesota. Model: Ole Svensson, tribal chief.



#### THE BEANIE IN EARLY SOCIETY: PART 7

The indefatigable Irish have proposed that St. Brendan may have introduced a beanie similar to that shown into the new world on his controversial coracle voyage. Clerical headgear is shown by comparison.



Common  
 Cardinal's  
 Hat.



**ADRIENNE** Rich writes of "the power of art to create connections...to transform the unnameable into something palpable, sensuous, visible, audible, to take our own unexpressed thoughts and desires and fling them with clarity and coherence on the wall, a screen, a sheet of paper, or against the long silence of history—this power has been instinctively recognized by women as a key to our deepest political problem: our deprivation of the power to name...." In the literature of science fiction, to grasp the power to name amounts to grasping the power to name our future, to find its shape and mold its elements and imprint ourselves and our needs in its form. In this chaotic time of change, we find ourselves searching for radically different lives, lives that haven't existed (or are no longer recalled), lives other than the traditional ones that we have been taught to see as our only reasonable expectations. We look not only for the power to name ourselves, we look also for new names.

Among the searchers for new names is Monique Wittig, who stages her dreams using as characters the writers of a mythical community journal. Ursula Le Guin's worlds are thought-experiments, metaphors causing us to realize that there are alternatives, that change is possible. Marge Piercy and Joanna Russ point out the value of our anger and the desperate need to act. Alice Sheldon (James Tiptree Jr.) and Suzy McKee Charnas direct a beam of high-intensity light upon the implications of our culture's assumptions and show their horror through nightmarish extrapolations.

Among the list of prominent female authors who write of futures in which the relationship between the sexes is radically different from that which we experience belongs the name of Vonda N. McIntyre. This is not to generalize that women intrinsically write first as women, that a piece of art reflects firstly the sex of the artist. However, it does, I

think, reflect the very different realities experienced within our culture by the different sexes as a result of their socializations and expectations. Right now it is women who are most adversely affected by sexual mores, and it is primarily the women authors in the SF field who are responding to the situation through their fiction. Vonda McIntyre's fiction continues to grow in quality as an elegant response to the inequalities, absurdities, and degrading assumptions which form the texture of our lives.

In all of McIntyre's stories and novels, the major characters are strong, capable, and sensitive women. And they are not killed, raped, villainized, or required to lose in love directly as a result of those qualities. The girl in *The Exile Waiting* and the woman in "Aztecs" both escape the restraining ties of their home planets and free themselves to live autonomous, dynamic lives. Both Mischa of *Exile* and Laenea of "Aztecs" are their own rescuers;

# DREAMSNAKE

**one** can create a story in many ways. Science-fiction authors, probably because they are responsible for sketching an entire world as well as a story, usually sketch with bold and even strident strokes. A common technique involves the introduction of long passages of expository narrative interjected on the most transparent pretexts so that the social, economic, and cultural background for the story is provided. There is, however, a more subtle way to create a convincing SF story which is all the more effective as it assumes a certain amount of attention on the part of the reader since every detail is germane to the creation which is taking place in the mind of the reader. The overriding characteristic of this kind of SF is "understatement", and in *Dreamsnake*, as in her earlier *The Exile Waiting*, Vonda McIntyre has made excellent and expert use of this artful method of telling an SF story.

*Dreamsnake* is part of the story of the life of the healer Snake. Most people upon reading it will recognize the first chapter as it appeared, in short story form, under the title "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand". The more discerning reader will note the difference between the novel and the story, the subtle changes in this chapter that are carried out throughout the novel and that typify the characteristic which I find so interesting in McIntyre's writing. All excessive reference to gender has been removed from the novel, an interesting method on the writer's part for exploring reader expectations and reactions. This subtlety would be fascinating in itself, were it not for the other kinds of understatement that make up the fabric of *Dreamsnake*. I do not mean to say that the world of Snake, that McIntyre's sketch of her and of other characters, or that the plot itself are

so underplayed as to make this a low-key or uninteresting story. On the contrary, it is the very quality that excites me with regard to her prose style.

Snake's world is drawn in detail, though it is drawn as a matter of course in the telling of her story. The colonial nature of this planet; the hints of former wars and formerly easier communication between town, desert, and mountain cultures; the references to a now decayed interchange between off-worlders and the people of Snake's world—these references are scattered and minimal, and they are also part of the seeming everyday events of Snake's life. No character steps out of the narrative to explain, expostulate, or justify the status of the world of *Dreamsnake*. Yet that world is utterly believable.

Likewise the differences between the social structures in the novel and our own are no less startling or intriguing because the former are given out piecemeal as a part of the narrative progression. Partnerships for business, friendships, and for sexual purposes exist often in threes, with the sex of the partners less important than their skills and ability to satisfy mutual dependencies. Tribes and outposts, centers interspersed with wild areas, camps, migrations, and a de-emphasis of the sex of a person without the desexualization of the individual in the process—all of these incidentally reported attributes of Snake's environment tell the reader a lot about the possibilities for a non-sexist culture and even more about the specific culture within which Snake operates.

Yet a certain amount of the interest in *Dreamsnake* is undoubtedly engendered in relation to other adventure stories which are roughly of its kind.

no shining male knight must be depended upon to save the day. McIntyre's insights into the intricacies of human relationships in both "Screwtop" and "Aztecs" give incredible complexity and depth to the characters, both female and male, she has created. [See reviews in earlier pages of this issue of Janus.]

Characterization is, in fact, the element of McIntyre's writing which makes her stories such extraordinary works both in terms of entertainment and conception. Characterization is not an extraneous element "attached" to the "more important" SF texture of the story (the distracting, "clumsy" operation opposed by critics of the "New Wave"). Rather, characterization in McIntyre's stories is an organic component of the science fiction in her writing. McIntyre demonstrates that the way people are and how they interact in the future is an integral, important

JEANNE GOMOLL



• SNAKE •

JANICE BOGSTAD

For example, I have read innumerable stories in which a woman either waits for or goes chasing after an adventuring man with whom she is smitten. In McIntyre's latest novel, it is Snake, the talented, interesting, and committed woman who goes off to seek her fortune, and her potential lover Arevin is the young man who stays behind to wait for her. Only after he dreams of her repeatedly and after he is able to dispense with his responsibilities to family and tribe does he follow her on the pretext of explaining the death of her dreamsnake to the community of healers. This turnabout is more than refreshing because it is not of the classical type where either (1) an Amazon-woman is turned into a clinging vine by the masterful, conquering superhero, or (2) the male character is so weak as to be unreal. Arevin's final rescue of Snake and Melissa, which might have been both typical and trite, is mitigated by Snake's many successes. She solves the problems of the dreamsnake shortage, outwits a crazy pursuer, and saves Melissa a second time when it seems that Arevin has given her up for dead. Again the strength of the novel is its

part of imagining a future world. It is the inter-relationships between characters in *Dreamsnake* that have such incredible depth, cause so many "clicks" of realization, and in the end make McIntyre's latest work so excellent a novel.

Snake, a healer, is the protagonist of *Dreamsnake* (Houghton-Mifflin, 1978), which is set in a post-holocaust (ecological or war) world of many disparate and isolated communities and cultures. Among other deeds, Snake saves the life of a young boy, journeys alone across wastelands with her snakes (used as organic hypodermics), performs vital services in several communities, adopts a child, and discovers the alien secret of the dreamsnake. As demonstrated by the fact that various chapters have been published alone in *Analog*, as well as in an anthology, *Dreamsnake* can be seen to be essentially an episodic adventure story. The various episodes are not nightmarish extrapolations of, or even direct comments about, the inherent sexism of our present-day culture, as is the case of some current SF works. Rather, McIntyre comments indirectly by telling stories in which characters play roles and problems are resolved in ways that subtly clash with characterization and motives of stereotypically male-oriented and -dominated stories and folklore. In the first chapter (originally published as "Of Mist, and Grass, and Sand", *Analog*, Oct. 1973), for instance, a woman is featured as matriarch of the community Snake visits. In the second chapter, Arevin, a major male character, is seen caring for a child in a poignant scene, yearning after his lost love, unhappy that his commitments to the child and his family make it

DREAMSNAKE  
BY VONDA MCINTYRE  
HOUGHTON-MIFFLIN, 1978

capacity to tell a good story through understating the character's importance to the plot.

*Dreamsnake* shares another quality with *The Exile Waiting*. This is another kind of understatement that is really restraint. In both novels, and in McIntyre's short stories, otherwise negative characters are also treated sympathetically. *Dreamsnake's* villains—the dome-city hesiarch, North; the mayor of a mountain town called Mountainside; and the stablemaster, Ras, who was Melissa's tormentor—are portrayed as victims of their circumstances and as misguided individuals though the negative results of their actions are nonetheless disturbing for their impact on the main characters.

Finally, McIntyre has reflected some of the themes that are a part of a rising body of women's SF. For example, Joanna Russ pointed out a recurring theme, which I have since noted elsewhere, during a speech which she made at the December, 1977, Modern Languages Association Convention in Chicago. She described the theme of the 12-year-old girl which appears in *The Shattered Chain* by Marion Zimmer Bradley, in Russ's own *The Female Man*, in Suzy McKee Charnas's *Motherlines*, and even in an excellent juvenile SF novel by H. M. Hoover called *The Rains of Eridan*. Melissa may be only 10 but she is also similar to the girls in these books who must be rescued from situations which are immediately threatening to their personalities and provided with alternative environments in which they are allowed to realize their full potential.

Understatement is the quality of *Dreamsnake* which I find the most striking. By not overdrawing her characters, turning them into superpeople, or over-emphasizing the alienness of their setting, McIntyre

## DREAMSNAKE/GOMOLL continued

impossible for him to follow Snake. Another chapter, published in *Analog* (Feb. 1978) as "The Serpent's Death", portrays the relationship between three characters who are involved in a group marriage; one is a woman, one a man, and one is of ambiguous sex. The third person is named Merideth, and I assumed the person was a woman, but *Analog's* artist portrayed "her" with a beard. Meredith is a major character in this episode, without ever being explicitly labeled as either female or male.

Sex roles surprise and delight us with their unfamiliarity; assumptions are mockend and corrected; characters, no matter what sex, have all human options open to them. This is vividly suggested in McIntyre's choice of words to refer to her characters and their roles. Just as the absence of gender description in references to Merideth demonstrates the unimportance of that element in the love between the three partners, so too does McIntyre show the real irrelevance of sex in other roles and relationships. In all descriptions of "marriages" or emotional/living commitments between individuals, the contracts are referred to as "partnerships", the individuals as "partners". Furthermore, partners are referred to as the older or younger partner, rather than the less-often applicable male or female partner, when the need to distinguish occurs. The terms "husband" and "wife" are nowhere to be found in this novel. A daughter or a son is also a partner. With this change in words, the more important economic, emotional, and mutually supportive connections between members of a family are emphasized.

The very language augments the development of the ideas suggested in the novel; the word "partner", in fact, forms the core of the novel's theme. *Dreamsnake*, for me, has as its central theme the subject of relationships, the imagining of a future in which humans make important, necessary commitments to one another in a new way.

McIntyre's ability to write full, complex characters who interact with each other in full, complex relationships dramatically implements the thematic thrust of *Dreamsnake*, i.e., new families. Throughout the novel, in each of the episodes, we are told the story of a different kind of family, or partnership, each shown to be healthy or unhealthy, depending upon the degree to which its members are autonomous or enslaved by the other(s). In each episode, McIntyre offers a different perspective on how relationships are defined. At one point, when Arevin is despairing about his possible failure to truly love Snake, a woman tells him, "It's impossible to protect anyone completely without enslaving them."\* As I suggested

\*Here again, one of McIntyre's non-sexist (though "ungrammatical") usages, "them", is used as an unspecified generic.

## DREAMSNAKE/BOGSTAD continued

has gone a lot of SF one step better. Her understatement draws a reader into Snake's world all the more effectively because it does not call attention to this process or to the alienness of that world.

I must admit that I read the novel entirely through before I realized what was special about it: the impact of a very subtle style which allowed me to know a lot about Snake's physical world, her personality, and the social structures within which she operates. It is refreshing to find an SF novel where the characters seem like real people and where the plot is more than just a pretext for sending the character on a set of adventures. Though *Dreamsnake* has a certain episodic character, it is more a *bildungsroman* than an adventure story. Snake even notes, when she

earlier, Arevin's dilemma with his "obligation" to Snake, as well as to a young member of his partnership who died of snakebite, reminds us how often the responsibilities we take on in the name of love are actual enslavements of ourselves or others. The same problem is met in the next episode ("The Serpent's Death") when the partners, Merideth and Alex, must deal with the conflicts between their selfish need for the dying Jesse and loving her enough to be in accord with her decision to die.

In a later episode of *Dreamsnake*, set in the village of Mountainside, McIntyre describes a community of often destructive relationships, based on insubstantial, artificial values. Mountainside is a well-off community where beauty, wealth, and class define one's position. The capitalistic structure of Mountainside's community degrades the ugly Melissa, a girl burned in a tragic fire accident. She is sexually abused by her employer, Ras, because no one cares for the scarred child. Mountainside unfairly elevates the wealthy, as can be seen in the unsettling servant/master relationship between the major and his employee, Brian. The episode says something about McIntyre's politics with regard to the argument between anti-capitalists and anti-sexists about which is the greater evil. McIntyre implies here that neither can be fought while ignoring the other. Neither institutionalized misogyny nor capitalism is the ultimate culprit; both need to be recognized and struggled against.

Although Mountainside is closer to our world than any of the other communities described in the novel, even here McIntyre shows how the society has avoided many of our culture's inequalities. There is no restraint to roles; both women and men appear to function interchangeably in any and all occupations; and the language of sexual encounters is devoid of seduction/rape implications. (To initiate sex, one simply asks, "Is there anything else I can do for you?")

In Mountainside, we learn of biocontrol, the universal method of birth control in McIntyre's world. Individuals are able to control the internal temperatures of their bodies (an idea reminiscent of the control developed to the extreme in another McIntyre tale, "Aztecs"). In Mountainside and elsewhere in the communities of *Dreamsnake*, women choose whether they will become pregnant. This is an important factor in the absence of sexism even in Mountainside.

Names are very important in *Dreamsnake*. In Arevin's community, people's names are known only to their loved ones; Melissa must actively reject the name "ugly" in order to believe that it is false; Snake is named in honor of her abilities as a healer.

There are other episodes and examples of how partnership relationships come to be and are named or defined. At the end of the Mountainside episode, Snake adopts Melissa, and this particular method of conceiving a partnership embodies the best of those

and Arevin meet late in the novel, that her unfortunate sojourn with his people was also closely related to her solving a greater problem that had plagued the healers for many years. This quality of discovering an ultimate purpose or value in seeming haphazard events is part of the experience of real life and adds to the believability of the nevertheless fantastically drawn SF tale.

Neither plot nor setting nor characters stand out as the single most important element of *Dreamsnake*. Though the story concentrates on the character Snake, it is only her close relationship to her world that provides the motivation for her adventures. All these elements are drawn into the story and all are drawn together in a harmonious accord to create the whole of the novel out of their mutual understatements.



described in the novel: people choose their partnerships, they are not born into them. One's community must be a set of chosen relationships consciously committed by and to oneself, never taken for granted. The healers, the family which Snake first belonged among as a healer herself, is made up entirely of adopted children—everyone in it is a brother or sister of the others; there are no authorities, only teachers. The metaphor for the healer's community is its very activity of healing and the science of bio-engineering, used by them exclusively to devise new life (a multi-fruit-producing tree, Snake's zebra horse, and, more importantly, serums used with snake venom to cure diseases and illnesses).

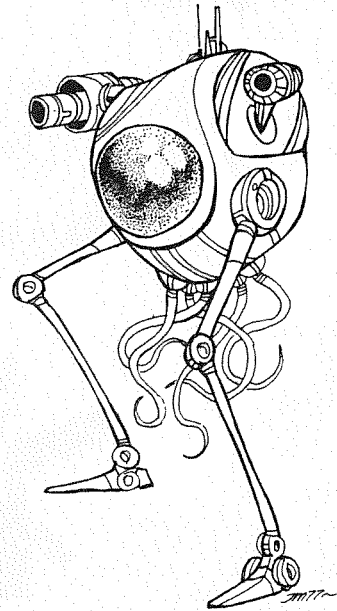
In opposition to this healthy family of support, learning, love, and sustenance is juxtaposed the isolationist community of the Center, a remnant of a pre-disaster society sealed within an enormous, impenetrable dome in the middle of a great desert. In that mini-culture, families in the old biological sense are seen as the artificial (granfalloon) bonds of relationships in contrast to the new chosen families. Symbolizing that destructive partnership definition (biological families) is the mention of the Center's peculiar practice of refusing to help the healers find more dreamsnakes (the snake of good dreams, used as an anesthetic-giver and most important part of any healer's kit). At the same time, however, it does trade with the slavers, providing them with a certain metal that can be formed into inescapable bonds.

There are other episodes and interactions that give further depth and subtlety to McIntyre's mosaic of images on the theme of relationships. One of the most interesting is Snake's sexual friendship with Gabriel, son of the mayor of Mountainside. This is an exquisite plot digression in which the princess in shining armor (as healers are often reacted to) rescues the despairing prince imprisoned in a castle by his evil father, teaches him that his freedom is in his own power (not by clicking his heels together three times but by controlling the temperature of his scrotum), has some good times in bed with him, and does not settle down with him to live happily ever after.

In the final episode of *Dreamsnake*, the epitome of a degrading "familial" relationship is described. It is, in fact, one of utter dependency and control. The characters in this chapter are literally warden and slaves. The warden, North, knows the secret of the dreamsnakes and uses it to addict his slaves and cause them to remain utterly dependent upon him. The symbol of the healer community's strength and health is perverted by North into desperate corruptness, evil, and sickness. In the climactic scene of this episode and the novel, Snake rescues herself and her daughter, escapes from North with the secret of the dreamsnake, and finally rejoins Arvin as they declare the value and meaning of their love for one another.

Through McIntyre's absorbing characterizations in *Dreamsnake*, we see several examples of how families can be defined and realize that we have a great many more choices available than seems to be the case in our present culture. It is this realization that is necessary before we can exorcise destructive patterns and get on with the business of actually trying to live according to new ones. In this aspect, in the imaginative possibilities McIntyre presents us, *Dreamsnake* is a joyful book. As Snake learns that she is still a healer without a dreamsnake—an anesthetic, pain-killer, easy death-maker—so too can SF be more than an "escape" from present-day difficulties and problems.

Alternative family structures are an important part of *Dreamsnake*, and, appropriately, Vonda McIntyre has dedicated the novel to her parents. ☺



#### THE BEANIE IN EARLY SOCIETY: PART 8

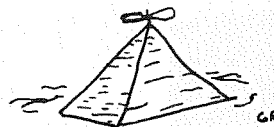
New Guinea cannibal with beanie. Beanie made of bone and coconut husk.



#### THE BEANIE IN EARLY SOCIETY: PART 9

Certain persons believe that the widespread incidence of beanies in primitive societies is evidence of visitation from more advanced beings from outer space. Needless to say, there is no rational proof for these theories.

Aztec Stone Carving

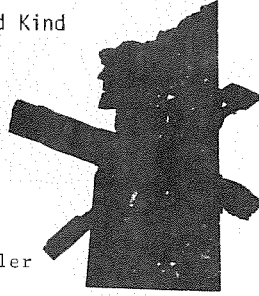


Theorist's drawing of Great Pyramid as "originally" planned.

SHOW &amp; TELL:

# Rock of Ages

DIANE MARTIN & RICHARD S. RUSSELL



T: Close Encounters of the Third Kind  
 P: Julia Phillips  
 & Michael Phillips  
 D: Steven Spielberg  
 W: Steven Spielberg, who  
 also wrote the 1977 novel of  
 the same name  
 R: Columbia, 1977, PG  
 S: Richard Dreyfuss as Roy Neary  
 Francois Truffaut as Lacombe  
 Melinda Dillon as Jillian Guiler  
 Terri Garr as Ronnie Neary  
 Bob Balaban as Laughlin (the Translator)  
 Carl Guffey as Barry Guiler  
 SE: Douglas Trumbull

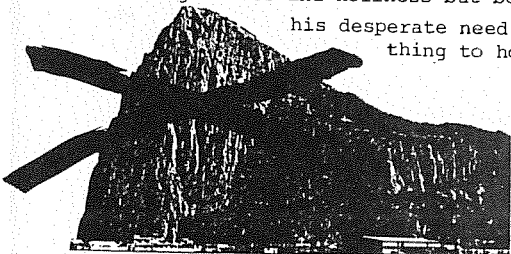
The reading for today is from *The True Believer*, Chapter 13, Sections 60 and 61. Eric Hoffer says:

By kindling and fanning violent passions in the hearts of their followers, mass movements prevent the settling of an inner balance.... They depict an autonomous, self-sufficient existence... as barren and meaningless.... [The true believer's] only salvation is in rejecting his self and in finding a new life in the bosom of a holy corporate body—be it a church, a nation, or a party....

The fanatic...cannot generate self-assurance out of his individual resources...but finds it only by clinging passionately to whatever support he happens to embrace. This passionate attachment is the essence of his blind devotion and religiosity, and he sees in it the source of all virtue and strength. Though his single-minded dedication is a holding on for dear life, he easily sees himself as the supporter and defender of the holy cause to which he clings. And he is ready to sacrifice his life to demonstrate to himself and others that such indeed is his role. He sacrifices his life to prove his worth.

It goes without saying that the fanatic is convinced that the cause he holds on to is monolithic and eternal—a rock of ages. Still, his sense of security is derived from his passionate attachment and not from the excellence of his cause. The fanatic is not really a stickler to principle. He embraces a cause not primarily because of its justness and holiness but because of

his desperate need for something to hold on to.



Or, in the pithier words of Francois Voltaire, "If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him." (*Épître à l'Auteur de Livre des Trois Imposteurs*).

The actual plot of *Close Encounters* is sparse. Basically, it concerns an average middle-class resident of Muncie, Indiana, Roy Neary, whose life is drastically and mysteriously changed by the sighting of a UFO. He feels a compulsion to meet the aliens again, and has a nagging feeling that he knows where. He finally identifies the place as Devil's Tower, Wyoming, and shows up there shortly after the Army has evacuated the area so that they can meet the aliens undisturbed. Persevering, Neary is there when the big saucer touches down, and he goes aboard it and away.

That isn't very much plot for over two hours of movie, and the absence of much detail leaves the film open to a variety of interpretations. It is no accident that we chose a quotation dealing with fanaticism as the basis of our interpretation. There are several types of fanaticism mentioned in or associated with the film.

UFOlogy, the study of possible alien encounters, is held in fanatical regard by many of its adherents. Most serious UFOlogists try very hard to present documentation of their evidence, though the "believers" don't really require it. Neary didn't try very hard to document his experience. He tried a little, but his main goal was to get to the Devil's Tower, no matter what other people thought of his reasons.

Then, of course, there is fandom, derived from the actual word "fanatic". Most of us know what that means.

And, centrally, there is Roy Neary. His suburban existence certainly was "barren and meaningless"—insidiously so, because he probably wasn't even aware of it, because he lacked a referent to think of something better—until the night he experienced his close encounter. That sighting was a catalyst that transformed him from a "mundane" into a fanatic, a "true believer".

How did this happen? What is the reason for his conversion? The film does not articulate this at all. The closest we can come is to say that it was a mystical experience. Neary was completely unable to communicate the urgency or even the reality of what had happened to him. It was something so inexpressible he didn't really try very hard to explain it, except to his wife, who he hoped would understand, though she didn't. ("Don't you think I'm taking all this really well?", she asks at one point.) Ronnie Neary does not have whatever it takes to be a true believer and finally packs up the kids and leaves Neary as he attempts to recreate Devil's Tower in their living room out of native ingredients.

Neary's inability to articulate his experience is a theme played several times in the film. In his job—what he does for a living and is presumably good at—he is supposed to be a power-line technician, but he can't even read his own maps. Then, in Laughlin, we have a trained cartographer functioning as an interpreter. And Lacombe: a third irony, that the head of the US Army's contact team speaks only French. These people are all misfits, so it is not surprising that they are all soldiers in the same fanatical army.

Even though there are a lot of people mobilized in this army (witness the convoy of Piggly Wiggly, Baskin-Robbins, and Coca-Cola semi-trucks), for a long time Neary, because of his relative isolation from the main action, believes himself to be alone in his mission/quest. Because he is truly fanatical, this doesn't stop him. Nothing stops him—being fired, having news media ignore him and the US Air Force "reassure" him, having his family leave him, encountering supposedly poison gas and the opposition of the US Army; the strength of his conviction drives him on, even when he isn't sure what his conviction is about. And when he finds it—why, it's a literal "rock of ages".

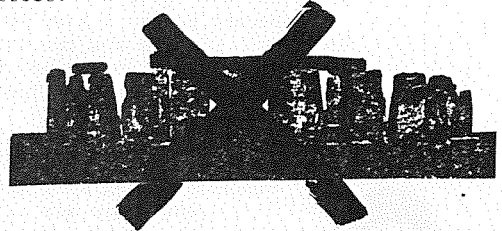
*Close Encounters* takes a member of regular society (though a potential misfit) and provides him with a catalyst that tears him away from an unsatisfying life by substituting something more worthwhile. To some extent all of us need such a cause to motivate our lives. This driving force can be a religion, a social theory, a political stance, or just a god-damned hobby.

How well does it do this? Unfortunately, not very believably. Consider: the aliens know enough about Earth to be able to broadcast 104° 44' 30" / 40° 30' 10", the Earthly (Greenwich standard) longitude and latitude of Devil's Tower.\*† This is a fairly sophisticated bit of knowledge about Earth, yet the aliens evidently don't speak any Earthly languages. How, then, did they learn about longitude and latitude? Consider: Devil's Tower, as projected by the aliens into the minds of Neary and others, is pictured from ground level, not from the air. Consider: somewhere along the line, Lacombe has got the idea that there is a hand signal and a color corresponding to each of the

\*and also of three other places on the globe—in the Pacific and Indian Oceans and in Inner Mongolia. How did Lacombe figure out which of the four? Or when the aliens would arrive? After all, it had been 30 years since the World War 2 planes had been abducted.

five notes (D, E, C, lower C, lower G) of the alien's "theme song", first noted over Dharmasala, Northern India. Where did these hand signals and colors come from? Another example of non-communicative "communication". Much more of this, and the aliens wouldn't have had to show up at all: they could have let Neary, Lacombe, *et al* simply imagine all of it.

However, let's give credit where credit is due. Most fanatics lack a sense of humor. Spielberg certainly doesn't: the film is full of funny bits. The space-ships—done by The Master, Doug Trumbull—are glorious. And Spielberg effectively departs from one hoary SF cliché—the daring loner making individual first contact—by having Earth's greetings offered by a committee.



The humor, the effects, masterful use of color† and music—all contribute to an enjoyable experience. More than that, the film is continually upbeat. It and *Star Wars* are a far cry from such downers as *Deliverance*, *Taxi Driver*, and numerous disaster flicks, which are not dreams but nightmares.

But make no mistake. Spielberg believes in UFOs with the passion of a fanatic, and the movie never for a moment entertains the prospect that they may be just so much swamp gas. The audience may be willing to swallow this whole without thinking ("If God did not exist..."), but, if so, it is because Spielberg has made a film not so much to convert the heathen as to reassure the true believers.

†the all-yellow screen of the Sonora Desert in the opening shot being an excellent example of this.

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You have old fanzines?!!



# Dear Jan and Jeanne,

doug barbour  
Department of English  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton, Alb., T6G 2E5

...i shdnt say this but: i dont think youre helping anyone, especially the writers, by printing the "verse" youve been printing—but i'd have to sit down a long hour with you to go into all the whys & wherefores behind my complaint. but when both you & janice can

mention william carlos williams i have to think you have read some truly valid recent poetry & know what it does, which the "poems" you have printed dont....

[There are two writers whose work regularly appears in Janus. Each is constantly telling me how badly the other writes and cautioning me not to include the other again in the zine's pages. I print both of their work, when I consider it is good enough.

[Yes, I know what good poetry is and can do in Chinese, French, and German as well as English. There are, however, lots of places for good poets to get their work published after everyone knows they're good.

[But there are also lots of kinds of poetry, and poetry can be interesting for all kinds of reasons which may not be acceptable to the "cultural elite" who have evolved an esthetic that appeals often to them alone. Yes, I know all about current ideas of poetic excellence, economy of language, ambiguity, multiple interpretation, and I've read WCW, W. Stevens, Yeats, Whitman, and also Tu Fu, Li Po, Wang Yang-ming, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rilke—but there is another way to look at poetry: that is, as a form of expression available to anyone who cares to express themselves in this form. Many of our poets, including myself, as well as our writers of fiction (which others have complained about—and, by the way, if you folks want to see better fiction in Janus, I'm always eager to get submissions) have as much access to Janus space as the most esoteric, convoluted, or subtly beautiful of the modern poets—more, actually, as the latter rarely write SF or fantasy "verse". —JANICE BOGSTAD]



John Bartelt  
401 8th St. SE #8  
Minneapolis, MN, 55414

...Thomas Murn's ["The Cosmic Hunting People" in Janus 9] leaves me puzzled as to the intent [of Robert Ardrey's books]. Is Ardrey explaining current theories and the history of their development, or is he expounding his

own new theories? Murn seems to indicate he is trying to do both.... There is enough bad science reporting that we can always use another writer who can explain science to the public. But is a popular work the place to propose new theories, where they will confuse (and possibly mislead) the public, and be ignored by the scientists?

Also, I'm curious as to how Ardrey (the "dramatist turned anthropologist") is also such an expert in geophysics that he can "chop up" statements issued by the National Science Foundation. Perhaps he consulted some authority, but that isn't stated in this paragraph (which seems to have been inserted at random).

Further, I take issue with Murn's description of other science writers, especially Gamow. [George] Gamow has a particularly colorful style, and...his books (*Thirty Years That Shook Physics*, for instance) are often littered with stories and anecdotes of the men and women who shaped science (many of whom he knew personally).

...Murn states, "The crux of the matter is that the ethno-archeo-behavioral-speculative work has to be done." So who said it isn't being done? Isn't that what science is about? Have you got something better than the scientific method? "Some conclusions about how things were for our remote ancestors have to be reached."... And earlier: "...the interpretation of the data becomes more important than the data itself." (But how can the interpretations be any more valid than the data they're based on? In a logical proposition, can you say the conclusion is more important than the premises? And how do you know when you have enough data to make valid interpretations?) No matter how many times Murn says it is important that some conclusions be reached, he hasn't produced any arguments or evidence to support that statement. It is not at all clear to me that the behavior of primitive hominids is of overriding concern or importance today (except as knowledge for knowledge's sake); unless, of course, Murn and/or Ardrey are trying to defend the thesis that we are still somehow controlled by this behavior.

...I was surprised...that Murn would stoop so low as to bandy about that overworked and much misused adjective "cosmic".... I doubt very much that there is anything at all "cosmic" about the evolution of humanity. For that matter, I doubt that the universe at large knows or cares that this dust speck we call Earth exists....

Jane Hawkins  
Box 1184  
Seattle, WA, 98111

Ah—another *Janus*, and just look at that cover! Lovely! The woman is a trifle feminized, in the sense of the jewelry and long, long hair, but the expression on her face is great.... The background—wild geography, swooping saucers, and a huge





sun (moon?). It's the kind of picture that hovers on being a story. Who is the woman? What is she like? What is her relationship to the world? The answers seem to start a nice meaty space opera in my mind.

[Ours, too. So we used the cover for this issue as the trigger for Jessica Amanda Salmonson's story "Anna and the Miserable Man" elsewhere in this issue. We'd like to do more of this if possible. Artists, are you listening? —JEANNE GOMOLL]

I also like the gold letters. Was that the artist's idea or a *Janus* inspiration? Most use of gold or silver in art fails, at least for me. The result tends to look tacky-gaudy. I've developed a prejudice against the stuff. However, it works on the *Janus* cover. Beautiful cover.

[The credit for the gold ink must be given to Randy Everts, our printer, to whom we feel more and more indebted with each issue for his advice and the care with which he prints *Janus*. —JEANNE GOMOLL]

...In *Janus* 8, mention was made of having contributors speak as people in a semi-perzine fashion. Is this still being considered? I am interested in the *Janus* people, and if they felt like writing about themselves occasionally, I'd enjoy reading it.

[I'll try to do some better introductions in "News Nurd", but probably the best way you'll have to get to know everyone (besides reading their articles and comments) is to come to WisCon. —JEANNE GOMOLL]

Gina Clarke's letter may open a "can of worms". I hope it does. I agree with the Lois Gold quote to some extent, but can't take that stand. The Women's Movement once abandoned a whole range of "side-issues" in order to broaden our constituency. So now we have the vote, and I'm glad of it. But was it worth it? An assumption was made that everything would be hunky-dory once women got the vote. The movement continued to some extent for a decade, but lost a great deal of momentum and virtually died.

The goal of getting together with Anita Bryant's people would be to get through legislation on issues we share. In order to "cohabitate" with those people, strong feminists would have to abandon "unimportant" issues such as gay rights, abortion, etc. Even assuming this were possible and that there would be short-term benefits, what about the long run?

Much as I want the ERA and many other things, I would not dump lesbians even if I believed everything else would go through tomorrow. An issue that is set aside, for whatever the reasons, cannot be easily resurrected. In doing so, the issue in question is declared unimportant *de facto*....

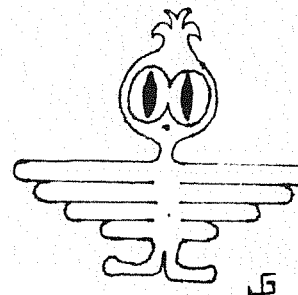
Allen Chen  
Box 4545  
Stanford, CA, 94305

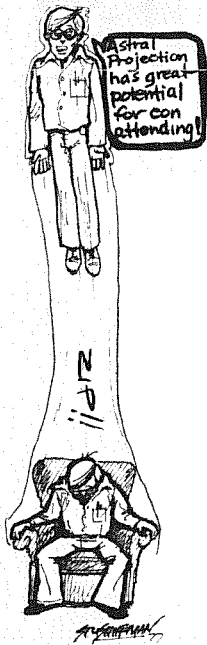
...[Janice's] comparison between Zen Buddhism and *Star Wars* [editorial, *Janus* 9] reminded me of a few interesting parallels between many of the ideas behind Eastern philosophy and *Star Wars*. The Force seemed to be very much like what Taoists call Void. Void isn't really empty, but it is a creative potential (as some people have interpreted it) from which the perceived universe derives. I noticed an interesting anti-technology sentiment in *Star Wars*. Darth Vader said something about the Force having far greater power than the Death Star—the puny little toys of humankind's technology. In Eastern thought, too, there is a rather unique turning away from, not technology, but the kind of reductionist, absolute, scientific thinking that leads us to our love affair with material being. Finally, it is interesting that both Darth Vader and Obi-wan Kenobi survive (the latter in some higher state of being, presumably). It suggests that good cannot exist without evil (an idea from Western thought, too), and that opposites are mutually complementary. Maybe I'm just carrying things a bit too far, but it's fun to speculate. We'll just have to wait for the sequel....

Jeff Frane  
Box 1923  
Seattle, WA, 98111

...I did read [Ctein's article, "If All Men Were Mothers", in *Janus* 10], and was struck especially by George Fergus's response. Not only does parthenogenesis (or any asexual form of reproduction) imply the obvious problems of the surfacing of recessive genes, but also the termination of the evolutionary process. One thing we know for a fact is that the environment will change. It has been changing from the moment of the Earth's creation, and it will continue to do so throughout the life of the planet (until such time, one might say, that the Superhuman will gain total control over the planet and the Sun). It is only the system of sexual reproduction, the constant shuffling of genes, that provides the mechanism by which species adapt to changes in the environment. If not for sexual reproduction, for example, we would not have the diversity of human somatotypes that allows the species to live virtually everywhere on the globe—not to mention the fact that the species itself would not have evolved.

I can't help but feel that work on cloning, parthenogenesis, etc. are symptoms of the ultimate in human egoism, the same egoism that operates in religions concerned with the "afterlife" or reincarnation. People just can't seem to accept the idea that once they're dead, they're dead. Gone. Humus. Just like all the other organisms on the planet. (Exception: one-celled, asexual organisms, which are essentially immortal; and how's that for a blow to the ego—an ameba lives forever but not so little boys and girls.) Admittedly, that egoism has resulted in some mighty fine architecture and some interesting techniques in preservation. It





has also resulted in the custom of using arable land for the storage of dead organic matter, usually sealed away so that it will not contribute to the nutrient value of the soil. Religion is based on this egoism—it is significant that the development of religious beliefs in human prehistory is determined by the practice of burial, and those interned were usually equipped with something (weapons, bear heads) to help them in, presumably, the afterlife. Asexual reproduction seems to be the ultimate, technological, compromise with Death. All right, this body is going to go, but I will live on in another...and another....

Is this an anti-technological response? I don't think so, for I would imagine that research into these various techniques might offer women the freedom that Ctein talks about, and it probably will mean control over cancerous cells. I would be in favor of any technique that provided the means to rid the gene pool of crippling diseases. Mostly, though, I fear that it would be an evolutionary dead end.

Alexis A. Gilliland  
4030 8th St. S.  
Arlington, VA, 22204

Ctein's article on cloning and parthenogenesis is interesting, but apparently he envisages a high-technology civilization in which machines produce babies for people who are diffident about using the usual methods. Perhaps in his next article he will discuss the machines which will nurse, nurture, and raise these children, not to mention educate, indoctrinate, and socialize them. I can imagine few disappointments more acute than a clone-child going differently than her mother (and sole parent) wanted. She (the mother) will lack even the solace of saying, "She (her daughter) didn't get it from my side of the family."

One of the running arguments I have with Avedon Carol is whether or not children are self-sufficient at the age of three years. She says yes: they can talk, feed themselves, get dressed, and go to the potty by themselves. I say no, but the experience of being a parent counts for nothing. Of course, if you don't care how the children grow up, you let them run wild. A recent study (at Harvard, I think) showed that men raising children as the sole parent held many of the attitudes normally attributed to mothers. Evidently humans are programmed to perpetuate the species? Maybe it would be better to say "predisposed" than "programmed". Certainly they do it....

Karen Pearlschtein says: "I'm also sick of tolerance." How sad. Those who are not with us are against us. I am sick of bigots and totalitarians and not too happy with fools....

E. B. Lindsay  
6 Hillcrest Av.  
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Australia

...On weirdness, I didn't think that MadCity was weird, nor even Greg Rihn weird. However, I do think you could work out some better variations on the propellor beanies. One side effect of the ion-power beanie was that it found favor with women libbers who wanted to insure that passing men kept their hands off. Greg missed the model that uses a crystal set tuned to the local station to drive a milliamp meter which has been modified by the addition of a commutator in place of the normal spring. This model has the advantage that it turns in time with the music, and was considered very useful to dancers who needed a visual indication of the timing of their steps.

[This issue's "Mumbles from Minneapolis" was originally scheduled to run in the last issue but was inadvertently omitted. Boy, did we hear about it...mainly from Minneapolis. A sampling follows.]

Jim C. Maxwell  
Minneapolis, MN

My friend Mike Faraday and I were reading *Janus* 10 and thought it was really great, but where's Bartelt's column? It's our favorite part.

PS: If you hear from Paul, tell him that  $\vec{v} \cdot \vec{B}$  does too equal zero. We haven't heard from him since we moved to Minneapolis.

Jules Verne  
Minneapolis, France

*Parlez vous*, John Bartelt's column?

Sigmund Freud  
Vienna, Austria

Ze editors uff *Janus* haff omitted John Bartelt's column. Dey are obfiously chealous uff his fine writing schtyle. A zimple case of pencil envy.

PS: A friend in Minneapolis mailed this for me.

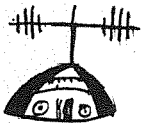
One Who Knows  
In Minneapolis

I bet Bartelt is Jewish, and you're a bunch of anti-Semites, right?

One Whose Nose  
Is in Minneapolis

So Bartelt has finally been silenced by the International Jewish-Commie-Hippie Conspiracy.

[We also heard from: Mary Badami, Elinor Busby, Suzy McKee Charnas, Gina Clarke, Eli Cohen, Ctein, Harlan Ellison, Barbara Emrys, Adrienne Fein, Ken Fletcher, Virginia Galko, Mike Glycer, Julie A. Gomoll, Martin Greenberg, Jeff Hecht, Wayne Hooks, Denise Hudspeth, Phyllis Ann Karr, Richard Labonte, Ursula K. LeGuin, Liz Lynn, Vonda McIntyre, Tom Moylan, Marc A. Ortlieb, Jessica Amanda Salmonson, Alice Sheldon, Don Simmons, Eric Wallner, Ann C. Weiser, Susan Wood, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, and Ken Zahorski.]



Radio Beanie

Dedicated to  
Ralph Milne  
Sorley



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[All I can say is, "My God, I can't believe we did the whole thing (in one month)." I hope you've enjoyed it. You had better have enjoyed it. You won't be seeing Janus for a while though now; we're taking a brief vacation. Just in case, have a Merry Christmas. —JEANNE GOMOLL]

### TESTIMONIALS

Here's what some satisfied (and some not-so-satisfied) readers of *Janus* have said about it:

• "[*Janus* is] worth the entire shitload of lesser fanzines clotting the mainstream of amateur SF publishing." —Harlan Ellison

• "a...personable, interesting genzine... [*Janus* is] relaxed, perceptive, humorous." —Susan Wood

• "*Janus* no longer resembles a warty toad on speed. Now it has the fascinating if somewhat asymmetrical appearance of a web spun by a spider on acid." —Mike Glicksohn

Further unsolicited testimonials are herewith solicited. See the address below.

### FANZINES

*Corr* (Perri Corrick-West, ed.) Multi-colored eclecticism.

*Digressions* (John Bartelt, ed.) Long-lost Madison fan holds forth from far Minneapolis.

*Janus* (Janice Bogstad and Jeanne Gomoll, eds.) Feminist-oriented genzine. \$1 each or \$4 for 4 issues (1 year).

*Orcrist* (Richard C. West, ed.) Scholarly journal devoted to works of J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis,

*Starling* (Hank and Lesleigh Luttrell, eds.) Hugonominated personal journal of popular culture: music, STF, comix, movies, mysteries, comics, etc. 50¢ each or \$2 for 5 issues.

### CONVENTION

The Wisconsin Convention of Science Fiction (WisCon) is co-sponsored with the University of Wisconsin Extension. WisCon 2 is being/was held February 17-19, 1978, with Vonda McIntyre and Susan Wood as guests of honor. A good time is being/was had by all. Will WisCon 3 be held in 1979? Stay tuned.

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

Madison Science Fiction Group. Meets Wednesdays at Nick's Bar and Grill, 226 State St. in Madison, except last Wednesday night of each month is the "event", usually discussion of an SF author or theme and held at Union South on the UW campus.

Madison Review of Books. Heard on WORT-FM; hour-long show on Saturday plus 2- to 3-minute reviews interspersed throughout each day.

Book of the Month Circle. Discusses a different novel each month. Meets informally in people's homes and apartments. Pretzels featured.

Dungeons and Dragons. A corps of dungeon masters hold at least one adventure a week among them.

Animated film. Based on Fred Haskell's rendition of "Mediocre Fred".

Speakers' Bureau. Presentations (some with slides) on any SF-related subject, including metric system.

Library. Group collection of fanzines, paperbacks, magazines, etc. Contributions welcome.



### UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION

All of the foregoing activities are coordinated by:

the Society for the Furtherance and Study of Fantasy and Science Fiction

a non-profit, non-stock Wisconsin corporation. For information on any of the activities, or on how you can become an active or supporting member of SF<sup>3</sup> (contributions being tax exempt), write to:

SF<sup>3</sup>  
Box 1624  
Madison, WI, 53701

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If you wish to respond personally to their contributions, or if you wish to solicit their work for your own purposes, please contact them directly.

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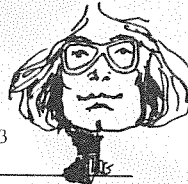
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[In addressing the Madison City Council on the subject of the following resolution, Philip Kaveny, speaking for SF<sup>3</sup>, commented:

Who was it who said "Our ability to achieve is only limited by our ability to dream."? I feel that to support the resolution to declare the week of February 11-19 Science Fiction Week in the City of Madison would, in a sense, formalize that unique relationship between dream, reality, and the vision of the future which the WisCon science-fiction event has to offer this great City of Madison, the State of Wisconsin, and the human community in its entirety.

[The resolution was adopted without opposition.]



## CITY OF MADISON

Wisconsin 53709

OFFICE of the MAYOR

PAUL R. SOGLIN  
MAYOR

TELEPHONE  
295-4411

WHEREAS, science fiction has long been an integral part of the literary practice of the State of Wisconsin, especially with regard to the work of the historian and science-fiction writer and publisher August Derleth; and

WHEREAS, Madison itself is represented in the works of other SF writers, notably the well known Clifford Simak, who set his novel, *Goblin Reservation*, on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; and

WHEREAS, the Society for the Furtherance and Study of Fantasy and Science Fiction, also known as SF<sup>3</sup>, made up of diverse members of the Madison community, has found this city to possess a congenial atmosphere for the pursuit of science fiction through the creation of various amateur publications, weekly and monthly meetings, and other educational activities; and

WHEREAS, Madison was the site of the first Wisconsin Science Fiction Convention, WisCon 1, held in February of 1977, with the assistance of the University of Wisconsin-Extension English Department, the Wisconsin Student Association, and SF<sup>3</sup>, beginning a continuing practice of bringing well known science-fiction writers to Madison; and

WHEREAS, WisCon 1 aptly represented the spirit of Madison, forward-looking intellectual and cultural center of Wisconsin, with its emphasis on feminist, political, and educational issues in science fiction; and

WHEREAS, WisCon 1 has already gained a reputation among those in the field for its excellence in exploring these issues, both due to the efforts of the groups involved and to the unique social, cultural, and economic atmosphere of the City of Madison and the State of Wisconsin; and

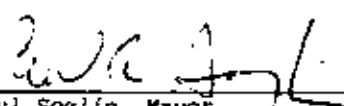
WHEREAS, WisCon will become a yearly event in the City of Madison, being scheduled for February 17-19 next and in the planning stages for February of next year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the week preceding WisCon (in 1978, February 12-18) be declared Science Fiction Week in and for the City of Madison, this year and in all future years in which WisCon is held, in recognition of the unique and fruitful nature of the association between the City of Madison and the art and practice of science fiction; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be suitably inscribed and transmitted to the Society for the Furtherance and Study of Fantasy and Science Fiction, for publication in an appropriate manner during WisCon and for preservation in the Society's archives.

Sponsored by Ald. Briggs,  
Koppelkam, Sorenson and  
Yeadon

Adopted January 31, 1978

  
Paul Soglin, Mayor

