

# energumen





This is the sixth issue of a quarterly genzine that is now ahead of schedule. **ENERGUMEN** is edited by Mike Glicksohn who does the layout, the typing, the pasting, and the mimeoing since he's too selfish and egocentric to let anyone else do it. He'll occasionally let others help collate. It is co-edited by his wife Susan, who does all the cooking and cleaning and things so he has time to work on the magazine and bears with stoical patience his apparent indifference to her efforts. She is also the final arbiter in matters of layout, spelling and grammar when he runs into difficulty. But she has nothing to do with the typos, the see through or the off-set.

**ENERGUMEN** is available for arranged trade, substantial loc or contribution of artistic or written material. As a last resort, it may be obtained for 50¢ an issue--no cheques accepted!

Editorial Address: 267 St. George St., Apt 807, Toronto 180, Ontario, Canada. **ENERGUMEN** is one of the few remaining fanzines that has no agents anywhere.



COVER..... Grant Canfield

FEEDBACK FROM THE MIKE by Mike Glicksohn. Where the editor has some things to explain..... 2

FEEDBACK PRIME by Grant Canfield. A fan artist's ideas on art and art criticism. A parody?..... 5

THE STATE OF THE ART by Mike Gilbert. A semi-pro artist hurls a challenge....12

THE VILLAIN OF THE PIECE by Jack Gaughan. A pro artist bares his soul and makes a plea..... 16

THIS FUNNY HOBBY by Andy Offutt. In which a pro author tells how he writes...and writes...and writes..... 20

TONIGHT'S REPORTS ARE FROM OTTAWA, WASHINGTON AND...THE MOON by Lydia Dotto. Our fearless girl reporter looks at the space program..... 25

MY 2¢ WORTH by Susan Glicksohn. The co-editor finally sees the light..... 29

STATIC where the readers have their say..... 34

BACK COVER.....Grant Canfield

ART CREDITS:

Austin...3,11	Bathurst...37,40,43
Bergstrom...23	Bjo...19
Canfield...5,7,8,41	Cochran...42
ConR...16	Davidson...20
Gilbert...12,13,14,15,18,25,29	
Gilliland...38	Giminez...26
Hagopian...33,39	Ingham...1
Mackay...2	McLeod...21,28
Miesel...31	Miller...30
Osterman...27	Porter...10,22
Teruya...17,35,36	Shull...24



# FEEDBACK FROM THE MIKE

Welcome to the new, double-barrelled ENERGUMEN, fandom's first (?) schizophrenic fanzine. You are holding an experiment, conceived by Susan and executed by myself, aimed at ending Buck Coulson's confusion and Jerry Lapidus' disappointment.

The first five issues of this fanzine reflected my own tastes and contained a variety of both fannish and serious material. Not everybody was pleased with this. Buck got confused when the serious material dominated the fannish columns, while Jerry was disappointed when the fannish stuff edged out the serious articles. Well, ENERGUMEN will continue to reflect my own conception of a genzine, but for this "issue" at least, the nature of my on-hand copy suggested an experiment that just might leave everyone happy.

The material that quite literally poured in shortly after we mailed out #5 broke down quite nicely into serious articles concerning the creative processes of drawing and writing etc., and fannish articles on various aspects of fans, fanzines and fandom. As most of the material was topical and required fairly immediate publication, Susan suggested that I actually publish two entirely separate issues at the same time, rather than one monstrous great issue that would overwhelm and frustrate everybody. And I've done nearly that.

ENERGUMEN 6, which you are now reading, is the "serious" issue--the "Energumen Looks At The Creative Process" issue. It is my hope that it will be ready for distribution at Lunacon in order to save me some postage. ENERGUMEN 7 will follow within three weeks and will be the "fannish" issue. (If #6 happens to be the last issue on your sub, or there's some other weird reason for your not getting #7 unless you Do Something, I point out that #7 has material by Ted Pauls, Arnie Katz, Rosemary Ulliot, Walt Willis, Bob Shaw, Susan and I, etc., etc.) Thus while #6 and #7 are both separate and complete fanzines (and hence count as two issues on your subs...but at 40+ pages each I think you'll find they are worth it) they may be considered as the two halves of a single entity. We have merely separated the material so that dyed-in-the-wool fannish fans won't be forced to read serious constructive articles, while the academics in the readership can avoid the light fannish chatter if they wish. Whether or not this process continues will depend on (a) the response to this experiment and (b) the nature of the material I get for future issues. It may never happen again that the copy will allow this sort of division, but since it did this once, the experiment seemed well worth while.

The lettercolumns were the hardest feature to handle for this split, since all the writers were commenting on the same issue. I've tried to include comments on the serious aspects of #5 here in #6 while saving the fannish references for #7. So don't curse me for failing to use your brilliant anecdotes and omitting you from the WAHFs until

you've had a chance to read both issues, okay?

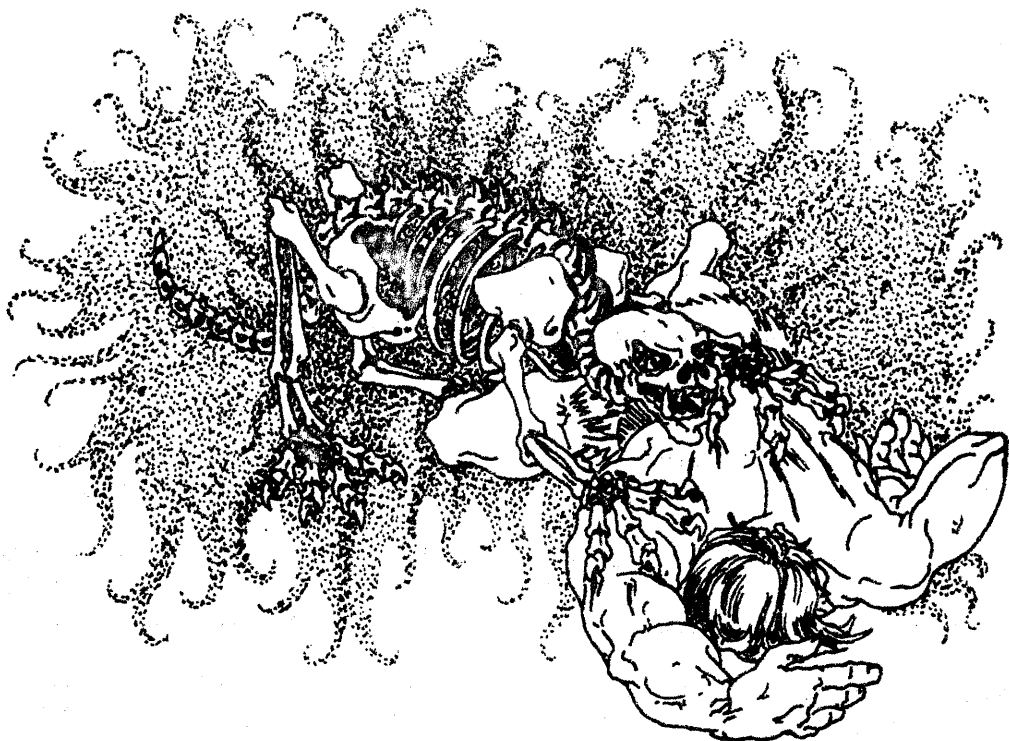
The material for this issue needs little explanation, and should prove interesting and provocative to many of you. One comment does have to be made though: Andy Offutt sent me the manuscript for "This Funny Hobby", which appears in this issue, totally uncited. I read it, found it somewhat mind-croggling and promptly started putting it on stencil. About a month later, after I had the whole thing mimeo'd and the very same day I collated it all, I got a note from Andy saying Whoops! he'd just gotten the latest SPECULATION and there was the very same article! He'd forgotten he'd sent it to Pete Weston! With my usual well-bred, innate Canadian good humor, I wryly chuckled, "Oh SHIT" Too late to do anything but hope for minimal overlap of our mailing lists and apologize to Pete. And that's the truth!

\*\*\*

This issue was produced in sections, as I finished typing the stencils, instead of in the usual frenetic one day session once the entire issue was on stencil. So for the first time I know what some of the rest of the issue looks like as I write these comments.

As we still don't have our own mimeo, I've had to weigh speed of production against perfection of repro and try to strike a balance between the two. It would have been impossible to produce even one issue without the two electric mimeos I've been using, so slipsheeting was out of the question. As any faned with a mimeo knows, if you don't slipsheet, you get off-set on the backs of the pages and how much you get varies with a variety of factors such as humidity etc. In general, the off-set on these pages is more than ideally I'd prefer, but not enough to force me back to hand cranking and slipsheeting. However, individual issues may contain a page with a large degree of off-set (since I've found the amount of off-set varies greatly even within the print run of a single stencil) and I apologize for those. But grungy pages are in the minority.

The other problem with electric mimeos is getting really dark electrostencilled art without massive see-through and off-set. Again, I had to sacrifice something in blackness in order to use the automatic machines, even when running separate stencils on



some of the art. And I find that even using the automatic inker, the machines I use have a frustrating tendency to fade out on the artwork if I turn my head from them for as much as a nanosecond. But I'm gradually learning, and am working on the elimination of these problems. Like when we get our own machine. Like Next Year When I'm Working!

\*\*\*

It is 2 A.M. on April 4th, and Richard Labonte has just telephoned the delightful news that ENERGUMEN has been nominated for Best Fanzine in the Hugos this year. Naturally we're pleased, and honoured, and extend thanks to all those fans who thought sufficiently highly of ENERGUMEN to nominate it. And equally naturally, we would like to win: but win or lose, it is an honour to be nominated for one's first year of publication, and we appreciate and are grateful for this honour.

I shan't go over the nominees here, since by the time this magazine appears complete lists are bound to have been published by the newszines. But in case anyone gives a damn, my own choices are:

NOVEL Year of the Quiet Sun--Bob Tucker  
NOVELETTE The Thing in the Stone--Clifford Simak  
SHORT In the Queue--Keith Laumer  
MAGAZINE Amazing--Ted White  
DRAMATIC Don't Crush That Dwarf, Hand Me The Pliers--Firesign Theatre  
ARTIST The Dillons  
FAN ARTIST Alicia Austin  
FAN WRITER Ted Pauls  
FANZINE ENERGUMEN

Although I must admit, in most of the categories I wouldn't be all that upset if another of the nominees were to win...except for the last category, of course.

\*\*\*

I receive a very small but steady trickle of requests for copies of my earlier issues that I cannot fill since I have no back issues except for my own personal copies. If there is anyone out there who doesn't particularly want to hold on to his or her copy of #1, #2, or #3, I will gladly extend their subscription an issue for each copy returned.

Again, if anyone is interested, I have extra copies of the covers from #1 and #3 thru #7, as well as the back covers from #4 thru #7 which are available for a mere 15¢ or 2 for 25¢. (We have to make up the cost of this thicker paper somehow, you know!)

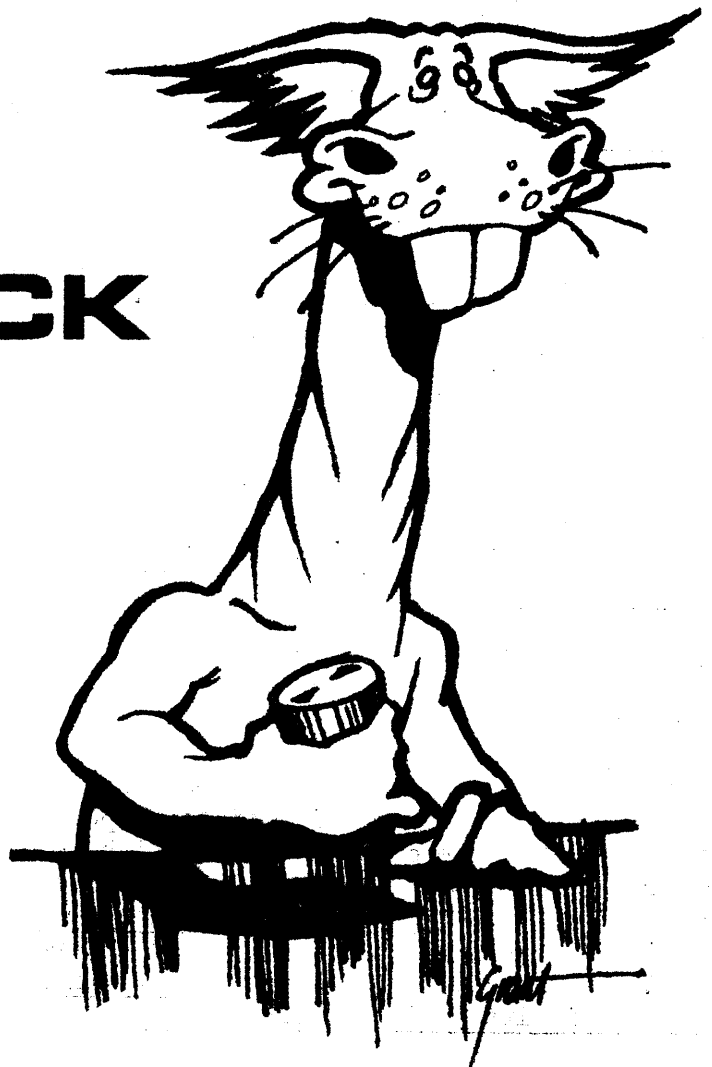
Speaking of art, I find that I am dangerously low on  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  page size drawings and would greatly appreciate contributions from any and all artists who may be reading this. And naturally, written contributions of both a serious and a fannish nature are always welcome. To the three people out there who have middle length book reviews with me, I apologize for not using them this time but there just wasn't the space. But I'm hoping that Real Soon Now...

While I have the space, I'd like to thank everyone who responded to the last issue. Your contributions and responses have helped make this fanzine whatever it is today (and don't ask me what that is, I only edit the thing!). Special thanks to John Mansfield for services rendered and to Jean Hutchison for her invaluable comments on layout. And an extra special tip of the famous Glicksohn hat to Pete the Mimeo Man, without whose advice and assistance this issue would never have appeared.

Please write, or draw, or phone and let us know what you think of the issue. And above all, make those plans to go to Boston in September to vote for TORONTO IN 73!!!

# FEEDBACK PRIME

BY GRANT CANFIELD



## INTRODUCTION

Elsewhere is Feedback From The Mike.

This is Feedback Prime...!

Feedback Prime is the latest, up-to-date, 1971 model no-holds-barred Article on Art Criticism, by a "talented newcomer"<sup>1</sup> fan artist masquerading as a fan writer. Pay attention, because I'm about to inform you as to the spatial/temporal location of everything.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER ONE

This is a fanzine.<sup>3</sup>

Inside this fanzine is some material which is essentially verbal in nature and some material which is essentially visual in nature. There is considerable overlap at times, of course, so sometimes there may be difficulty in distinguishing the difference. However, here is an easy test that can be applied to obtain broad generalizations:

Fanzine contributions of a verbal nature deal with words. Here is a word: word.<sup>4</sup>  
Fanzine contributions of a visual nature deal with pictures. As an exercise, see if you can find a picture.

The contributions of a verbal nature in fanzines come from contributors known as fan writers. Contributions of a visual nature in fanzines come from contributors known as fan artists. The fan writer who contributed the words you are now reading is also a fan artist at other times. The operative-level definition of fan artist is provided in the

- 
- 1) Geis, SFR
  - 2) Where it's all at.
  - 3) Surprises will abound.
  - 4) This is the word for "word".

Rules for Hugo Ballotting: an artist or cartoonist whose work has appeared in fanzines (in the year in question).<sup>5</sup>

The distribution of fanzines determines the audience (sometimes alternately known as the Eye of the Beholder) for the contributions within the fanzine. You are an audience. You are also part of the total audience, which is composed of many persons like yourself who have received a fanzine apparently similar to yours. The contributors of the material in your fanzine did not submit their contributions for your fanzine, then another contribution just like it for your neighbor's copy of the same fanzine, then a contribution for his neighbor's copy, and so on. Instead, each contributor produced only one copy of his contribution, which he then submitted to a magic process known as mass production. Mass production is how fanzines are "reproduced".<sup>6</sup> Mass production, in short, is the process which makes fanzines the medium of exposure for the contributions.

For the audience, this means one can subject himself to the contributions without having to travel to California or whatever arcane place the contribution came from prior to mass production. The relationship of the audience is directly with the contribution in its medium of exposure.

For the contributor, mass production means his single contribution can be handled in such a manner as to present it to a wider audience. Mass production, in a sense, duplicates the single contribution, but it does not copy it exactly. If it did, it would be matter duplication, but it does not and is not. It changes the contribution somewhat, but these changes can be considered beneficial. If these changes weren't made, you would have fanzine pages with zipatone peeling off and charcoal getting your fingers dirty<sup>7</sup>, because these things happen with the original artwork. The original copy of artwork, at any rate, before it is submitted to mass production, might as well be called, oh, how about medium of production, rather than medium of exposure. Mass production is the process that transforms the work in its medium of production to its appearance in its medium of exposure. The relationship of the artist is directly to the contribution in its medium of production.

The astute contributor is aware of the changes which will be wrought upon the artwork by mass production, and can use this knowledge in the production of the art itself. The fan artist knows, for instance, that mass production will turn his charcoal-smudgy (and peeling-zipatone) original piece of artwork into a neat, sleek, clean page, with all the ink put on at one time. Similarly, the contributing fan writer doesn't have to correct his own spelling errors or justify his own margins.

The audience and the artwork have a relationship. The artist and the artwork have a relationship. What about the audience and the artist? Do they have a relationship? We know that the relationship of the audience with the contribution in its medium of exposure is direct, but what is the audience's logical extension of that relationship? By means of nebulous synapses known alternately as self-awareness, world view, aware-  
-----

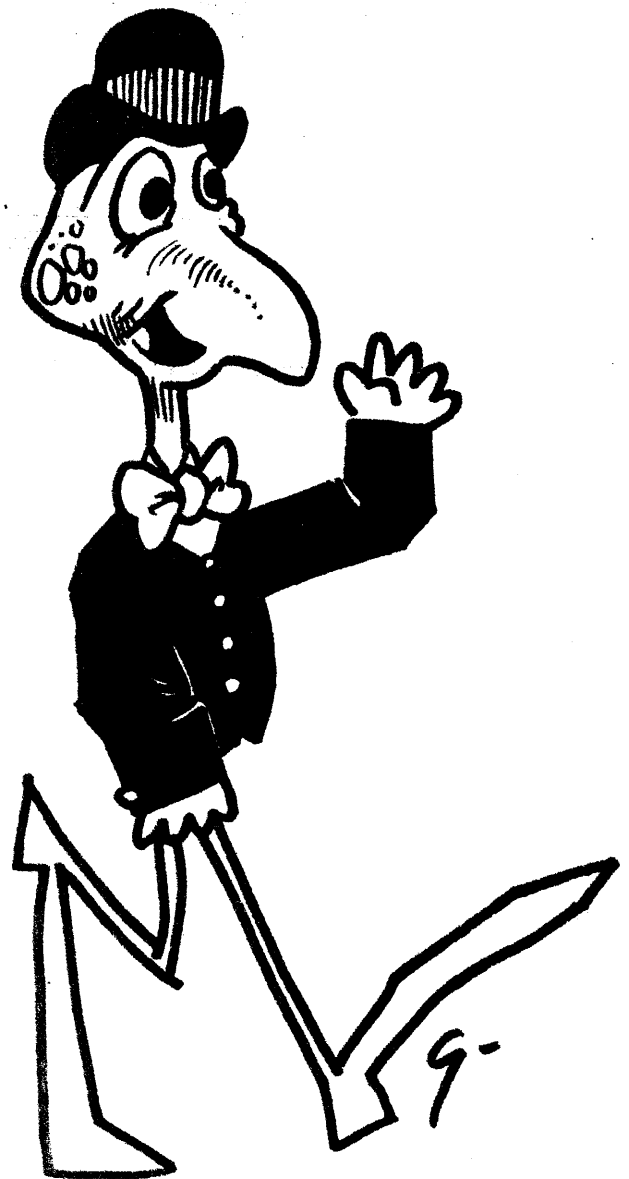
5) This definition, of course, has been subject to considerable criticism. Fanzines aren't the only medium used by fan artists, it is argued. There are also art shows at conventions, and name tags, and like that. Besides, who is to say what the medium will be in the future? Will Energumen 766 (long since converted to a logarithmic numbering system) even be a fanzine in the contemporary sense? Or will it arrive in the form of a cassette tape, ready to be plugged into your home holographic projection desk, flooding your living cubicle with darting, pulsating, swirling patterns of light (the "cover illo") with the mellifluous voice-over tones of elder fan Michael Glicksohn introducing you to the latest production from the Energumen Ballroom high atop Toronto Piezoelectric Skytower 14? Ah, that would be communication, that would be a transferal of information, a media-usage to warm the cockles of the heart of the most ardent McLuhanist. The point is, though, the definition could still be rendered workable by changing just a few words: to wit, an artist or cartoonist whose work has appeared in the fan media



ness of process, perceptions of external reality, and the like, he is able to put two and two together<sup>8</sup>, and postulates the existence of the contribution in its original form, the medium of production. Moreover, he makes the next logical (or illogical) quantum jump, and postulates that someone has produced, or created, the contribution in its postulated medium of production. He reads words, which he presumes to have been written, so he postulates the existence of a writer. He perceived fan art and he postulates the existence of a fan artist. In other words, he assumes there to be a creator for he has seen the createe? But there seems to be no direct relationship involved between the artist and the audience at all, only (at best) indirect relationships.<sup>10</sup>

Well, shit, since we don't have a direct relationship to play around with, let's just go ahead and examine the nature of the indirect relationship, whaddaya say?

Now the audience belongs to a number of different universes of discourse. If we presume the audience to be a human being,<sup>11</sup> then he shares a universe of discourse with other human beings, in that human beings all seem to perceive external stimuli through sensor organs and react with effector organs in statistically similar ways, and can then compare notes with each other about their perceptions of what has intriguingly been called "external reality". If the audience is of that subset of human beings who understand "the English language", that constitutes another convenient universe of discourse. If he is of that subcultural subset of human beings who read English language "fanzines", he shares a universe of discourse called "fandom" with other human beings called "fans". Sharing a universe of discourse with somebody means that you have a statistical chance of reacting in vaguely similar, though never identical, ways as that other person to images and symbols of that universe of discourse.



(in the year in question). Stand back and let the definition freaks at it. At any rate, fanzines seem to be the prime medium of fandom at the present time, and since the name of this article is Feedback Prime, I think we're justified in just sort of sliding over the definition, don't you? No? Well, tough shit.

6) Sexist! Male chauvinist pig! If you think we're going to let you get away with this demeaning sort of bullshit, you're crazy!--signed, Love, Your Wife.

7) In the case of certain blatant crudzines, this might be an improvement.

8) Four.

9) Watch it, kid, you're heading for a big trap. Take my advice and split while you can.--signed, T. Aquinas.

10) Unless they happen to have a direct relationship of an entirely different sort, which is still illegal in some states.

11) No help here. You'll have to decide this one for yourself.

The audience and the contributors share a number of overlapping universes of discourse.<sup>12</sup> In the aforementioned English language, they both recognize the word patterns which are the symbology of language. The word isn't the thing itself, but it is effective as a discourse-symbol of the thing. When words appear in written form such as you are reading now, they are symbols of the spoken language: symbols of symbols (of symbols of symbols, and so on). Printed two-dimensionally on a flat surface (in this case a page), these words are graphic symbols. When the medium of exposure is essentially two-dimensional in nature, it is a graphic medium. Other examples of graphic media are graffiti on shithouse walls and highway signage. Just as the writer is postured towards contributions in the graphic symbology of the written word, so too is the fan artist postured towards graphic material. He cannot produce mirrors of reality, because reality seems to have three, four, or even more dimensions, whereas graphic media such as fanzines are only two-dimensional.



The fan writer has at his disposal a fully developed graphic symbology for converting his thoughts/ideas/whatever about the multi-dimensional world into a two-dimensional form for exposure. You are reading that symbology. Similarly, the fan artist has learned about the graphic symbols he can use. These are known as tricks of the trade, and, roughly speaking, they constitute the symbology of such esoteric universes of discourse as art schools, cultural artistic heritages, and Walt Disney How-2-Draw Booklets. There are many tricks of the trade. It is a language at least as rich as the English language. Some tricks of the trade are purely technical in nature. The student learns the mechanics of drawing, proportion, color theory, design and composition in two (and more) dimensions, as well as many of the myriad variations, shortcuts, and nuances thereto. Other tricks of the trade are more philosophical in nature, and posture the student towards expressiveness of "subject matter", "integrity of form", "subtext", or whatever. These tricks of the trade are called isms.<sup>13</sup>

A base example of an ism is representationalism, which dictates integrity of form in order to mirror reality, or something like that. Vice versa, maybe. At any rate, this is relatively difficult to achieve in a graphic medium unless you happen to be a camera, and even then you probably won't do as well as the Original. Representationalists would probably like us to react to a two-dimensional drawing or painting as much as possible as we would react to the real-life object or experience for which it is a symbol. But I'm sure that a drawing of a naked lady and the presence of a naked lady in your

12) See Chapter Seven.

13) Also known as all that bullshit.

kitchen (or whatever) don't mean the same thing to you--I suppose that's known as flogging a point.

At any rate, isms may or may not have much to do with the processes of art creation, but they seem to have much to do with the after-the-fact jawing known as art criticism.

In point of fact, if you are an artist you may not understand any isms at all, but that's nothing to be upset about. If you are not an artist, you may think that a glib understanding of as many isms as possible is all that's necessary for an understanding of art itself. Which may be. I certainly wouldn't want to argue with anyone who understood all the isms of art criticism.

Art criticism springs up when the audience doesn't think he understands all the ramifications of the symbols used in the art he perceives. There is always an aura attached to the artistic process, an aura of mysticism, as if the process were somehow magical. Not magic, just processes of symbol manipulation. Though the symbols themselves--words or tricks of the trade or whatever--may vary, the basic processes of their manipulation are pretty much the same. Which sets of symbols get manipulated is a function of which universes of discourse are at hand. As a member of the universe of discourse of "artists", the fan artist has at his disposal all the artist's tricks of the trade. As a member of fandom, the fan artist has at his disposal all the symbology of fantasy. Furthermore, of course, there are the other universes and sub-universes and sub-sub-universes, and all the overlapping universes, and all the little nook-and-cranney universes, which make the whole thing so complex and frightening and that's probably where the magic comes in if it comes in anywhere.

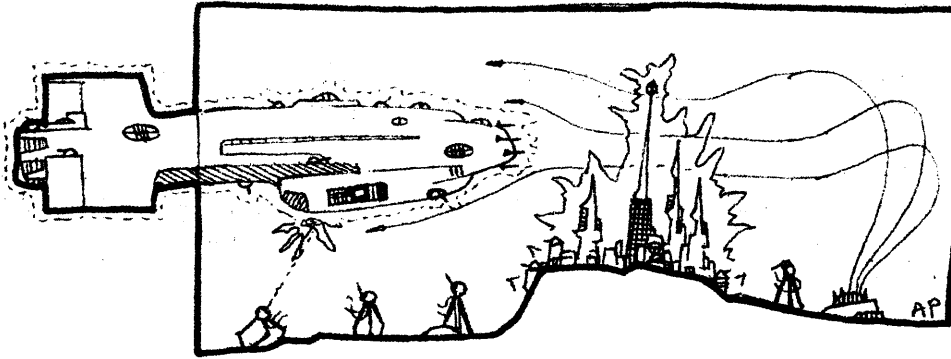
Where do these symbols come from? What is an "idea"? What is a "vision"? All these are words. Where does art come from?

Uh, I don't know.

Cybernetic processes, such as those in computers and human beings, demand feedback. Whether or not the artistic process is a cybernetic process is a matter for conjecture,<sup>14</sup> but at any rate many fan artists demand articulate art criticism as feedback from the audience. The audience on the other hand demands that the fan artist educate the audience with some of the secrets of his arcane symbology, so that he can provide the feedback the artist desires. The fan artist is reluctant to undertake such a task, but the audience pleads, "If you don't lay some of the vocabulary on me, I'll never be able to tell you how beautiful your work is and what a swell person you are." The fan artist rushes to dust off his typewriter.

But he finds there is so much vocabulary to impart. He could tell about some of the neat things he learned in his art school universe of discourse, like S-curve composition or scratchboard technique or color separation, but that would be like pissing in

14) The argumentation might go something like this, for instance: The artistic process is a cybernetic process in that it satisfies the requirements of sensor, control, effector, and feedback. The artist--his central essence, all that is his state of being, his super-ego, whatever--constitutes the central control device which converts perceptions of external events (the sensory action) into an information-carrying medium, in this case graphic in nature (the effectory impulse). The goal of this information transference would be whatever you want to argue the Function of the Artist to be. Is it to evoke the "aesthetic emotion"? Whatever. You can test your theory about the cyberfunctioning of your little artistic-process model by submitting it to random cybernetic analogues: pattern recognition, quality and nature of feedback, analogue of memory, process of learning, etc. This argumentation would require more rigorous logic than I care to involve myself with until Chapter Seven, so in the meantime perhaps it is best left to the computer jocks in the audience.



the desert or teaching a Beta Hydran two words of English and expecting him to tell you how to operate the safety override on the destruct mechanism that's set to go off at any minute.<sup>15</sup>

He could try his hand at discussing an ism or two, thereby giving his audience great insights into the terminology he would like to see in his feedback. But this is another hopeless task, especially if he isn't very hip to isms to begin with. Besides, there have been whole libraries of art criticism written on all the isms you can think of and many that you can't think of, and if the audience is interested they can read these writings. Mostly these are very dull, however, and it isn't much fun to read great treatises developing theses like "Art is in the eye of the beholder", or "It is the function of the artist to create", or "Beauty is integrity of form", or whatever. At least, I'm not very interested in reading that sort of thing, but it's perfectly all right with me if you want to. What is the artist to do?

One thing he could do is to wonder aloud if the red he sees is the same red his neighbour sees, but this is another silly ism called solipsism.

The artist posing as a writer is in a quandary. He desires articulate commentary on his work, but has become convinced he won't get it unless he writes an "article on art criticism" for a fanzine. He desires worthwhile feedback, but he doesn't know how to program it. He doesn't even think that feedback is something that can be programmed, or can it?

Finally, the artist comes to wonder whether or not the feedback he needs is articulate art criticism. The only feedback he needs for his creative acts is the normal, everyday mundane kind of feedback he gets just from living with his eyes open and his mind and heart alert. He doesn't need somebody else, audience or whatever you want to call it, to tell him in glowing, precise terms just exactly what his contribution has accomplished, or how it has failed, or anything about the contribution once it has left the artist's personal aegis. The artist's relationship with his art, as an artist, ends with the completion of his relationship with the art in its medium of production. That is all. The only tool the artist has for evoking the aesthetic emotion (if that's what he's out to evoke) is the artwork itself. Everything necessary to trigger the emotion in the audience must be inherent in the artwork itself. That is the information-carrying medium, and that is the information that is communicated as well.

After-the-fact explaining and apologizing and writing art criticism articles and demanding articulate feedback criticism--that's not a function of the artist's artistry but of his humanity. The desire for ego gratification is the name of this feedback cycle. And it's not as necessary as all that. In fact, it has been argued that perhaps all the artist desires in the way of feedback from his audience is a simple, binary on/off, yes/no, I like/I dislike kind of response. "Articulate art criticism" would be this kind of binary response couched in pretty language.

-----  
15) Beta Hydrans are pretty crafty though. He might just pull it off.

Whatever. The artist trying to justify his artistry in words is at best a silly sight. He is out of his medium. He must inflate puffy balloons of logic, easily punctured, to support his vast cosmic theories regarding the Creative Act. Instead, he should be actively creating the artwork he is trying to talk about, because in that medium he has a better chance of saying...whatever it is he wants to be saying.

Finally the artist--masquerading as a fan writer, masquerading as an art critic, masquerading as a McLuhanistic revivalist or a pragmatic representationalist or whatever his trip is--must end his masquerade. (This point is known as burning out.) This point is reached when the artist realizes that he doesn't really have the slightest conception of the actual mechanics of the artistic process or the process of creation, or any of that stuff.

I don't understand the whys and wherefores of any of this shit, man. I just draw it.

A fan artist named Bill Rotsler<sup>16</sup> has said, "I just draw the inside of my head." I guess maybe we all do. And those are strange regions in there, group. Some of those regions may never be charted. And in my case at least, I don't think I'll ever again try to write a map of them.

-----  
16) At SFCon '70 in San Francisco last year. This is a genuine authentic footnote.

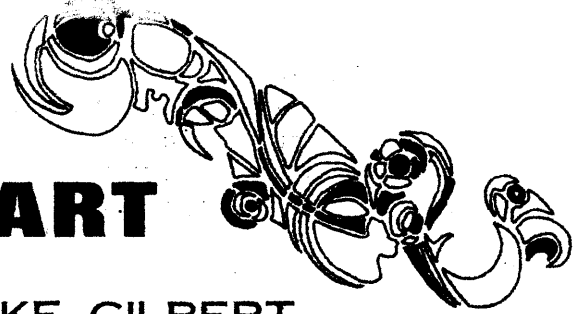
EDITOR'S NOTE:

This has been Chapter One of Feedback Prime by Grant Canfield. We regret to announce that there will be no Chapter Two forthcoming. The Author's wife has asked us to mention that the Author has contracted a rare and crippling bone disease which has localized in his typing finger. She wishes us to pass on his apologies, but he will be unable to complete the development of his "article on art criticism" at this or any other foreseeable time never ever.

Production plans for the major motion picture to be based on Feedback Prime have been indefinitely suspended. Donald Sutherland was rumoured to have been cast in the title role.



# THE STATE OF THE ART



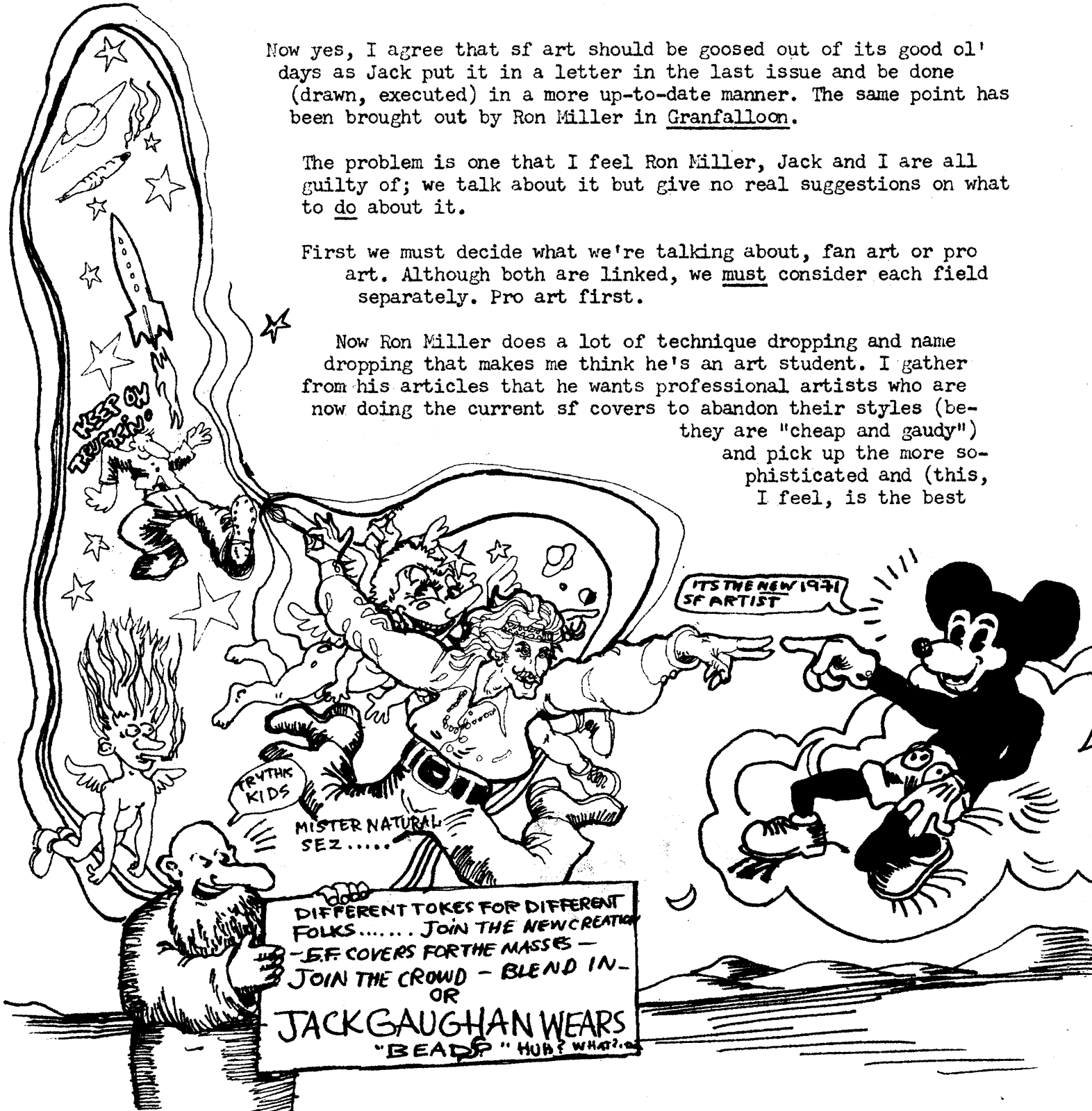
BY MIKE GILBERT

Now yes, I agree that sf art should be goosed out of its good ol' days as Jack put it in a letter in the last issue and be done (drawn, executed) in a more up-to-date manner. The same point has been brought out by Ron Miller in Granfalloon.

The problem is one that I feel Ron Miller, Jack and I are all guilty of; we talk about it but give no real suggestions on what to do about it.

First we must decide what we're talking about, fan art or pro art. Although both are linked, we must consider each field separately. Pro art first.

Now Ron Miller does a lot of technique dropping and name dropping that makes me think he's an art student. I gather from his articles that he wants professional artists who are now doing the current sf covers to abandon their styles (be- they are "cheap and gaudy") and pick up the more so- phisticated and (this, I feel, is the best



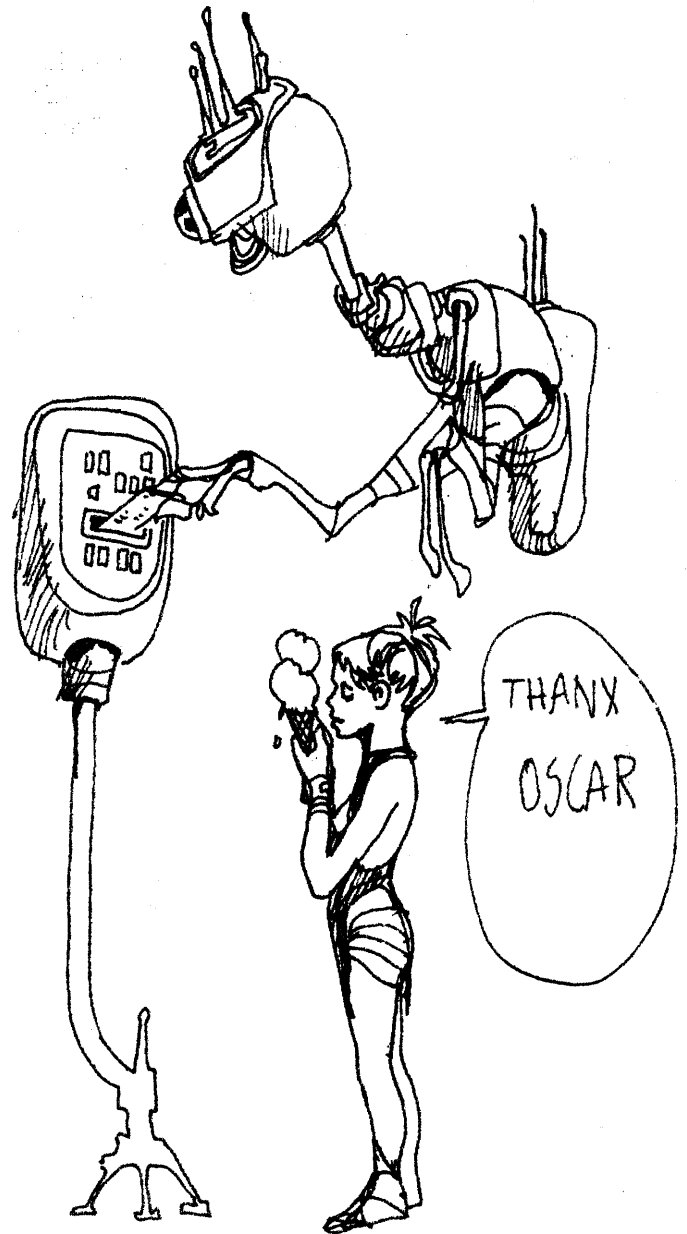
word phrase for the thought) "toney" and "kultured" methods of those whom he labels as modern artists. Now I agree on the quality of the artists he mentions (Paul Calle, Robert McCall, etc) and his motives are most fine, however, he overlooks one basic and fundamental thing--the philosophy of selling paperback books. The job of the free-lance artist in regard to paperbacks is not as easy as it seems to Ron. Paperbacks, (as well as most things) are static and reluctant to change because of the depression. Ron does not seem to grasp this. In addition, there is one even more important fact that Ron totally ignores.

Several years ago, Lancer Books made an expensive and exhaustive study of Gothic novel covers. It was found that if they deviated one bit from the standard concept of the full moon, tree, castle and frightened looking chick, the books did not sell. In fact, the results of this study were so conclusive that you'll never see a Gothic novel without a cover that follows the standardized format. It seems to me that, much to my regret, Ace Books has just concluded, inadvertantly, another such experiment concerning the Ace Specials and the Dillon covers.

Though they received much critical acclaim for the quality of their work, the Dillons, to the best of my current knowledge, will no longer be painting the covers for the Specials because the books were not selling--the buying public was not responding. The situation is the same as with the Gothics; the public is simply not buying "art" or experimentation. Therefore, the Art Director (who determines with the editor's agreement the styles and trends used on the covers) is not buying experimentation or modern art either. In fact, the only place you'll find "toney" covers is on Ballantine books, who, a while ago, had a policy as stated by their Art Director as "I don't want the books to look like science fiction." And even this was about eight months ago and it now seems as if they've had a "gothic" experience and are now doing semi-standardized, traditional sf covers. (The only really quality covers they print are some of Bob Peak's fantasy covers--he uses a bleeding pen and ink drawing.) The simple fact is that paperback companies exist to sell books, not to bring art to the general public.

Here is the crux of the problem: we have people wanting (and rightly so) a more modern outlook in paperback and (I presume) magazine illustration. But how, I ask, are you going to have it if the people aren't going to buy it? Answer that, somebody out there. I can't see any solution based in the reality of the current situation.

In the same Granfalloon article(s), Ron talks about fan art also being concerned with rolling around in and reillustrating itself ad infinitum. It's justified criticism, although I totally disagree with him when he says that if we are to "progress", there



is no place for Fabians, Barrs, Austins, and, sob! aspects of your aged commentator.

Fan art provides more room for experimentation than does professional art because the artist is working for no-one except himself. However, in condemning people who use and have perfected "anachronistic" styles, Ron overlooks perhaps the greatest factor for the popularity of such art forms.

Art, in all its forms, is a reflection of the times and, like it or not, we live in oppressive, repressive, static (if not reversive) times. The arts reflect this. Thus we have the growth of fantasy and related subjects and, for the last few years, a remarkable yearning for nostalgia in all fields and myriad forms. I may not agree with the principle of nostalgia, but, unlike Ron, I believe that the fact that it is practiced, that it has a large following and that its practitioners are masters of their craft makes what they are doing perfectly valid. Personal taste gives one no right to say they have no place in modern art because they happen to be behind the flow of modern illustration.

Myself, I would like to see more departures from the tried and true styles that they **have mastered (me included)** but I don't want to see artists following the trends of the 1930 comic art revival, or fanzines looking like an underground sado-pornographic version of the Peter Max Poster Book.



There is also the problem the artist faces if he/she has achieved fame/recognition for his work. Should he abandon what he knows he can do with ease and assurance of critical acclaim from fans for something new with dubious results? For the sake of the artist, I urge experimentation. Without it, he cannot help but stagnate so I urge I urge fan artists to try new styles and approaches but not to abandon what they have learned.

In conclusion, we find that no matter how much we want change, we cannot have it without the support of an audience that also wants the change. I am afraid that the present economic and social situation will not permit experimentation in the professional field. But fandom can have experimentation and should have enough flexibility to support it.

So I'll no longer sit and



make comments; it's time to air out our brushes. I propose to other fan artists that we test our mettle and that of the fans. Let's all try something new; let's see if we can do it and if the fans can accept it. Let's see if the fannish art critics can accept experiments, or if they would prefer a static selection of artists and styles. What do you say? Or do you care at all?





# THE VILLAIN OF THE PIECE

BY JACK GAUGHAN

As an artist, a painter...more precisely, an illustrator I (and I think I may, in this respect, speak for others besides myself similarly employed)...we more or less hang about the fringes of both the publishing business and those professional societies devoted to promoting and protecting the interests of the writers.

While science fiction is, I think, unique in even recognising the existence of its illustrators, it is also a sort of lonely place in which to work. Oh dear me! It's not all that sad. We're not languishing in garrets ignored and misunderstood, but in many ways and for various reasons we are "out of it".

Let's see if I can explain what I mean.

When a book is planned to be published (we shall assume a manuscript exists), an editor will have read the manuscript, suggested or even have made changes in it...if it's of any consequence at all, memos will have been sent around to the various concerned people in the publishing firm apprising them of the nature and supposed quality and appeal of this book. There might even be a meeting on it. A number of heads are brought together on how best to market this item. For that's what it is...a marketable item, and publishers are in the business of marketing such items. There have been conferences and go arounds and discussions. After all, you're talking about one helluva lot of paper and type and distribution costs and overhead and salaries and like that. What I mean to say is this thing is given some thought. Now the cover.

In the case of most publishers, the book comes up on their art director's schedule and he's given the task of producing a package. Right here let's confine ourselves to science fiction because what I have to say doesn't apply to those who publish more or less pre-sold best sellers. The A. D. calls an artist. The artist is one he can depend on and one who works in the field.

The artist may or may not read the book. In SF I believe most of them do read the book. He produces a cover. It is accepted or not. Period.

No conferences.

No hints as to how to market the book.

Nor any word as to what is expected especially in relation to THIS PARTICULAR book.

Nothing.

Just sketch and get approved or bounced.

The artist is all by himself. He has no knowledge of the conferences that have gone on before or whatever.

Now what this means is that he is considered less an illustrator of that book than a package designer in a category. Unless some attention is paid to each individual book, I can put no other interpretation on this situation. We gotta book. It's SF. So put an SF cover on it: it should be eye-catching (a little poster) and let 'em know it's SF.

OK.

Now in a category, (assuming you'll grant my premise that the illustrator is really a package designer of category books) you have certain things with which to work to let the prospective book-buyer know what he's getting. A western has horses and guys in western costumes and horses and mountains and guns and horses and maybe an indian or two. The old last chance saloon, a hanging oil lantern, saddles etc. Nurse novels have pretty ladies in funny hats. And the Gothic formula is so set it's funny. Light in window of building, lady in voluminous dress, rocks, sea, trees...but definitely the light in the window. Fine.

To this day this practise (with which I can't argue because it evidently sells books) has imposed a cycle of styles on paperback covers (after all, that's what I'm talking about); one year each illustrator outdoes the other in his photographic technique, then that palls and each one (still working with his limited range of props) goes "painty" or for close-ups or for white backgrounds or squared-off layouts. I mean that as long as his approach is limited (and it is) by the powers that be (them as buy cover paintings) then he's forced into ridiculous stylistic postures with his paint and his craft. That is now a way of life. It exists. And I'm sorry to say is going to continue.

And the villain, if villain there be, is NOT the publisher, the editor, the indifferent art director who never reads the books, the promotion man or the distributor.

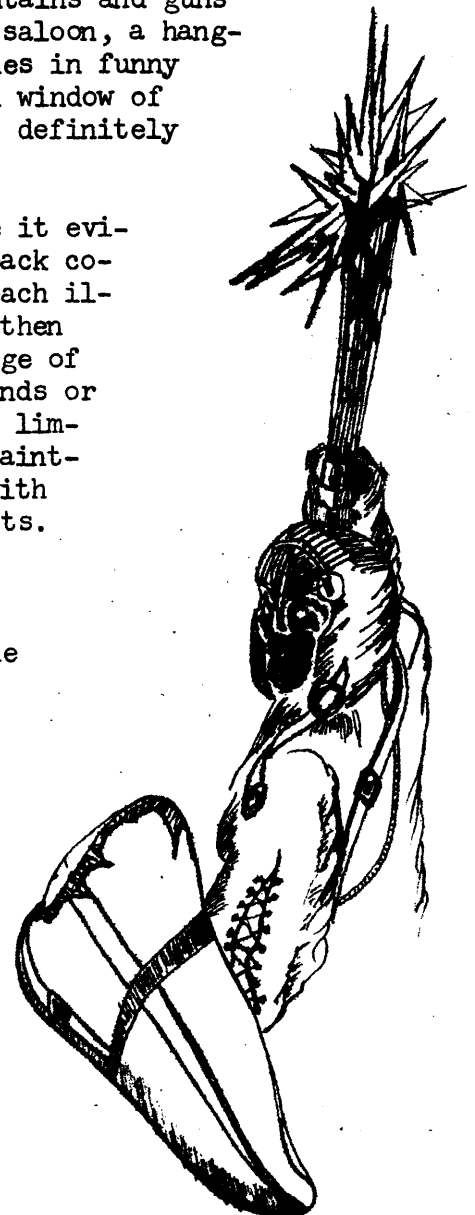
The villain, if villain there be, is you the reader!

The reader reads largely by category.

The western reader reads...westerns.

The science fiction reader reads science fiction.

I know of no case, particularly in SF, where a cover made a book sell more than it normally would, with the exception of those covers with NAME authors on them. The authors are NAME authors because a lot of people like their books. Therefore a lot of people buy their books. I am willing to admit of the possibility of a cover selling a book on its own merits but shall doubt



until I am quite clearly shown otherwise.

These are observations...not dicta.

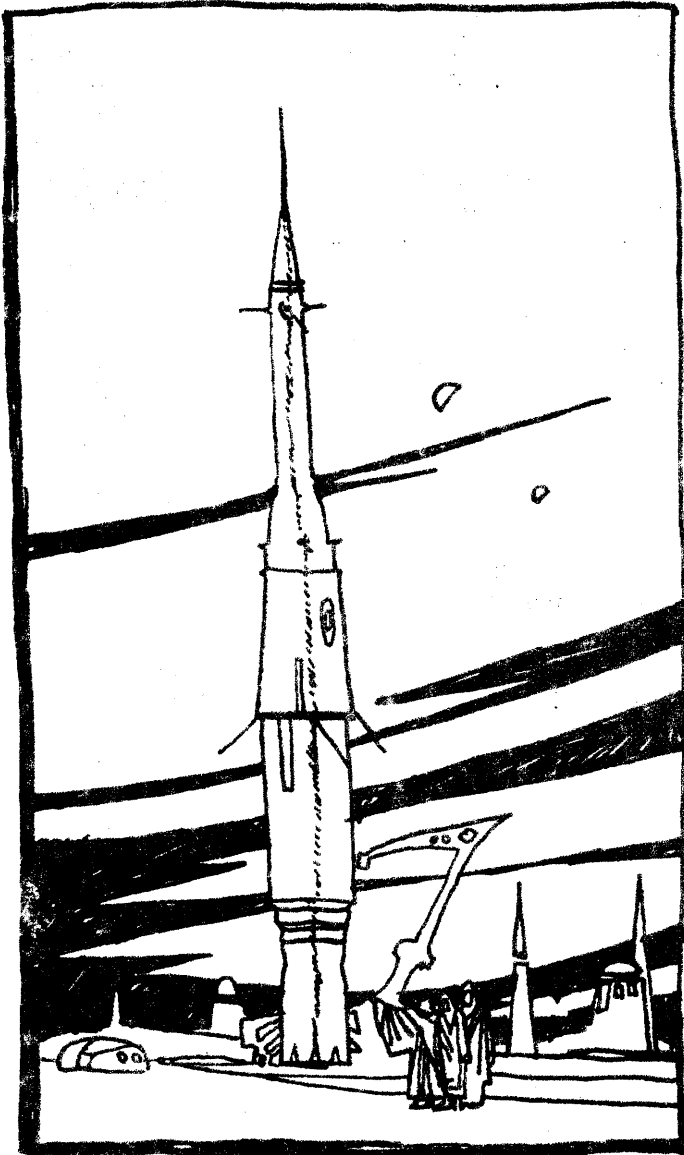
Now what this means is that the artist has to work in his category and keep his eye on the field. If everybody does red covers, he had better start doing blue ones so his will be seen on the stands. And they have to be seen to be sold.

In the CATEGORY of science fiction what have we to work with? Well, we got planets and rocket ships, machines of various sizes and descriptions (machines and their shapes have fashions which change with the times too!), rockets and space suits. We had surrealistic landscapes for a time and doubtless will again. And the variations in the field were not in what you painted but in how you painted it or them. It has thus become a field in which one cannot be so much interested in illustrating the story as in coming up with some catchy variation on the themes...the gimmicks.

A few years ago I thought the millenium had come.

And I thought Terry Carr had ushered it in.

And in spite of the fact that I wasn't doing the Ace Specials, I felt pretty good about it.



It made my job more interesting...yes, even easier. Merely by utilizing the Dillons (if not introducing them...Leo Dillon was doing Galaxy illos some years ago) and getting the work in print, a whole new area in which to work was opened up. Several publishers asked me, among others, to do some of that there SF work without the rockets and beasties and things. "I mean, you know, Jack ...get ARTY!"

But no more.

I don't remember an exact quote but it went something like this in LOCUS...a news item....

"The Dillons are no longer doing covers for the Ace Specials as their covers did not sell the books."

That's not a quote but that's the gist. I mean that's the phrase they use. Your covers "aren't selling".

Aren't selling?

Isn't it rather that somebody isn't buying?

When this series first came out, I was pretty set in my ways about the marketing principles of covers and I thought about them in these pretentious terms. And I said, to myself, it'll never go.



Never work. Never sell. Then as time went by I changed my mind and rather enjoyed not having to paint fins and scales and teeth but "get arty". I even swung pretty free with "my" magazines for a while.

Until somebody hinted that this cover with the spaceman on it was doing better than that one with my soul on it.

My soul "wasn't selling".

Out there somewhere is somebody, maybe it's not you or anybody who'd conceivably even have heard of a fan magazine, who reads and buys category fiction without regard to the quality of the story or its awards. The Ace Specials have garnered many a nomination and perhaps as many awards. They are good books. Far and away above the "average" output. But out there somebody didn't see the covers as science fiction and didn't buy them.

"The Dillons weren't selling."

No, my friend. Somebody wasn't buying.

Why?

Go back to the beginning of this little jaunt through "packaging" and start over. Do not pass go. Do not collect two hundred dollars. And HELP!!

# THIS FUNNY HOBBY

OR

SOME DAYS IN THE LIFE  
*another*  
OF A WRITER

BY ANDREW J OFFUTT

## foreword

John Brunner is a man whose work I respect highly. In an article in SFR he discussed the problems of the holders of the strange job called ~~WRITING~~. The article was called This Funny Job. One man had advised John that he set a target of two single-spaced pages daily, "yet frequently fails to

achieve more than a third of that and almost never exceeds it." [He creates SINGLE-spacely? Lord!--ajo] Another told him that creating 1700 words had left him physically weary...and so on. In the course of the article and in a letter in the same issue, Brunner said what I suspected: that his problem is quite the reverse.

So is mine.

## I: Relaxing for fun and profit

I have defined a writer as the happiest man alive, because he gets paid for doing his thing, his hobby. Now and again I get some funny looks when I say that, and I read and hear about how this or that writer has a terribly hard time creating, or is or was blocked, or has to fight himself back to the machine. This has always astonished me. Writing's a hobby. Also a compulsion. It must be done; I must do it. I wrote a novel when I was nine (cowboys, what else?), and stories right along, and a novel when I was 13 or so (ERB, what else?). I wrote three novels while in college (pretending to be taking notes during dull lectures). Two of them still read pretty well. I started to add "strangely", but that would not be valid. I did some darned good writing in college, and a little good thinking. It is a time in one's life when one's brain is turned on, stimulated, and some shockingly good things can come out of it. (Shocking in retrospect.) I was a goddam child, of course, and naive and incredibly stupid, when I graduated at 20. But my mind functioned.

Cut to 1967. I had published a few short stories, solo and in unlikely collaborations; had put in several years with Proctor & Gamble until I outgrew that; had put in a year in the life insurance business and then had gone into that same business for myself; had begun managing. Suddenly, after saying No about seven times, I finally said yes



and took up the management of three insurance agencies in three different cities. Rip-ping up and down the highways. Holding meetings here and there. Playing Executive in motels (that's a fun game too, and most players never outgrow it). I was a member in good standing of the crisis-of-the-day club. I was exhausting myself, mentally and physically. Too, I knew what my twice-daily Alka-Seltzing for that fluttery gut was in all likelihood leading to. Yet with the exhaustion came extreme mental stimulation.

On weekends I was in sore need of relaxation.

I relaxed in front of the Selectric. (I like the best machinery, too; the Mercedes and the Selectric are, although the Underwood P-48 and the SCM-250 I had for a year each were Bhad Nnews). In six months of such heavyweight management, capped --and made bearable by-- Saturday-and-Sunday writing, I created three short stories and 5½ novels. They started selling. I closed the out-of-Morehead agencies. Four months later I made certain other arrangements, and took a back seat in andrew offutt associates(unltd).

Finally, in August 1970, I left the insurance business altogether. I did some designs, spent a lot of money, and had an office built in here at home, Funny Farm. Among other things, I have shelves designed and measured for the encyclopedia, the ten or twelve ringbinders I use, and for paperbacks; how much shelf space people waste, putting 7-inch paperbacks onto 10-inch shelves!

I had been in the life/hospitalization insurance business seven years. In the final 20 months I managed, selling nothing because I did not try to (that's true capitalism). In that same period I sold sixteen 50,000-word novels. Settings, times, subject matter, "type" and even styles --I did a Victorian, for instance-- varied.

Since August 1967 I've sold just under two million words. In 1969 10 novels sold, over a half-million words. In 1970 12 novels, four of which, finally, were sf with my own name on them, and a couple of shorts and an underground-newspaper article. (Well, all right: Screw.) I have written no short stories for two years --oops, one, sorry. Anyhow, they are harder to write, for me, than novels. Someday Harlan and I must discuss that in public.

Honest injun: All the foregoing has nothing to do with self-aggrandizement. It's just telling you that I am a writer, and why, and a little of the How. I suppose I worked my tail off; to me it was all relaxation. Hobby.

## II: Whaddaya mean, a fulltime weekend writer?

Until very recently, all my work was done on weekends, on the IBM. I would start at about 1:30 PM, sometimes a little earlier, on Saturdays. And write until dinner call: between 6:30 and 7:30. Interruptions were (1) frequent bellows for more coffee; (2) bathroom; (3) lunch: cheese and a little wine. Sunday's schedule was the same, without lunchbreak. I wrote at a secretary's metal typing table, at the top of the steps in the hallway of this huge old house.

Meanwhile, the four offuttspring and my coonhound would be doing their things, and since I sat facing a backyard window I was occasionally forced to, ah, arbitrate, uh, disagreements --or pause to watch birds. In the living room downstairs the telly was usually going, and in the kitchen my



Jodie would have the AM radio tuned to her godawful Bluegrass/country/Western station: noise. In the bedroom behind me my FM played music --hopefully loud enough to drown out the telly and the other radio.

I do not know if I could write in proper auctorial solitude and silence or not. I'm afraid to try! At present there are two radios going in the house, my office door's open as usual, Missy's coughing, and some others are getting a bit loud with their Hot Wheels.

During the week there were other things to do: research, editing first-drafts and proof-reading submission drafts (I don't type those; why should a creator do copy work, any more than an attorney or a business executive?). Sunday nights I still read aloud the week's production, an average of 20,000 words. With cons and Reds ball games and parties, that averages out to about a novel a month. That's decent production; lord, who wants to work ALL the time?

Sure, there are spurts; one Monday night in October I had an idea, and hand-outlined a novel while watching the NBC movie. Next day I typed that outline. Following night I read/changed/expanded that, while watching election returns. Wednesday I typed that: a long outline of 6500 or so words. Thursday I typed the first chapter, but had to stop to go make a speech. Friday-Saturday-Sunday-Monday I wrote on it, and finished it Tuesday. That novel's writing was a happening, to me, and I enjoyed rereading it because it was created so fast I hardly noticed what it was about!

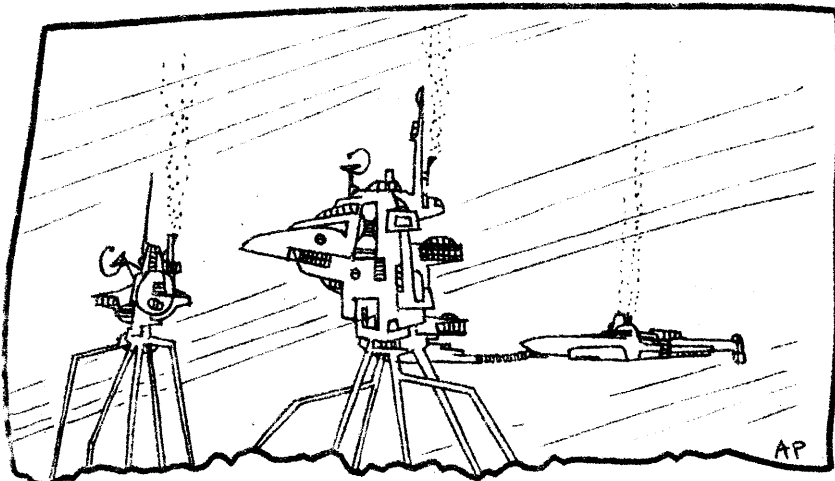
Last summer, June 1970, I experienced my first Block, that ancient writer's BEM I'd heard about.

Stupid; it was MY fault. The (very sercon sf) novel was 2/3 outlined, see, with the ending decided (although it got changed when I reached it), and the previous weekend had seen completion of a chapter, a section, and the outline. Simultaneously. Very neat. Very stupid. That's the WORST place to stop. Stupid. I HANDED myself a block. It's a book I feel deeply about, too; it came a little less easily than some. It's the pretty-immediate future, as I see it, and regional (I live in Appalachia and most people who write about Kentucky ruralites don't know what the holy hell they are typing about), drawing strongly, aside from personal observations/notes/thinking, from three books: (The)Territorial Imperative, Naked Ape, and Environmental Handbook. (Thanks, Ballantine. I meant to send it to you.)

Anyhow, I blocked. When I came back to it the following weekend, for the first time in my life I could NOT pick up and get going.

I fought. My brain fought back. I bathroomed three times, washed a pair of corfam boots,

wished it were Winter so I could chop wood, separated original and carbon of the novel just finished for submission, got up and down, fixed more coffee. It was awful. I sweated. (I do not perspire. I have never perspired. I sweat. And no, you're wrong: I weigh 154 at 6'1".)



I fought. I kept sitting down and trying to type. I snarled, cursed, cussed, obscenitized. Kept on fingering keys. (I use three fingers, one of which is on my left hand. It gets sor-



est.) I kept on. Come on, damn you!

I PREVAILED! It had been awful. It had lasted 45 minutes, and now I know what a block is. I'd lieber forget, and I will never ever stop at a stopping point again!

I can't see that a block ever need be longer, assuming one has any control over himself at all. Ideas come out of the woodwork, daily, and who writes something he doesn't WANT to write?

### III: Sex for fun and profit

Now I would rather talk --and drink, they go together-- than anything I can think of. Next I'd rather write: talking on paper, right? And I'd really rather write erotica than anything else, with interruptions for sf or something every now and then. I think most people know I write pseudonymous erotica (say porn, but I reject the word as I reject the concept). I am a FAN of erotica (some of it IS porn...). We read quite a bit of it. (In general I prefer my own.)

"Jodie," I told my wife after that block, "this thing's a bitch and I feel drained. Also it's so bloody bloody, because that's the way the US is getting and going to be, and there's no sex in it. Once I relieve myself of this novel I am going to do some high level offen-ge-goofing."

"What're you going to do?" she asked, with visions of sugarplums, Nassau, Heidelberg and probably poverty dancing in her 'ead.

"Write something wild and sexy as hell," I told her. "Got this idea for a vampire sexy. Brother and sister, see, in New York, now. But they don't suck the blood out of necks..."

That's just what I did. The Castle Keeps was finished at 70,000 words the weekend before Midwestcon. Realizing that TCK had taken a year to accumulate in notes and to germinate, and four weekends rather than the usual three to first-draft, I got the outline and ten or so thousand words of the wompyr thing done during the week. I was going to Midwestcon; it was a weekend; I wrote every weekend. Therefore I felt it fair to go only if I did at least half a weekend's work in advance. It's never seemed so to me, writing longass fanzine articles like this one with a headache from last night's party and so on, but yes...I guess I am disciplined. By other people's lights, I mean. It still seems to me that I am a lazy, undisciplined flibbertigibbet, and lord knows what I'd accomplish if I tried working for a living on a daily basis. (Probably create a continuing series character and publish 80 million words of TYPING, as opposed to writing.)

(The wild and sexy vampire book is The Devoured, sexy vampire fans, Midwood 508M-195-29, for a buck ninety-five. Sexless vampires you can buy for less money...)



Finally I return to John Brunner's article This Funny Job, which spurred this one. (It's all Brunner's fault, you see.)

He talked about some writers having so much trouble, and also about the musicians who sweat out all the duller stuff (harder? More socially acceptable?) --then relax by blowing their brains out: jazz. Relaxing.

Maybe the writers who sweat so hard should take breaks. What did they always WANT to write? (I LOVE those bloody Italian Westerns and would love to write scripts for one. And to be the bad guy in one. Lee Van Cleef's uglier, but I can ride better.) What would they rather write than anything? A Western? A corny adventure or a mystery? S&S? (I've perpetrated six of those. One was very sexy, strictly for my Jodie and me. The other five were MEANT to sell, but...) A sexy book? (let us not overlook the opportunity to pun off the word jazz here, fans).

DO it. It's relaxation. (So is playing Writer at parties and cons, but that doesn't make any money.) Do it --as long as there's some discipline involved. Mine is simple. A new sf novel every time my agent sells one. Creation on weekends only, letters and articles during the week and no fair on weekends, that's cheating. Meanwhile...I relax and support us all by doing my hobby. God grant that the sf continues to sell... and the erotica too.

It would be HELL to have to write it --and I do have to-- and not be able to SELL it!

And WERE  
coming AFTER  
YOU NEXT...



# TONIGHT'S REPORTS ARE FROM OTTAWA, **WASHINGTON AND...** **THE MOON!**

BY LYDIA DOTTO



When an oxygen tank exploded in the service module of the Apollo 13 spacecraft last April, it understandably gave astronauts Jim Lovell, Jack Swigert and Fred Haise a rather troublesome mission. But after they'd returned safely to earth and had been wined, dined, medalled and paraded by President Nixon, the in-joke making the rounds among newsmen was that it had all been a Sinister Plot by NASA's public affairs office to bolster lagging interest in the space program.

It certainly bolstered the media's interest at any rate. Until 13's accident, the press had been on the verge of abandoning the space program altogether; the only reason Apollo 14 made it out of the starting gate, coverage-wise, was because of 13.

There is a great deal of irony in this. NASA officials had bent over backwards to accommodate the press on Apollo 13, precisely because they sensed creeping public non-chalance about the program would damage the agency's already precarious standing with Congress. In earlier days, when space enjoyed an unprecedented vogue, NASA was in a position to dictate to the media what they could and could not cover. It was a power they often chose to exercise; thus, although openness had always been the official policy, this was notoriously more fiction than fact on some missions. However, newsmen I've talked to - they represent most of the major North American networks, newspapers, wire services and newsmagazines - give NASA full marks for openness on 13.

(Perhaps, at this point, I should explain my involvement in all of this. Due to the exigencies of life in the school of journalism at Carleton University, I'm writing a thesis on media coverage of the manned space program. The aforementioned newsmen, located variously in New York, Washington and Toronto, constitute what is commonly known as "live" research. I also happen to intend being a space reporter, if you'll forgive the term. Some people regard this ambition dubiously, given that I'm a female. But that's another story - a long one...)

To get back to the point, Apollo 13 represented two media firsts - the first time a pool reporter was allowed into Mission Control and the first time a camera was allowed on a recovery helicopter. The latter concession merely provided better TV; the former, wangled out of NASA after years of pleading by news representatives, was fortuitous for the agency. They were able realistically to claim they didn't conceal any vital air-to-ground communication; in fact, they didn't even discontinue this communication during press conferences, which had been their habit up until Apollo 13. They'd obviously learned their lesson in the mid-60s when they received generous lumps from the press for concealing communications tapes after Gemini 8 went tumbling out of control in earth orbit.

To a large extent, media coverage of the space program has always depended on NASA's good will, since the agency possesses an effective monopoly on all air-to-ground communication. Telemetry, voice and television signals are routed to Houston through NASA's Manned Space Flight Network and from there are fed, in the case of the voice and television signals, to the media. Everyone gets the same thing (although CBC and CTV take this feed off CBS and NBC respectively). At the cape, they can take their own pictures, but this is pointless since NASA feeds excellent shots from strategically-placed cameras on the launch pad and in chase planes. Likewise, the cameras on the recovery ship and helicopters are pool feeds, as are the televised programs from the spacecraft. The networks are therefore essentially reduced to "color" coverage since the hard news aspect is fully handled by NASA and the astronauts themselves.

The result of this has been journalistic gymnastics often unparalleled in absurdity, and a proliferation of studio experts and hangers-on whose connection with space has sometimes been rather tenuous.

(Having made my studio debut on Apollo 14, I hesitate to be so harsh about this. Actually, Apollo 11 was the only real victim of these excesses. I remember a CBS ad in the New York Times - coming to you live from Washington, London, the Smithsonian, JFK airport and even Disneyland for god's sake!) Since 11, some of the networks have picked up knowledgeable, articulate in-house experts - I'm thinking of CBS with Wally Schirra and CBC with Bill Rector - and coverage subsequent to 11 has actually been pretty good, although 13 was sensationalized. (During his visit to Toronto, Jim Lovell said the press had generally been "very kind to us" but added with respect to 13 "they seemed to overdramatize the dangers," - this from a man who was about as alarmed by the whole matter as anyone.)

Through the years, coverage of the space program has largely been a matter of explaining technical intricacies and gee-whizzing about the wonder of it all. In the early days, there was the added element of hide-and-seek intrigues. NASA was more than a little paranoid about live coverage of launches, a paranoia not unjustified in view of the frequency with which boosters were exploding on the launch pad in the late '50s. There was also the fact that the military mind still prevailed at that point and a lot of payloads, when they eventually started getting them up, were classified.

Undaunted, newsmen would camp on jetties in the Florida swamps for days and nights at a time waiting for launches which were often peremptorily scrubbed. Not one newsman I talked to ever mentioned actually nabbing a launch in this peculiar manner; a lot of them, however, did catch colds. In any event, old-style journalistic enterprise was the order of the day. CBS Broadcaster Walter Cronkite once said the most reliable way of assessing the importance of activity at the Cape was to cruise around Cocoa Beach habitats. A noticeable absence of space people meant another night on the jetties.

By 1961, when the US fin-



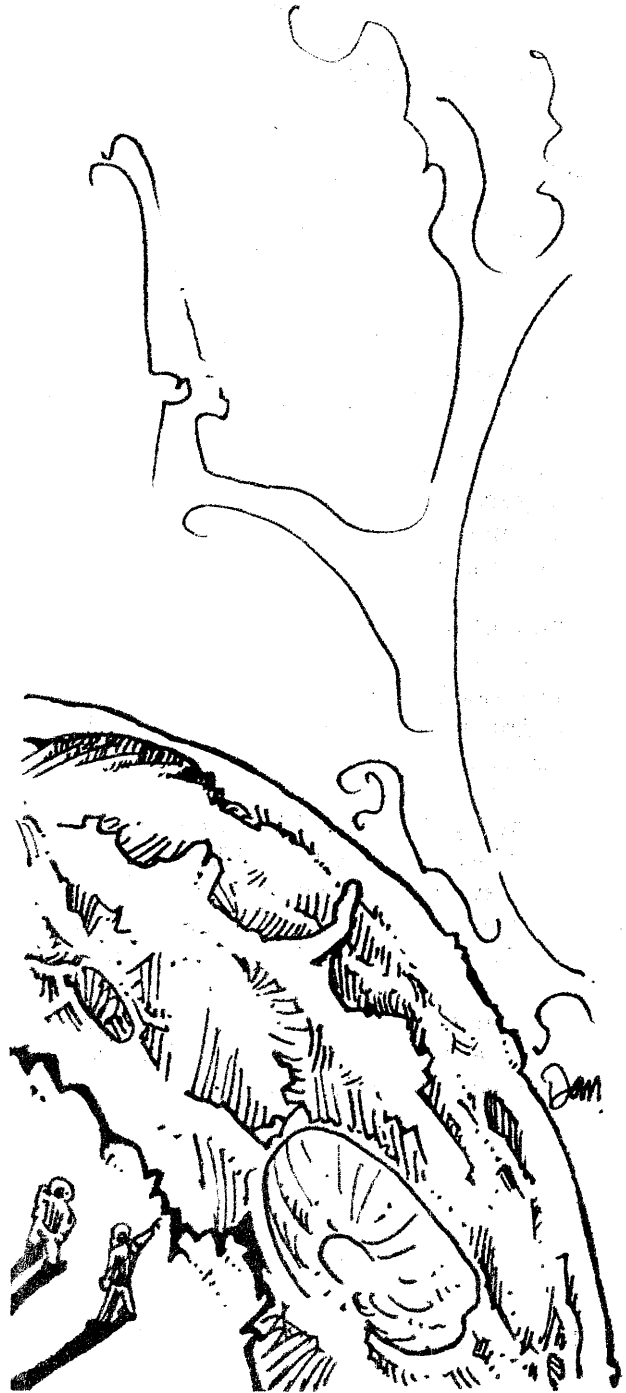
ally got a man into space, NASA has loosened up somewhat. Alan Shepard's launch was broadcast live, but President Kennedy had called NASA public affairs officer Paul Haney fretting about the reliability of the launch escape system. Haney inferred this to mean the President was worried about live coverage of a possible launch pad abort.

News coverage of space didn't really come into its own until the advent of the on-board TV camera, in October, 1968, on Apollo 7, the first manned Apollo flight after the fire. Prior to that mission, the astronauts vigorously opposed taking cameras along, complaining of already overloaded time lines, but NASA resolved the snafu in favor of the cameras basically for public relations reasons. Notwithstanding this, Apollo 7 commander Wally Schirra, hassled by an unexpected head cold and a misunderstanding with Mission Control, peevishly refused to broadcast the first show on schedule. Later he and his crewmates unbent and produced the Wally, Walt and Donn show "from high above everything".

TV newsmen like to claim the space program is overwhelmingly a visual show. In one sense they're right - if you cover the space program solely as an adventure story, which they do. The newspapers are for space nuts like me who want to know in minute detail what's going on. (Surprise, surprise! Most space reporters covering space do know what's going on.) But TV does have its problems. Like, for instance, when Alan Bean fritzed out Apollo 12's lunar TV camera and the networks had to scramble around with animation and simulations for the lunar walks. Every lunar camera since then has had a lens cap. This didn't do much good on 13, but Alan Shepard and Ed Mitchell were super-careful about it on 14. Not as super-careful, mind you, as the TV newsmen were being - vicariously, of course. I was sitting in the CBC studio during the second lunar walk and every time the astronauts moved the camera, there would be much muttering and gnashing of teeth in the studio.

Even Mission Control got a bit uptight about it because at that point, going back into the LM for the back-up black-and-white camera would have screwed up the time-line. It's doubtful they would have done it.

For two reasons, however, the concern over the camera on the second walk seemed a little excessive. First, Shepard and Mitchell were trekking out to Cone Crater, out of range of the camera. Second, the camera is incapable of broadcasting liftoff from the moon, since it is powered from the descent stage which is cut off some time prior to launch. This launch is about the only thing the networks haven't succeeded in convincing NASA to televise, but they'd probably eventually get it if the Apollo missions weren't running out.



Apollo 14 was notable for two other aspects of visual coverage. I can't recall any other launch where they've been able to show not only first stage jettison, but second stage and launch escape tower jettison as well. And at splashdown, cameras picked up the capsule long before they did on any other mission. For the first time, viewers saw the three main chutes come out.

The intervening coverage, of course, had its ups and downs. The mission ran into a series of middling-to-serious problems en route to the moon and press coverage of same was sluggish. Some papers never did get around to adequately explaining the true nature of the docking problem.

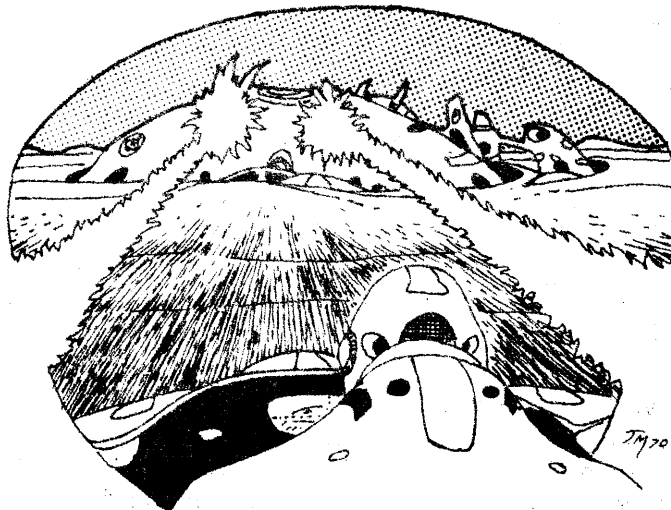
But these are nit-picking problems compared to my real gripe with media handling of the space program. It's like the Daveyreport on the mass media says: "there has to be a dramatic, disruptive event before traditional journalism will acknowledge that a situation exists." The result is that people are constantly being "ambushed by events."

Ever since the beginning of the space program, the media have emphasized only its Buck Rogers aspect; that's a valid aspect, but it isn't the only one. In the Cold War atmosphere in which the program was born, there was little attempt to realistically assess its place in a technological society or its ramifications for that society.

The time to decide if space exploration is a worthwhile pursuit is at the beginning, not after the money has been spent and the expertise acquired. Yet, largely because the media treated the whole thing as little more than an extravaganza, this crucial point was ignored and the public abandoned the space program after they had their extravaganza in Apollo 11.

I know, I know. I'm sure there are problems-on-earth backlashes out there. That's another argument completely - one that I can't go into here. Suffice it to say that whatever the pros and cons of the space program, the media have done their share to ensure that it is a prime example of built-in obsolescence. As a journalist, it appalls me that this should be so, but there it is.

The absurdity of it all staggers me. I'm a relatively recent convert to sf, but for the last year I've been immersed in science fiction and science fact. Maybe that's affected my brain - but I keep thinking 1971 should be the beginning of the space age, not the end.



# MY 2¢ WORTH

BY SUSAN GLICKSOHN

I have always dimly suspected that mathematics involves a creative process.

As a grade-school child, I whizzed through arithmetic, mostly so I could get on to the interesting stuff, like "reading". I figured that "rithmetic" was probably useful for looking after my bankbook, just as grammar was useful in writing--but dull, dull, dull.

Then I hit high-school math. Or it hit me. Arithmetic, you learn.  $2 \times 2 = 4$ ,  $2 + 2 = 4$ . Memorize it. Use it. Math, I discovered, you have to understand. Oh, I learned how to do math, eventually, sort of. I sat at home Saturdays, memorizing theorems and sample problems along with Latin conjugations and the uses of the ablative absolute. And finally the day came, after about four years of memorizing, when I knew I understood Latin, not just the meanings of the words, but their sense, and could appreciate the formal beauty of Cicero's perfectly balanced sentences, or the rightness and grace of Catullus' lyrics. Math, they told me, was like that too; but I never understood it. Not that I tried all that hard--if I couldn't puzzle out the homework, there was good old Rodney across the aisle who liked sf too, and who perceived immediately which triangles were congruent, and why and how to prove it in six different elegant ways. It appeared to be intuitive, almost, and certainly enjoyable, this understanding of mathematics; it seemed to be closely akin to my almost-intuitive understanding of poems or novels, and the delight I could take in exploring their symbols or images or themes.

It seemed creative.

I passed math, passed it quite well on memory and work and a kind of faith--teacher says if I do this problem this way, I will get the right answer. With relief, I left math behind to explore the creative processes I could understand. Then I ended up, almost inevitably, marrying a mathematics teacher-to-be, the son of the chief computer programmer for Toronto. Math people!

"Of course you can understand math. You just had bad teachers" said Michael Glicksohn.

"You've just convinced yourself you can't do math. The human mind can do anything it



wishes to do," said Paul Glicksohn.

"No, I had good teachers--one of the best in Ontario, even. They had to be good, to teach me the little they did. All I'm saying is, I cannot understand the creative bases of mathematics. I can barely tell a piccolo from a piano, either; and you could train me for years to talk about music and chatter learnedly about the first movement of Mahler's second symphony, but I still wouldn't have the slightest understanding of what was really happening when you and Rosemary played the record of that symphony. Michael could tutor me for years...."

"No. NO!! Not for all the beer in Ballantine's brewhouse!!!"

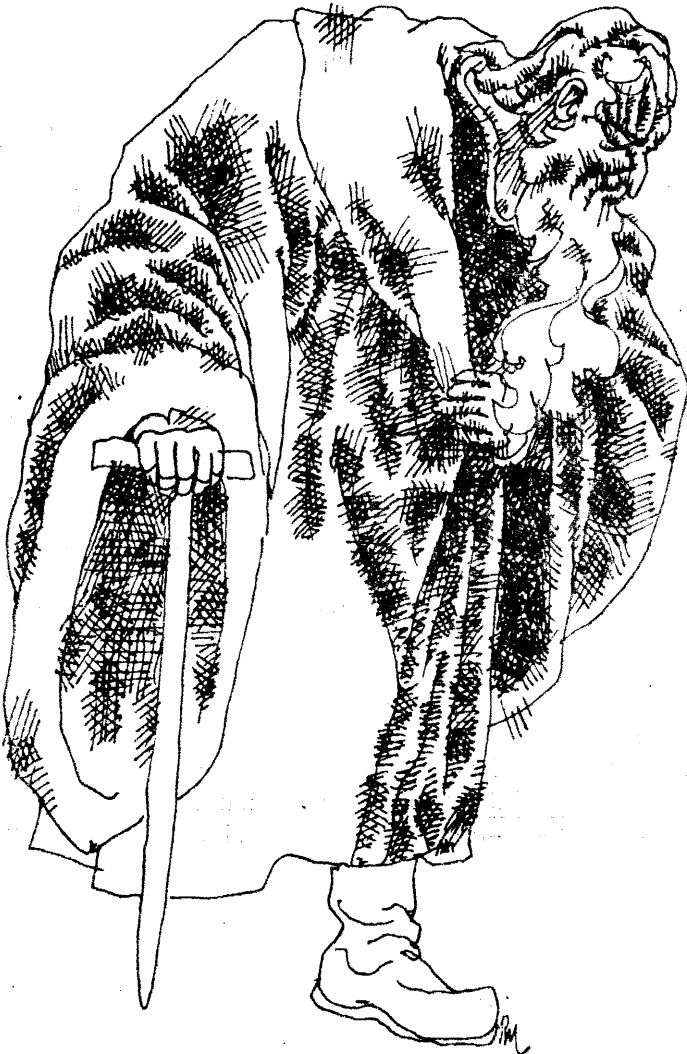
"And I'd never have a mathematical mind, any more than I have a musical ear."

"She's right, Dad. I came rushing home with a really elegant proof of the irrationality of the base ten logs of the integers from 1 to 9, and she didn't even care! I had to write to Bob Vardeman about it instead. No mathematical soul there, no feeling for logic and symmetry, no..."

"New proof? Let's see it, Mike." And they forgot about me.

Then Michael brought home a book for me. A Mathematician's Apology by G.H.Hardy, is a noted mathematician's explanation of his life--of his creative process. It is, even for me, a moving document.

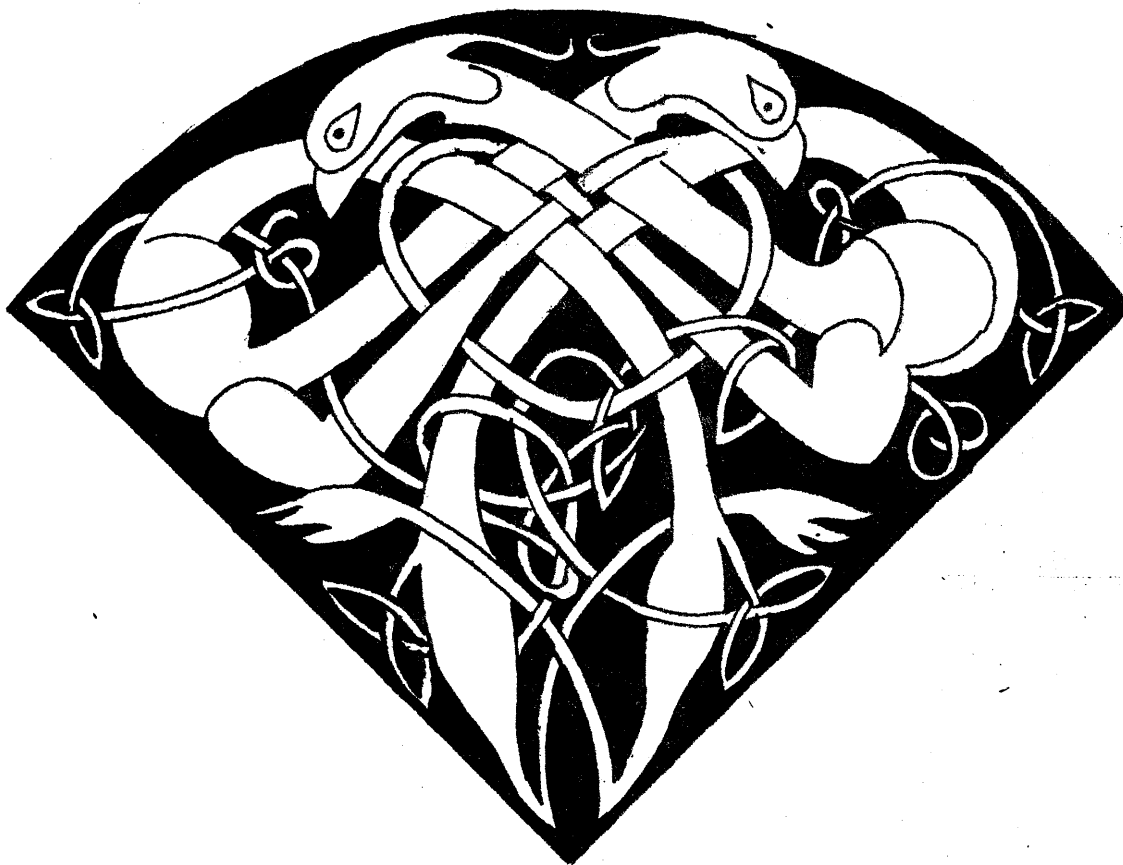
The essay (it's only 92 pages long) was first published in 1940, when Hardy was in his early 60's. The 1967 re-issue includes a lengthy foreword (it's 58 pages) by C.P.Snow, who was not only a brilliant junior fellow at Cambridge when his friend Hardy was a brilliant senior scholar, but who has recognized and attempted in his novels to bridge the gap between the "two cultures" of art and science. While it tends to shift the balance of the book away from Hardy-on-mathematics to Hardy-the-man, the foreword is valuable to the non-mathematical reader for precisely that reason. It describes, of course, a typical, almost legendary don-figure, eccentric, early setting himself aloof from the 'normal' round of human affairs to sip port and observe cricket, to share brilliant esoteric conversations and conduct brilliant esoteric research in his academic cloister. Yet it also shows a likeable human being, with a youthful "lightness" of spirit, generous to friends, the man many of us seldom picture behind The Scientist; and it emphasizes the basic meaning of the essay which follows. Snow stresses that "There is something... at which he [Hardy] was clearly superior to Einstein or Rutherford or any other great genius; and that is at turning any work of the intellect, major or minor or sheer play, into a work of art."





Mathematics is an art. Hardy describes, with simplicity, candour, and an undercurrent of wry wit--what it has been like to have been an artist. Make no mistake; the tone is not whining, the self-pity of an old man who feels neglected. It conveys the pride of genuine achievement: "I still say to myself when I am depressed, and forced to listen to pompous and tiresome people, 'Well, I have done one thing you could never have done, and that is to have collaborated with both Littlewood and Ramanujan on something like equal terms.'" It conveys, as well, the resignation of knowing that one's creative self is dead: Wolsey's "And so farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness." Artists, Hardy says, despise art critics; and mathematicians share the scorn "of the men who make for the men who explain. Exposition, criticism, appreciation, is work for second-rate minds." Knowingly, with ruthless logic and honesty, he condemns himself: "If I then find myself writing, not mathematics, but 'about' mathematics, it is a confession of weakness, for which I may rightly be scorned or pitied by younger and more vigorous mathematicians. I write about mathematics because, like any other mathematician who has passed sixty, I have no longer the freshness of mind, the energy, or the patience to carry on effectively with my proper job."

Hardy's proper job was mathematics--but not "math" as the 1930's world of Bohr and Einstein, or the 1970's world of NASA, or any schoolboy knew it. Hence the apology. People say that mathematics is useful, Hardy points out, as a tool to build bridges, or war machines. Certainly, "trivial" or elementary mathematics (in which he includes a working knowledge of differential and integral calculus) is "useful" in a sense--though he indicates that scientific knowledge is not necessary to, or used by, the vast majority of people, who can turn on a gas flame without knowing how or why it burns. "Real" mathematics, pure mathematics, the realm of beauty and ideas in which he works, is not "useful", and he will not attempt to justify it, or his life, on practical grounds. Oh, certainly he takes some comfort, writing in the early years of a war he hated and could not support, that "real" mathematics is "gentle and clean" in its practical uselessness, unlike the applied mathematics of war which are destructive but essentially 'trivial', "repulsively ugly and intolerably dull; even Littlewood could not make ballistics respectable." Cold comfort aside, ("No one has yet discovered any warlike purpose to be served by the theory of numbers or relativity") he



insists, with total honesty, that mathematics is not justifiable on any practical or humanitarian basis; that "it must be justified as art if it can be justified at all."

Thus it is as art that he must present his work. "A mathematician, like a painter or a poet, is a maker of patterns," he says, a creative artist producing beauty since "there is no permanent place in the world for ugly mathematics." Ugliness? Beauty? They must be perceived intuitively; he cannot define the esthetic appeal of mathematics, but it exists--just as "we may not know quite what we mean by a beautiful poem, but that does not prevent us from recognizing one when we read it." People commonly speak of "beautiful" chess problems, he points out, but these are only "the hymn-tunes of mathematics". Hence he presents a symphony or two, Greek mathematical theorems (and he is too honest to present 'trivial' problems, logic or mathematical philosophy, anything but working mathematician's math--which leave the non-mathematician following on faith) which will, he says, demonstrate the beauty and seriousness of mathematics to anyone who can appreciate such values.

All of this sounds like a noble artistic philosophy--but it is profoundly personal as well. Hardy's life has been spent in the pursuit and creation of mathematical beauty. He has been a worldly "success", yes--he has followed the career that his mind was best suited for, he has fulfilled his intellectual curiosity, his personal pride, his worldly ambition. Yet ultimately his life, his "useless" life, must be judged on artistic grounds: "The case for my life...is this: That I have added something to knowledge, and helped others to add more; and that these somethings have a value which differs in degree only, and not in kind, from that of the creations of the great mathematicians, or of any of the other artists, great or small, who have left some kind of memorial behind them."

His essay is one record of that creation, or, as he holds with Plato, that re-creation of an ideal reality. It is a document of conscience for any artist, an "apology" for a life spent in "useless" creation, written with no equivocations or evasions to the reader or to the artist himself. And it is profoundly moving. The artist's sole excuse or reason for living is gone; he can create no more. All the greatest mathematicians died young (Ramanujan, Hardy's protégé, a natural genius who lay on his death-bed telling Hardy why 1729 was not a dull number, died at 33) or, like Newton, initiated no major advance after 50.

Hardy was old; a coronary thrombosis had in 1939 had impaired his physical faculties and ended the sports--squash, tennis--which he loved; and he knew that his creative powers were gone. Snow says that he "took to despair", lost interest in life itself, finally attempted suicide and died soon after. And that despair, together with the joy of creating, echoes throughout A Mathematician's Apology: Hardy quotes the opinion of Bertrand Russell (his friend and former colleague) that mathematics can be a refuge where "one at least of our nobler impulses can escape from the dreary exile of the actual world", and then adds his own crucial reservation--the mathematician must not be old.

"Mathematics is not a contemplative, but a creative subject; no one can draw much consolation from it when he has lost the power or the desire to create; and that is apt to happen to a mathematician rather soon. It is a pity, but in that case he does not matter a great deal anyhow, and it would be silly to bother about him." Ah yes--but A Mathematician's Apology is not the second-rate explanation of a second-rate mind; it does, I think, matter profoundly to anyone interested in the creative process in any form; and it would be silly not to bother with it. Even if you "don't understand" mathematics. [G.H.Hardy, A Mathematician's Apology. With a foreword by C.P.Snow. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.]

((Editor's Note: Hardy states that "...most people are so frightened of the name of mathematics that they are ready, quite unaffectedly, to exaggerate their own mathematical stupidity." Perhaps there's hope yet?))

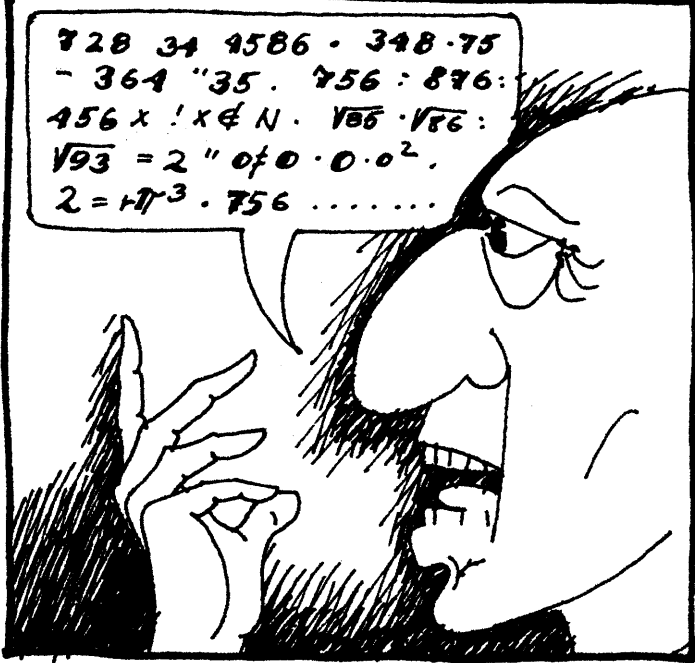
125, 34 235 67 85  
183 675 236 759 63  
x 352 · 5684 · 356,3  
⇒ n ∈ x: 7 · 895 · 672  
+ 859x · 7564 = 0



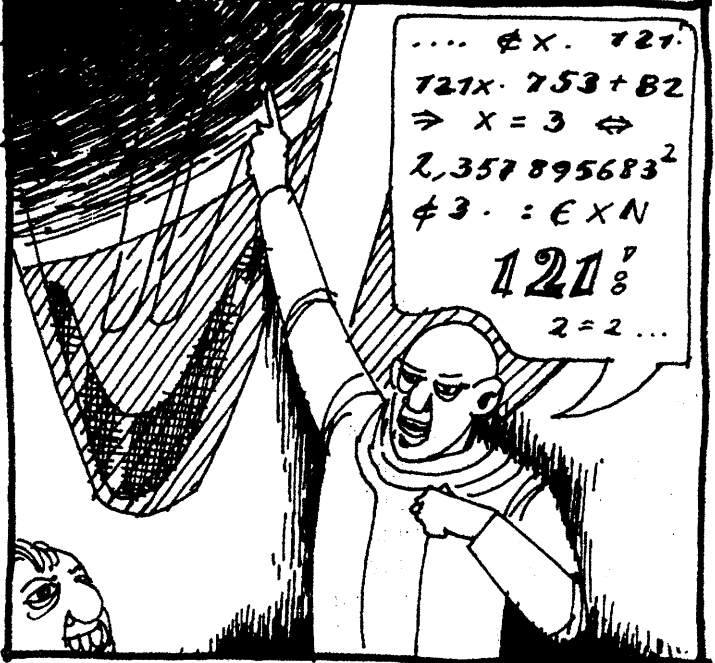
121!



728 34 4586 · 348 · 75  
- 364 "35 · 756 : 876:  
456 x ! x ∈ N · √86 · √86:  
√93 = 2" of 0 · 0 · 0<sup>2</sup>.  
2 = π<sup>3</sup> · 756 ·····



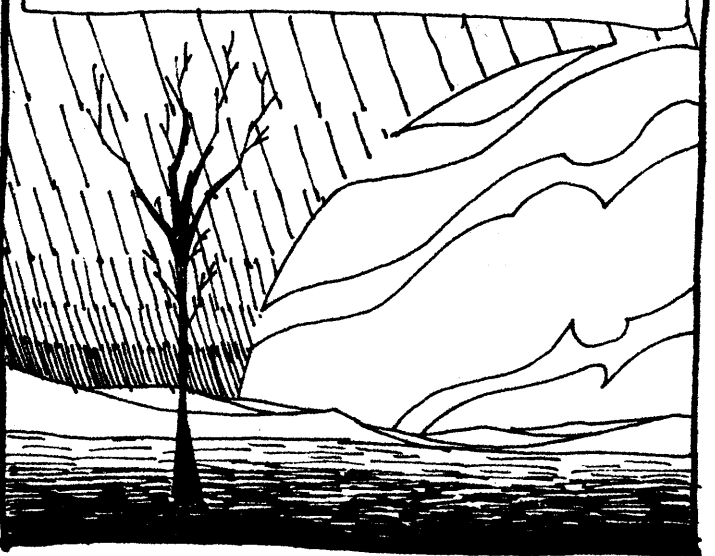
.... ∈ x · 721.  
721x · 753 + 82  
⇒ x = 3 ⇔  
2,357895683<sup>2</sup>  
∈ 3 · : ∈ x N  
121!  
2 = 2...

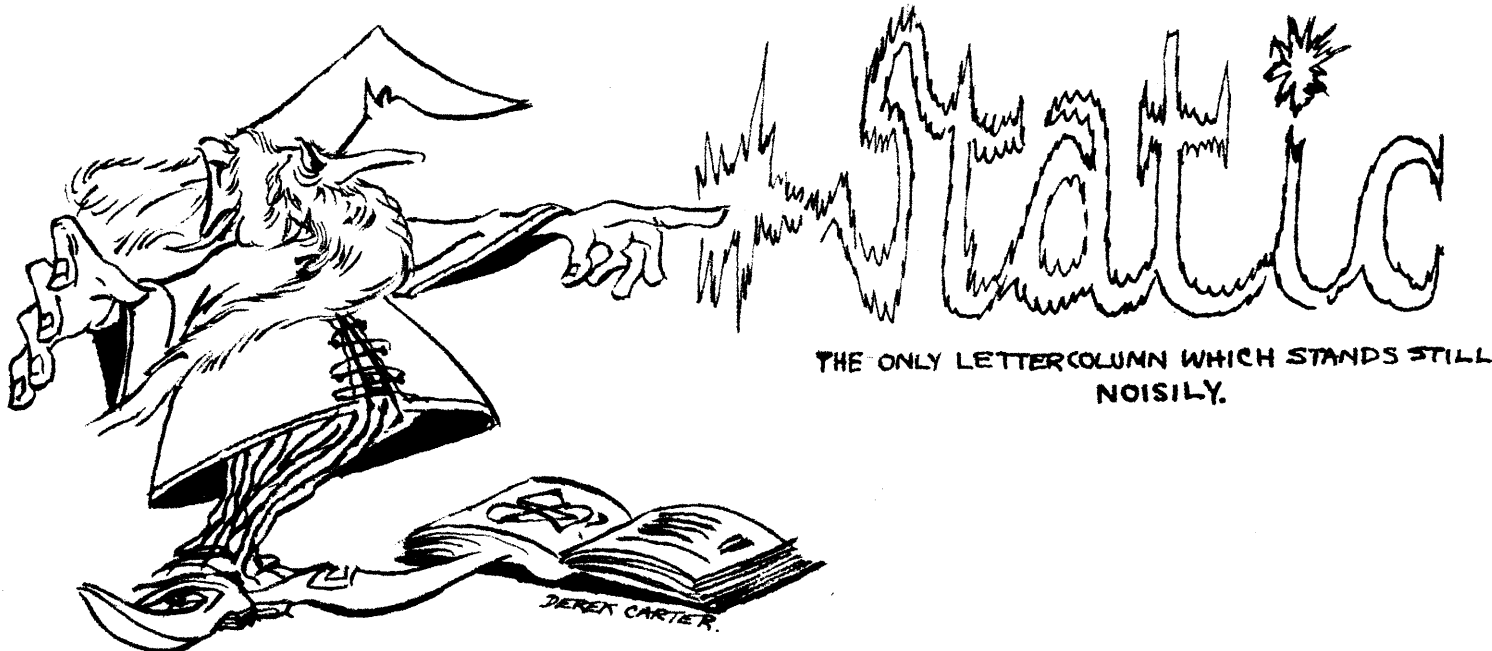


$\left| \frac{\Delta p}{p} \right| \leq r_1 + r_2 \Rightarrow \{x: a < x < b\}, 0! 0!$   
 $0! 0.0001! \Leftrightarrow \phi(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} \int_{-\infty}^x e^{-\frac{t^2}{2}} dt!$   
3700: 8!



$\sqrt[3]{47688} = 1,6920$





THE ONLY LETTER COLUMN WHICH STANDS STILL NOISILY.

ELI COHEN  
408 McBain  
562 W. 113th  
New York, NY  
10025

EA arrived at a rather peculiar time. I've just finished my third reading of NOVA and absolutely have to do something about Paul Walker's atrocity. We both agree that it's a good book, but I get the feeling that Walker skimmed it hurriedly, dashed off a few glittering generalizations, and that was that.

First of all, the plot synopsis: Admittedly, it's very hard to synopsise a book like NOVA. But Walker has somehow gotten it into his head that the book is about a heroic Yankee freeholder battling against the evil forces of aristocracy. He has forced this interpretation on the plot with the result of numerous factual and interpretive inaccuracies. Point one: The Outer Colonies are colonies of both Draco and the Pleiades, not allies of the Pleiades against the evil Draco/Earth system, as Walker implies. The Pleiades do not maintain their independence "by their wits"--when Lorq's father was his age, "the sovereignty of the Pleiades had been an accepted fact for a generation." (p.82 of the paperback). Because it conflicts with his good-guys/bad-guys view, Walker ignores the fact that Lorq winning will be almost as bad for the Outer Colonies as for Draco (in the short run). In fact, the battle is not simply a struggle for dominance--the situation is such that through natural economic forces, short of a merger between Red-Shift and Von Ray, one or the other will be destroyed; or rather, if no one does anything, Red-Shift will be in trouble, and the only way they can survive is to knock out the Von Rays first. To me, the fact that Prince is fighting for the survival of Red-Shift and the Draco Federation makes his cause more just, however obnoxious he is.

Nit-pick: Lorq is the great-great-grandson of the first important Von Ray, the pirate that Walker calls his grandfather.

The relationship between Ruby and Lorq is difficult to be sure of, but I can't see much evidence for more than interest and possibly a liking on Ruby's part (and she does try to kill him at least twice). Her heart obviously belongs to her brother, and it is not merely "perverse attachment". She loves him, as is attested to by her reactions when Prince is hurt, and when his glass tank is shattered at the end. Of course the clincher, and the emotional peak of the book for me, comes after Lorq's Tarot reading has identified Ruby with the Queen of Swords, and Prince with the King of Swords. Mouse is describing when he set Ruby on fire with his syrynix, and at this highly charged moment, when I at least was hanging on every word, the background Tarot-whist game goes,

"'Queen of Swords'  
'King of Swords'  
'The Lovers.'"

I mean, do you want him to beat you over the head with it?

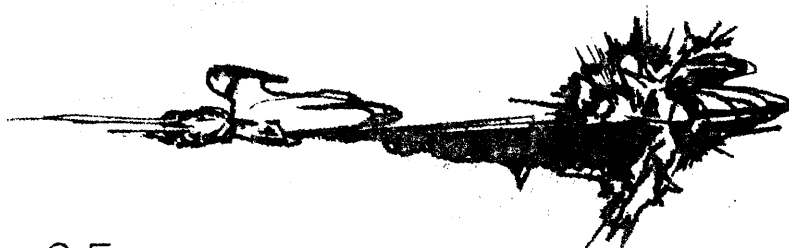
Lorq is, of course, in love with Ruby. She is his grail and naturally he doesn't get her. I'm not very familiar with the Grail myths that Delany is allegorizing. I do know that there is usually a double quest, for the Grail, representing the feminine principle, and associated with the suit of Cups in the Tarot, and for the spear that actually killed Christ, representing the masculine principle and associated with the suit of Wands. There is a staff and a dish mixed up in it also, corresponding to the other Tarot suits, but I don't know much about them. I figure Illyrion has got to represent the spear, and Ruby has to be the Grail (at least as far as Lorq is concerned). Are there any English majors out there who can help? I'm afraid I've been too corrupted by Malory's King Arthur and Wagner's Parsifal (which Delany specifically says distort the myth) to follow the plot of the Grail quest in NOVA. (Cute Tricks Dept: Note that on p.145 Prince sweeps a table clear of a beaker, a dish, a dagger, and a carved wooden stick.)

Another nit-pick: "A battle which climaxes with the three major protagonists entering the exploding star." Only Lorq goes through the nova.

As to Walker's masterful summation of Katin--I think it is obvious that Katin did write his novel, that that novel is NOVA, and that Katin could not embrace Mouse's worldview. Delany even has Katin musing on whether to address his novel to people of the past, ie. us, rather than those of the future. Your reviewer has again let his sympathies for the characters distort his perception of the novel. OK, so he likes Mouse better than Katin. (One of the flaws in the novel, to me, is the flatness of Katin's character, but if you consider him a self-effacing author who has put himself in his novel as a character, that offers a convenient cop-out.) But both the Mouse and Katin are incomplete, unbalanced people; the former living only in the present, grabbing life to himself, and the latter living in the past, always detached and never involved, never actually doing. They are really halves of a single person, who we might call Katin-Mouse. I suggest Mr. Walker say that name over to himself a few times, in case the eccentric name puzzled him. But all the evidence is that Katin only needs a real subject to write about, and he's found that by the last page.

I could rage for hours about the yacht-racing, educated, aristocratic, wielder-of-power Lorq Von Ray, scion of the family that has ruled the Pleiades for three generations, described as "a red-blooded American boy, a spunky Yankee-peddler." He is as much an hereditary economic lord as Prince is. Just because his family is more likeable than the Reds shouldn't blind one to this. But what really provoked me to write this letter is the line about Prince, "...he is blind to his puniness against the muscle and determination of Von Ray." Sheesh!! One of the main things that bothered me, and still does, about NOVA is Lorq's stupidity and blind luck. This idiot has carefully maneuvered Prince into confronting him, on territory that he has chosen, at a time that he has practically picked, and when he finally stands face to face with his opponent (and there you are, panting in the background, "Go get him, Lorq, spring your plan, wipe that smug look off his face"), he is saved by the pure chance that the syryn timer happened (!) to be available, and Prince just happened (!) to have procrastinated long enough about killing him. If there was any justice in the Universe, Prince would have shattered Lorq's skull with a flick of his metal hand!

AARGH! Enough is enough. One of these years I'm going to dig up Chretien de Troyes, and then re-read NOVA. And there are so many fascinating interconnections--the triple society, Draco, Pleiades, and Outer Colonies, representing upper, middle and lower classes, which would also serve to characterize Lorq, Katin and Mouse. And come to think of it, they are obsessed with the future, past, and present respectively. I wonder if you have to put all three together to get a whole person? Katin-Mouse is certainly missing the drive that Lorq would supply, and the concern with the consequences of present actions. Oh well.



POUL ANDERSON . Speaking out of very limited knowledge--comparatively few fanzines ever  
3 Las Palomas come this way--I wonder if Mrs. Miesel isn't the best amateur critic  
Orinda, Cal. around these days. This is not said because she has been known to pub-  
94563 licly like work of mine. I understand she has publicly disliked other  
things by me. But most fan commentators (not all, of course) that I've  
happened to see haven't appeared to offer much but pompous dogmatism, where it hasn't  
been mere billingsgate. In contrast, Mrs. Miesel keeps making remarks like (in a let-  
ter) "Ever notice how Pelagian Delany is?"--an exact and enlightening observation.

By the way, most of your readers may not know that Theodore Sturgeon occasionally com-  
ments on science fiction in William F. Buckley's fanzine National Review. (He disagrees  
with the politics of the other contributors, but then, they have plenty of arguments  
among themselves.) Needless to say, this is a lovely column. Enthusiasts may wish to  
search it out in their public libraries with the help of Reader's Guide.

It is indeed tragic that THE PHOENIX AND THE MIRROR went so unnoticed and unsold. Now  
we shall all have to spend impatient years waiting for more about Vergil Magus. Even  
more than Fritz Leiber, Avram is grossly underrewarded for what he gives the world. Oh,  
sure, both these men have their admirers and get their awards and so on, but a succes-  
d'estime buys no groceries. I feel confident both will eventually have a highly suc-  
cessful literary revival, as James Branch Cabell is at the moment, and only hope it  
comes while they're still around to enjoy it. Meanwhile these admirers could help by  
putting their money where their mouths are. How many of you out there have bought a  
copy of PHOENIX directly from the author?

Re the amusing limericks; I've had a hand in composing quite a few on sf motifs, but  
most are unfit for a family magazine. The best I know is by the late Anthony Boucher.  
Once when he was editing F&SF I sent him a story in which I mentioned the first line  
of a limerick by me. He promptly sent five lines to follow, which totally eclipsed  
mine:

A spaceman and girl in free fall  
found a new way of heeding love's call.  
"I've beentumbled," she said,  
"on floor, sofa and bed,  
but never halfway up a wall."

Those were the great days.

((It is doubtful if any reviewer in fandom brings more  
erudition and scholarship to their reviews than Sandra.  
She may not be as prolific as some, but her work exhib-  
its a depth and a degree of thought often lacking in  
many of our "critics". According to the response from  
Avram and from my readers, our promotion of PHOENIX in  
these pages has resulted in a fair number of sales. But  
if you still haven't ordered a copy, by all means do  
so. You won't regret it; and neither will Avram.))

JOE HALDEMAN  
Box 972  
Brooksville, Fla.  
33512

...Both poems were quite good; I  
thought IT CAME FROM BEYOND THE SEA  
was the better. Janet Fox handled her  
imagery in a beautiful precise way,  
weaving in and out between the "real-  
ity" flickering on the screen and the reality of a Sat-  
urday matinee filled with exhuberantly frightened child-  
ren (They don't seem to react that way so much anymore,  
Janet--guess too many of them have seen blood-splattered



horrors like SOLDIER BLUE or NO BLADE OF GRASS, to be scared by a papier mache Tyrannosaurus Rex). The only flaw in the poem, for me, was the use of "have been" -- perhaps this is because I've been slapped down so severely for employing similar constructions, that I don't like to see anybody else having fun.

THE HARVEST was also very good. Angus Taylor has a nice ear for the sounds of words; very effective internal rhymes and half-rhymes. Also a lovely theme, compact story that should be read aloud. By firelight.

Needless to say, I think you err in banishing poetry from your pages. You de boss, tho'.

Avram Davidson's rambling article was really fine; a real pleasure to be allowed to see such a complex and vigorous mind at work. I am glad to see that an uncut version of JOYLEG is coming out. It's one of my favorite books, a great book to hand to someone who says "ah, I never read enny o' that crap". Our field has so few good humorous writers, you'd think publishers would baby him, rather than stomp on him. Try to figure it.

((As far as poetry goes, Susan has two things I lack; interest and knowledge. So she's the obvious choice for poems. Besides, Joe, so far you're the only one of my readers to even mention the poems, so why continue? And you don't really count since you're a known, card-carrying poet yourself! Good luck with the writing, ol' buddy!!))



JERRY LAPIDUS      It pains me to say that I really did not like this issue as much as  
54 Clearview Dr    the last (which I did, after all, call your best yet). What's come  
Pittsford, NY      down is what's been the problem all along, the written material; the  
14534                art is as good as any issue in the past, perhaps all told, even bet-  
                         ter. But the writing, while as interesting as always, is less solid;  
this time, it's almost entirely looseness and chatter, instead of the fine mixture of  
the two we've seen in the best of the past issues. I'm afraid, Mike, you've reached  
the point where, after putting out a couple of really nice issues, you're now expected  
to keep up that high level; and fans like me are going to come down on you when you  
fail to reach it.

Do you get what I mean about the written material? In past issues, there's seemed to be a balance between the lighter writing, say, of Rosemary, and the more serious material, usually concerning sf, from people like Susan and others. This time, it's almost all one type: a light editorial from you, a "fannish" column from Susan, a similar column as usual from Rosemary, and yet another similar column from John Berry. Only Sandra's review, and, to stretch a point, Avram Davidson's letter are really of any lasting interest, and although both are interesting, they're much too short to make much of an impression.

The art, though, is generally at least as good as in past issues. A very nice--if a bit hard to read!--cover, and a really superb back cover. And the small art is much better, too. This is what I was talking about last time when I spoke of the abundance of small illustrations. It's not the size that counts, of course, but rather the intent and the effort behind it. What I was criticizing was the large number of filler illos, minor cartoons and doodles. This sort of thing is quite nice to provide a change of pace, but it'd seemed as if it had been taking over more and more of each issue,





leaving "serious" work to the covers. That's still something of the situation in this issue. But with all that said and done, I really did enjoy the magazine. Really. And just to show you, I'll talk about it.

I think you've taken me a little at the extreme in the editorial. I didn't mean for you to refrain from flippancy, sarcasm, or anything like that; you should know me well enough to know that those are some of my major methods. It was just that your comments on the Hugos seemed more serious than facetious, especially in the eyes of one who doesn't really know you. Mike, it isn't the flippancy at all--if anything, it isn't really flip enough, because it's not clear that you are being flip.

Hugos? OK. Ringworld, "The Region Between", "Runesmith", "Lovecraft's Follies" (Trinity Square Repertory Company in Providence, RI), Leo and Diane Dillon, Amazing, Outworlds/Energumen, Ted Pauls, Mike Gilbert/ Alicia Austin. Comments. Ringworld is flawed but so are all the other possible nominees; the concepts and characterization are excellent there, and it got my nomination. "Lovecraft" will not, of course,

be nominated, but it IS the best visual sf I'd seen. Other possibilities you don't mention would be "The Gladiators" and "The Mind of Mr. Somes", both prize-winners at the Trieste Festival, and "Colossus: The Forbin Project", which is supposed to be excellent. The Dillons have produced by far the most interesting and unique art to be seen in the field in many a day, and certainly deserve some sort of recognition. Amazing has probably had the best balance of various types of good fiction, plus the best features of any American prozine; Visions of Tomorrow, now deceased, also deserves at least nomination. I'd like to see the fanzine go down to a three-way battle between Outworlds, Energumen and Speculation, but I fear SFR will garner yet another nomination (and victory). Ted Pauls is about the only possible choice, and to me Alicia's and Mike's work is far more interesting than any of the other possible contenders.

((You can't please all the people, Jerry. Some people think I've been getting steadily better; others, that I've gone downhill since #1. I do what pleases me with what material I receive and I guess that's all any faned can do. Perhaps my experiment with the material for this issue will be more to your liking.))

-----

ALEX EISENSTEIN 6424 N. Mozart Chicago, Ill. 60645

Fie on you for letting Sandra Miesel even suggest that ENERGUMEN is not really eligible. I realize you deny this in your editorial and obliquely refer to the question in your answer to Sandra; nevertheless, when she asks you to "step aside" for SPECULATION, I think you should have this once broken your rule about interrupting locs and immediately corrected the false impression engendered by her opening remarks. Some people, after all, read the lettercol before they read the editorial (and some never read the editorial); you should have kept in mind that #5 would probably arrive while readers still had nominating ballots in hand.

Far from jinxing your chances for the award, your self-promotion, such as it was, probably enhanced them. Just look at Geis and SFR; he actually begged for both the Hugos he got, as well as the one before which he missed; presently he's working on #3 with similar methods. If Geis wasn't (or isn't) in bad taste, you certainly aren't. In fact, I feel Geis was, but you aren't, simply because he did beg for it, in a mock-facetious



manner, and you refrained from doing so--you merely indicated, albeit with a jesting semblance of conceit, that you (and at least one other) were eligible for the award. I personally did not find your pseudo-attack on Bowers, nor your style of hyperbole, to be in bad taste. The distinct possibility exists that I am prejudiced in your favor because I can mentally hear you saying the remarks you wrote in your previous editorial, as well as picture your expression, the merry glint in your somewhat blood-shot eyes... However, on reflection, I've decided that the distorting effect of that prejudice is vanishingly small; that your true and honest intent must have been visible to anyone of moderate intellect; and that (consequently) Jerry Lapidus is a bit of a fugghead when it comes to gauging the effect of humorous exaggeration. I also receive the decided impression that Jerry himself would not have apprehended the essential irony of your utterances had he not known you, known you well enough to "know your real attitudes". I think he must be the only one who wouldn't.



I really think you shouldn't have printed Lapidus's vile assertions about the Dallas bid without a suitable editorial rejoinder; after all, you were once a staunch supporter of the Dallascon, and, as a Marvel completist, you should take some exception to Jerry's blanket condemnation of comic fans. Without doubt, many of the young comic-fans can be quite obnoxious, even when minding their own business (they tend to squat in the midst of the busiest traffic patterns while doing so, oblivious to the inconvenience they cause); nevertheless, some of the most interesting people in fandom are comic-fans (Mike Barrier of Funnyworld is a prime example.) In any event, every Worldcon unavoidably attracts hordes of shifty-eyed, grubby-handed little comic-fans, because that's where many of the hucksters make their real money, folks. Texas is certainly no more a hotbed of comics fandom than Southern California, and I've never heard of an objection to an LA bid based on the possibility of a comic-fan invasion.

As for Jerry's claim that a Dallas win would end "the era of the friendly, fannish bidding", and the implicit, corresponding charge that Dallas introduced the "high pressure" system of bidding--what the hell does he think has been going on for the last 5 years? The bidding is fierce and often vicious (i.e., "high-pressure") whenever there's more than one group in the running. The most recent LA bid has been the only one to run unopposed in the last half-decade; even Ben Jason's Tricon bid met a less-than-friendly, last-minute threat of opposition in 1965. The only competitive bidders of recent years to be on fairly amicable terms were the Boston and Washington groups who bid for the 1971 convention. The rest is dreary history--"fannish" in a sense, but hardly friendly and certainly not easy-going! (Please note--I am not promoting the Dallas bid over the one for Toronto; I am merely trying to quash vile and baseless slurs against Tom's bid before such become the standard practice of some of your supporters. I think you should do the same as it can only reflect poorly on the Canadian bid. Jerry speaks with great enthusiasm about "friendly, fannish" spirit, but apparently he is not yet ready to partake of it himself.)

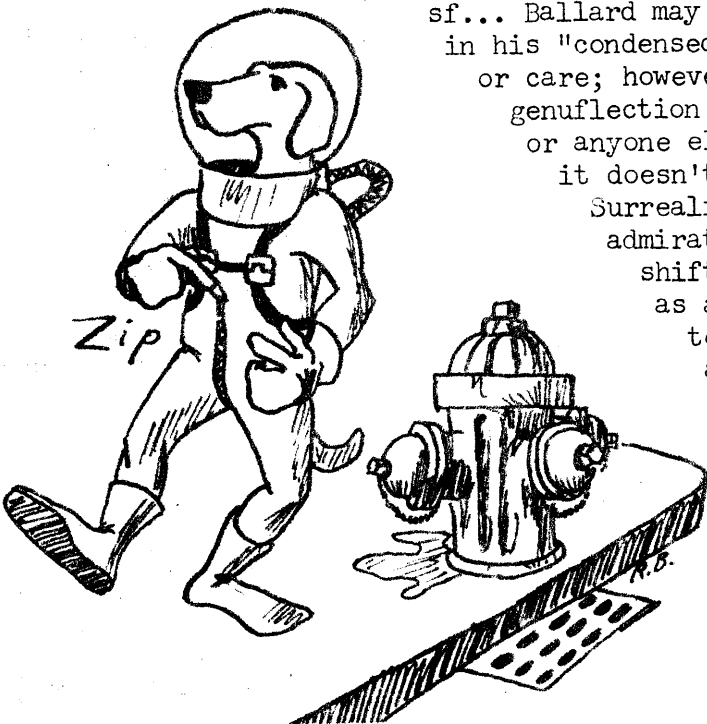
((The difference between me and a "comic fan" is the same as between you and a Trekkie, Alex. And it is these bad connotations of the term "comic fan" that have been, rightly or wrongly, strongly linked with the Dallas bid. And I think Jerry's use of the term "high pressure" refers to the aspect of commercialism and impersonality that is involved in the Dallas bid, as compared to the low-budget, person-to-person Toronto bid, not to the degree of drive they exhibit. I for one would be highly dubious of any committee not willing to go all out to convince me they were the best around. And I think I'll give you another page or so after all--23 to go.))

((Alex again.)) Unfortunately for David Hulvey (and a misled host of others, I suppose) Angus Taylor's defense of Ballard "refutes" nothing and no-one; how could it, when it depends primarily on the exaltation of irrationality? (A man may verbally deny the power of reason, just as he may deny sanity, but he cannot, by the nature of things, logically refute it!) All the other appeals in the Taylor piece are phoney, because they are based on glosses or half-truths. Taylor writes as if modern science actually supports his brand of nihilism, as if quantum mechanics and relativity entirely disposed of all previous empirical and theoretical science in one grand iconoclastic revolution, the first and only of its kind. (I needn't belabor, at least for the editor of this magazine, that such a view of the development of physical science is historically false.) Furthermore, Angus Taylor would have the reader believe that relativity and quantum physics complement each other in a perfect blend for a unified theory of operation. In fact, the two analytic systems often conflict with each other in many important (and seemingly irreconcilable) respects. How, exactly, does a "mathematical abstraction" differ from a "mechanical explanation", in terms of the new physics superseding the old? Does Angus believe that Newton was any less mathematical in his approach than Einstein?

"Physics" is "mechanics", whether Newtonian, Einsteinian, or Keplerian, even; that's the name of the game and Determinism will always be an essential part of it. Heisenberg's principle places no constraints on actuality, but only on what we can observe--accurately--of that actuality. To claim that Uncertainty diminishes the idea of causality, and thus also rationality, is absurd; it merely diminishes our fancied ability to measure, thus preserving us from ever disturbing our precious illusion of "free will" ("What, never?" "Well, hardly soon...").

One point which always seems to elude Ballard, and about which Taylor is none too clear, either, is that Surrealistic painting is not imagistically equivalent to literary Surrealism. No matter how often Ballard composes fiction that incorporates description of his own ideas for Surrealistic artwork, the stories that embody them will never be classifiable as Surrealistic literature; the graphic and verbal versions are analogous in methods of creation and ultimate effect on the audience, not necessarily identical or even similar in subject matter. ("The exquisite corpse drank the new wine": Q.E.D.) With almost pathetic naivete, Damon Knight has accepted Ballard's fantasies of unnatural global catastrophe and/or outre landscape as genuine Surrealistic writing; perhaps

Damon thinks this identification lends them a literary cachet they otherwise could not hope to attain as mere and mishandled sf... Ballard may well have become a genuinely Surreal writer in his "condensed novels" and such, for all I presently know or care; however, idolatry of Salvador Dali, with periodic genuflection towards Andre Breton, does not qualify him or anyone else as an expert on the Surrealist movement; it doesn't even indicate that he's well-informed on Surrealist painting. I have unbounded respect and admiration for Dali as a master of multiplex and shifting illusions, but his greatest distinction as a painter has always been that he's nine-tenths put-on. (Ballard may outdo him in facade, if not in facility.) If Surrealist painting had never gone beyond Dali and Breton and its Dada heritage, it would never have become as vital and broad an influence in art as it has; certainly Breton must have excommunicated from the "official" movement many more artists than he ever attracted or inspired. (I think Ballard may now be starting on this approach...)



To answer David Hulvey's gratuitous slap at non-fanciers of J.G. Ballard--I've always preferred a "stone mind" to cheesecake brains, myself. But really, David, labels are disfiguring only when they don't fit... And I've read Ballard's fiction, so much as I could stomach, and found him wanting--as an intellect, as a delineator of character, as a prose stylist, and even, somewhat, as a descriptive writer. On balance, he's a mediocre craftsman as a writer of fiction, and just plain poor as a creative artist in that medium. As a science fiction writer? Forget it.

The new surrealism must be very un-: I read and thoroughly enjoyed many 50's Bugs Bunny comicbooks; they weren't at all Surrealistic (or even surrealistic), though occasionally they waxed quite stfnal. The only relation I detect between them and Surrealism acts in the other direction, inasmuch as the Surrealist painters constantly utilized comic juxtapositions, often for some very un-comic effects.

---

MIKE DECKINGER Avram Davidson's letter was very interesting and probably the best  
25 Manor Drive Newark, NJ 07106 thing in the issue. It's unfortunate that PHOENIX didn't achieve the recognition it deserved but I would guess that perhaps uncertainty over its fantasy content might have led some readers to consider it ineligible for a science fiction award, although fantasy has never been legitimately excused. I hope Avram will turn out many more like this. Even half as good would be no disappointment.

I would tend to agree with Paul Walker that NOVA was ignored by the fans. The slight mention it received in fandom was completely out of proportion to its value. It was the sort of reaction that would be better suited to the latest Charles Eric Maine book, but not Delany, certainly. The prozines did it no better, with Budrys' gushy praise that probably repelled many by its sheer vitality. Similarly, the Bantam paperback edition was cursed with a poorly conceived cover that could only snare the most grasping browser.

It's ironic that a new novel by a "quiet" writer like Delany receives comparatively little notice or display, while Arthur C. Clarke, due to the success of 2001, finds his earliest and most forgettable pieces lovingly enshrined in rich, hardcover volumes. Or take the frenzied efforts to reprint Frank Herbert, now that DUNE has clicked with that segment of the reading public that diligently searches out and dotes on topical material, even though it links Buck Rogers with THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS. Quality is not needed to sell a book, sometimes it can even be a detriment. If Harold Robbins knew how to write, he'd be starving.

---

DAVID HULVEY Every other zine I receive gets a  
Rt 1, Box 198 Harrisonburg, Va 22801 few terse words from me about the Hugos. I won't recount my love for Silverberg's Urban Monad 116 series or comment on any other awards except to enter a plea for a new approach to the Dramatic category. I owe my idea and fervor to Jonh Ingham's quiet assertion in Gf 11. That is, what with the arid artistic desert of TV, the box office panderings of the motion picture industry and the general torpor in the visual arts field, I move that the Dramatic Award go to a superb sf rock album such as: In the Court of the Crimson King, an observation by King Crimson; Atom Heart Mother and Ummagumma by the Pink Floyd; Blows Against the Empire, a real mind-blower by the Jefferson Starship; and Wooden Ships,



a single cut done by the Jefferson Airplane on their album Volunteers and separately by Crosby, Stills & Nash. These all reflect SF or fantasy elements very clearly. First, the fantasy world created by the Crimson's observation tells



The wall on which the prophets wrote  
Is cracking at the seams.  
Upon the instruments of death  
The sunlight brightly gleams.

The last number produces the purest notes of poetic fantasy.

The black queen chants  
the funeral march  
The cracked brass bells will ring;  
To summon back the fire witch  
To the court of the Crimson king.

There's more, much more; some of which I quoted to other fanzines in hopes of laying open the subtleartistry of these musicians.

The Pink Floyd performs unique SF-rock-opera-poems in a style that defies petty labelers. Of their many fine productions, Atom Heart Mother stands highest. Blows Against the Empire is the story of 7,000 alternate-culture nonconformists who hijack the first starship to flee the social structure that rejects their kind. I don't particularly dig such a nihilistic idea, but it's so beautifully executed in such sense-of-wonder moods that my quibble is mere indeed. Finally, Wooden Ships is an after-the-holocaust story of two survivors who escape the destruction after a time by sailing in wooden ships upon the sea. I wish I could quote some of it, but space doesn't permit.

((I think it will be quite a while before the majority of Hugo voters are sufficiently familiar with the music scene for an album to make the final ballot. Personally, if I were to nominate any album for the Dramatic Hugo, it would be the Firesign Theatre's "Don't Crush That Dwarf, Hand Me the Pliers" which is about the most stfnal record I've ever heard.))

---

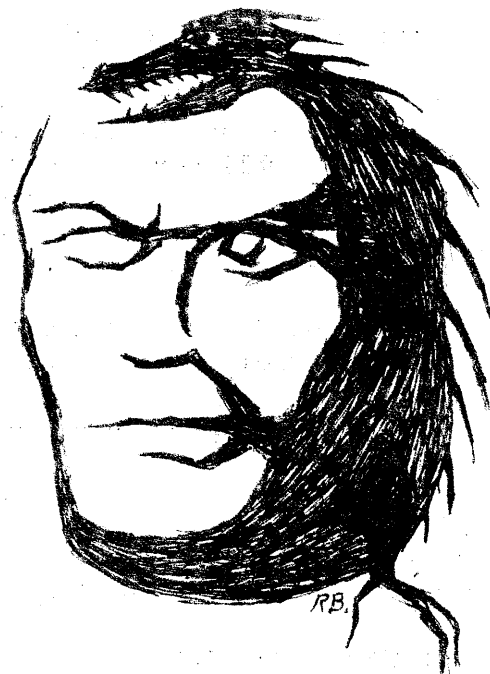
TED WHITE

1014 N. Tuckahoe St  
Falls Church, Va.  
22046

Avram Davidson's piece is sad with its exposition of the sorry truth: that publishers get rich but authors rarely do. Doubleday's publishing program is indeed a fiction. Doubleday is totally uninterested in maintaining any genre book (mystery, western, sf) in print. Doubleday buys its books cheaply, makes back its actual out-of-pocket expenses on hardcover publication, and then sells a paperback edition (50% of the monies therefrom stay with Doubleday) on which it makes its profits. Further, Doubleday has been known to do stupid things in its greedy quest for paperback sales. Its sales (of a Farmer book and a Dick book) to Signet several years back were for sums which staggered the humble sf author's imagination--many thousands more than he could ever get for himself. (This was encouraged by Signet's policy of doubling what it would pay an author for an original, when dealing with a hardback house. On the one hand, this is generosity: the author gets the same amount--supposedly--while the hardcover publisher (who keeps 50% don't forget) is also happy. On the other hand, if my book is worth, say, \$5,000 from Doubleday, why is it worth only \$2500 from me? Obviously, it must earn back more to justify a \$5000 price, and if it will, then why cheat me of my fair share now? Ah, but this leads us to:) Unfortunately, these sales, while advancing the prices paid for sf nicely, thanks, also priced it too high. And those books either bombed, or earned too poorly. Result: Signet has cut back its sf program drastically and hurt the lot of us thereby. Other authors have had other unhappy dealings with Doubleday. (But not me. I've sold to all the major pb houses, but never Doubleday..)

As for PHOENIX itself, I was around when Avram was writing its first draft, and I recall reading its opening pages with amazement and excitement. (He was supported, if that's the word, in those harried days by his editorship of F&SF, which paid him about 33% more than I make these days from AMAZING and FANTASTIC--hi, Avram!)

Later, the ms. came in to F&SF--after Ed Ferman became editor, I think--and I was asked to read it. I read it and wrote a long, and probably presumptuous critique of it. I said I thought it should be published--that it would be a point of genuine prestige to publish it--but that I wished he could rewrite sections. My criticism was that when Avram began the novel he had no sense of the way a novel was built, in terms of emotional ebbing and flowing. It seemed as if he almost deliberately built scenes to near-climax--and then somehow eased back into an anti-climax. Like coitus interruptus. I found it profoundly disturbing as a reader, while at the same time I marvelled at his prose and his invention. I don't know whether Avram could have rewritten the book to deal with those objections--which may have been rather callow (it was some years ago and I really was lecturing my better)--but he didn't, and F&SF for its own reasons didn't buy the book. (F&SF rejected more books which I recommended than it bought.)



However, a grossly condensed version appeared in FANTASTIC. I wanted to read it, when the hardcover came out, in order to make comparisons for a review, but I couldn't. At least Avram realized a little extra money for it. And, as far as I am concerned, fantasy novels can be serialized and I only wish I had more of them for FANTASTIC. (The last two Davidson novels offered to me were simply impossible to publish before their scheduled book publication. The most recent one went like this: Virginia Kidd calls me up. "I have this lovely new Davidson novel you might like, but first I have to ask you: can you publish it before September? It has a definite September book publication." And I have to add and subtract months in my mind--we're putting the August FANTASTIC to bed right now, but it comes out in late May...--before I can regretfully say, "Gee, that's impossible...we've got this John Brunner novel in the works which has to be out before..." and there it is: I lose the book before I've read it, because it would have to be scheduled for right now. x sigh x)

((Perhaps Signet is willing to pay more to Doubleday on the assumption that previous hardcover publication indicates higher pb sales are likely. But twice the price? Does seem strange. And, Ted, about that subscription from a year ago...))

KEITH LAUMER  
Box 972  
Brooksville, Fla.  
33512

Sandra Miesel's review of Tau Zero was a good job. She did what few reviewers seem to bother to do. She read the book carefully enough to obtain a grasp of what it was the author was undertaking with the book and her comments were directed toward an assessment of how well he succeeded in accomplishing his goal. A refreshing change from the general run of reviewers who provide us with a resumé of the plot à la eighth grade book report, plus a few carping complaints that John Wayne's not Shirley Temple or that there're very few real belly-laughs in Hamlet.

RE Avram Davidson's column, I was amazed to hear of him hawking his books in the streets. It seems like a come-down for someone of his talent. I quite agree with him about Doubleday's pulping policy: it seems to me to be madness and is one of the

reasons I am no longer writing books for Doubleday. When I taxed them with selling an inadequate number of copies, then pulping the books after having sold out the original printing and refusing to reprint, I was advised that in spite of the lower advances paid by Doubleday, I would make more money in the long run sticking with them than with other publishers who pay larger advances and keep the books in print longer and sell more copies, mainly because the books are in existence and able to be sold. I, however, was unable to understand how anything could be accomplished in the long run since there is no long run.

((The question that springs to my mind about all this is what is SFWA doing to protect its members from such treatment? Joe?))

-----

CY CHAUVIN                    So now you're a two-fanzine family, eh? Dad gets the big, deluxe  
17829 Peters                ENERGUMEN, while Mom is stuck with the economy model, ASPIDISTRA...  
Roseville, Mich.          A good example of male chauvinism if I ever saw one, right, Susan?!  
48066                        (And if I don't know chauvinism when I see it, who does? Ha!)

I'm glad to see that someone (Jerry Lapidus) besides myself has read both Silverberg's Up the Line and To Live Again and agrees that the latter is by far the better novel. Yes, I know that Up the Line is supposed to be a parody on all the other time-travel books written, but nobody seems to realize that it is a lousy parody. And anyway, I doubt if being a parody had anything to do with the novel getting nominated; in fact, one reviewer thought the paradoxes and time-travel situations were boring and should have been left out!

You and Linda Bushyager both wonder why it's so hard to get good written material in comparison to artwork, and actually I think it's only a matter of competition. There are lots of fanzines competing for their share of written material, but only relatively few have good repro; hence, the best reproduced fanzines get the best artwork... And both GRANFALLOON and ENERGUMEN have excellent repro. Ask a British faned for comparison; I bet he doesn't get much unsolicited artwork!

((It seems to me that the same thing has happened with Silverberg again this year. I found his Tower of Glass the weakest thing of his I read all year and yet there it is on the ballot. Sorta makes you wonder. I agree with you on the written material question and have previously stated so. See my editorial in #7 for comments.))

-----

WAHF: Hal Davis, who sends the following paragraph from the official Internal Revenue Service Guide: 'Bribes and kickbacks to nongovernmental officials are deductible unless the individual has been convicted of taking the bribe or has entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere.' Oh yeah?! C.Lee Healy. Tim Murphy. Angus Taylor, who claims with a straight face that TAU ZERO is simply a rehash of THE DROWNED WORLD and refers anyone who doubts this to the last sentence of Ballard's novel. Rick Dey. Dan Osterman and Mae Strelkov, whose six page legal size letter on #4 was just a bit too late despite the registered mail that conveyed it all the way from Argentina. But she is a truly beautiful human being and can make me a roach pie anyday.

Since I'm a couple of weeks ahead of my schedule, there may well be some letters on #5 come in before May that I'll carry over to the next issue as I did with Eli Cohen's letter this time. But comments have dropped to a trickle in the last two weeks so I may not have to. Thanks to all of you who did respond to the last issue and I urge you to let us know what you think of the experiment we've tried this time. If you're not in either of the lettercolumns of #6 or #7, or haven't contributed to the issues, then be warned that #8 won't arrive unless you respond in some way to what we've done here. So next time you decide to write, don't make it Real Soon Now! See ya!



