

Vol. 1, No. 2 Dec. 1975
Madison, Wisconsin

Janus





JANUS

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Madison, Wis. 53703. *Drawing on page 1 by Jennifer Wilson



by Jeanne Gomoll

[The Managing Editor hopes that the Editor-in-Chief, now vacationing in Florida, does not find such an editorial topic too flippant]

By way of credentials, I have read science fiction from early grade school on. Doing battle with teachers and professors, I managed to write term papers on sf for nearly every course I studied. But when the University of Wisconsin introduced its sf course, taught by Fannie LeMoine, there was no longer any need for rationalizations as to the importance of sf in literature and in society, in order to be allowed to direct my time towards its study.

Ms. LeMoine's viewpoint, attributable to her specialty in classics and comparative literature, is one that conceives of sf as having roots in the works of Plato, Aristophanes, on up to Moby and Jonathan Swift, Wells, Orwell and the modern self-consciously acknowledged sf writers. You know. Which was lovely: I was supported in my belief that sf had a far more tremendous significance and potential than outside critics were allowing.

But I was always uneasy when quoting such quotes as the ones which go something like, "sf is the only relevant literature today," and saying things like, "we are only waiting for our Shakespeare to receive proper recognition as the formidable genre that we are," or promising that sf was and would be able to do things that no other literature could do...

It being harder and harder to tell sf from straight literature nowadays, I wondered what technique or viewpoint ~~we~~ abilities did sf have that have not already been, were not or could not be used by any other non-sf person writing? And if there were no such differences, how could we go on claiming sf to be a separate genre with roots reaching as far back as literary history goes?? How could we claim, still, that sf knows something that no other type of writing can know?

I'm afraid I just can't accept the phrase, "sense of wonder," as an explanation of that difference no matter how valid a description, as anything more than a personal writing characteristic... And the never-ending hassles over a universally accepted definition for sf, I think, must be indicative of the actual impossibility of such a thing.

So here's my theory...

Sf is not a genre in itself. [Don't scream, write a letter.] It is not, as is a novel, a form susceptible to change through the years to accommodate all possible societal norms. Its reflection of one particular historical epoch, (that is our own), is its chief identifying characteristic. And when the conditions of its birth disappear, (or when the habits of its livelihood are co-opted by other "outside" authors) - the

form as a separate entity, no longer will exist. Sf is the result of a society in which only a few understand the consequences of a technological world. Sf is an attempt to come to terms with a new world. But such a world view can not for long be held the sole revelation of a few people.

I think that a process of disappearance is underway now. Nothing will be lost: we will still write of fantastic worlds and of incredible possibility, but it will no longer be necessary to ghettoize such efforts. Individuals who understand the necessity to deal with science and technology as an important factor in modern society and in the future, are no longer scorned and no longer restrict their ideas to what must strictly be called sf.

I think too, that self-conscious identification of the writer as an "sf writer" is important. Unless they proclaim themselves sf writers, I do not intend to name them as such. That of course, leaves out Plato, and quite a few others. And it will also leave out more and more future authors, who rightly so, will refuse to be categorized and restricted thus.

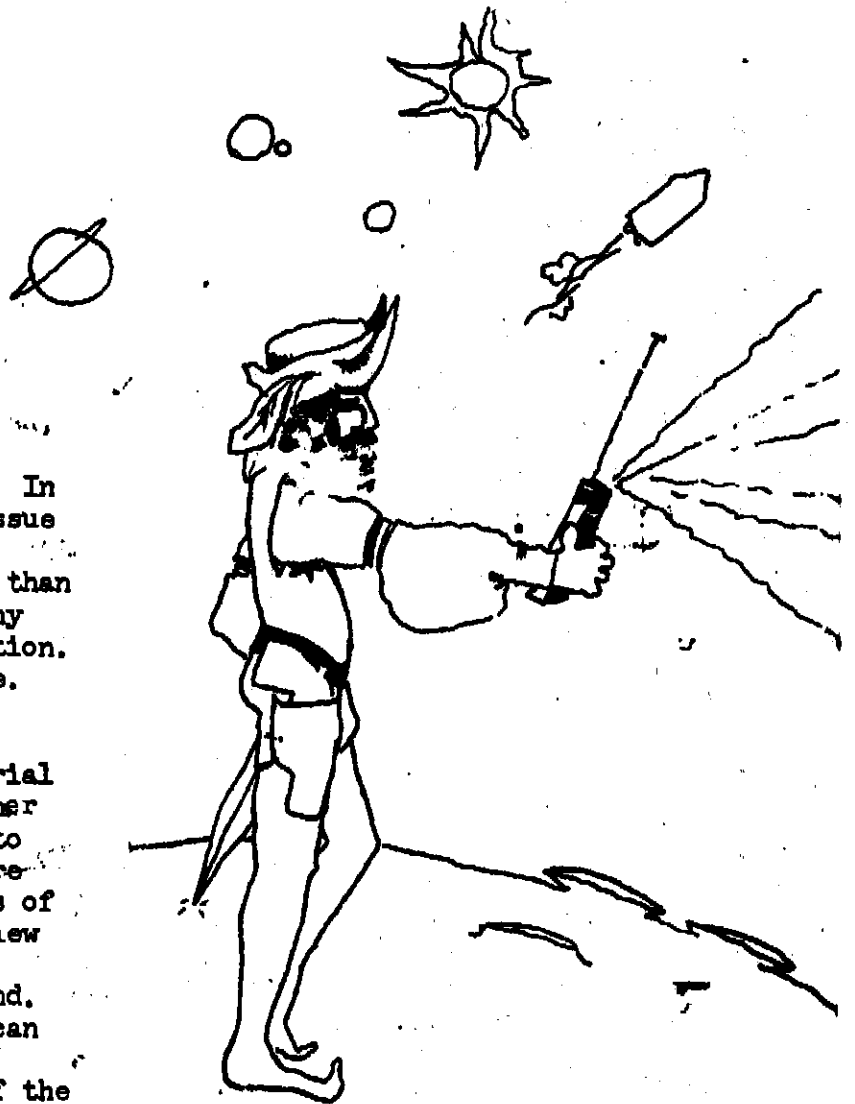
And so, with regard to the "flippant" title question, "IS SF DEAD?" - I believe it may soon be indeed - but in the Indian manner, having first seen its dreams, insights and outrageous mind-flights reincarnated in and re-energizing "mainstream" literature.

The Editor-in-Chief, having returned from her vacation acknowledges that this is not too flippant a topic for an editorial. In fact, I planned one for the next issue on sf as a genre. However, I have a different opinion on the subject than the Managing Editor. There are many good reasons for a sf genre definition. But, more of that in the next issue.

I had planned a longer editorial for this issue but now I have neither time nor space for it. I do want to say a few words about Past As Future in sf. In keeping with other parts of this issue, notably Tom Murn's review and the movie reviews, most of my remarks will be of the negative kind.

Understandably, an sf author can only extrapolate the nature of a future world from his knowledge of the present and the past. Some authors do

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Excerpt from OFFWORLDS CULTURAL APPROXIMATION UNIT
Section A-35592, Scan #311, 01260-01261
unit time By Thomas J. Murn

...you know, They were there all the time, but I just couldn't prove it...

I mean I knew somewhere deep down in my subconscious that these things I was doing, the choices I was making, were crazy, were grandstandish and too devoted to sensory ends...

All the times I've opted for vicarious experiences instead of responsibilities or duties or whatever, or vice versa, crazy trips from out of nowhere, barely registering or floating down through a shorted out grid of consciousness...

Man, I was being god-damn Tapped! Wow, just running into people and things like they were god-damn pinball bumpers, and all that time They were up there digging on it, reviewing it, wondering why I did this or that in response to such and such, or god only knows what they were thinking about copying the sensory signals, exactly how I don't know...

But like that time I stood up to the church guard, uncharacteristic for sure, weird actually, not feeling my usual paranoid flow, screaming at him...

Or carrying that gun into the party, behind half-a-horseload of gin, trying hazily to find out some motive as I walked in and

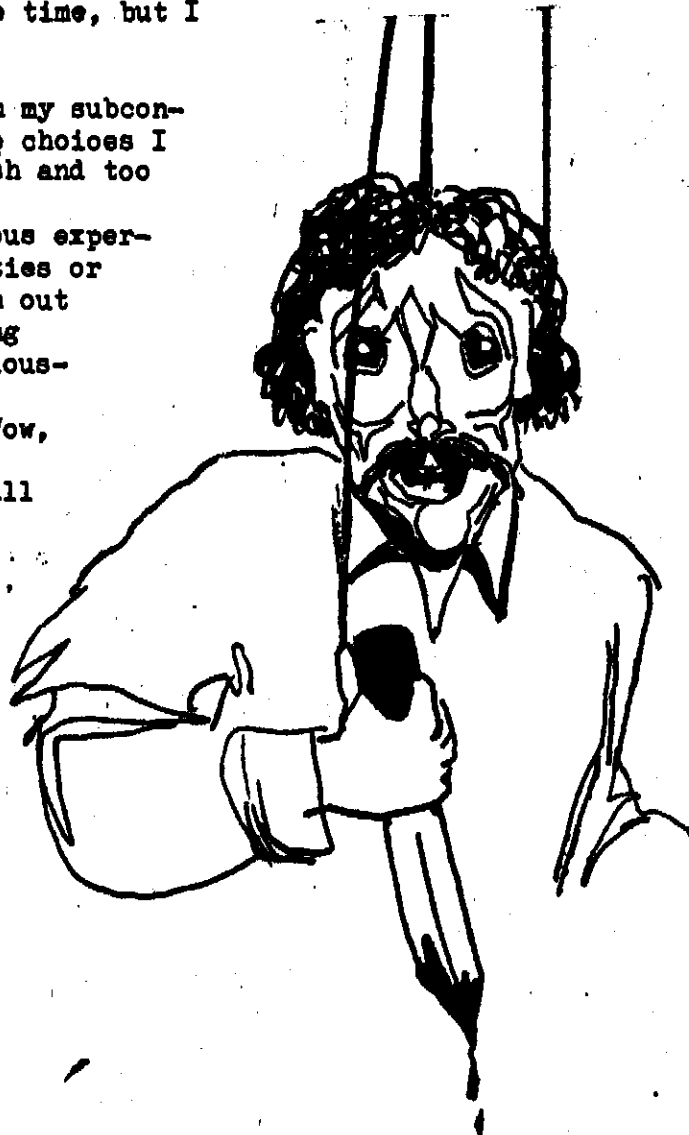
Yeah, I'm sure They dig on it, I hope that it's doing them some good, finding out oh so unobtrusively what just is happening with the dominant species on this planet; yeah; but what about US, you know, Daily Life in the Midwest Seventies or something like that?

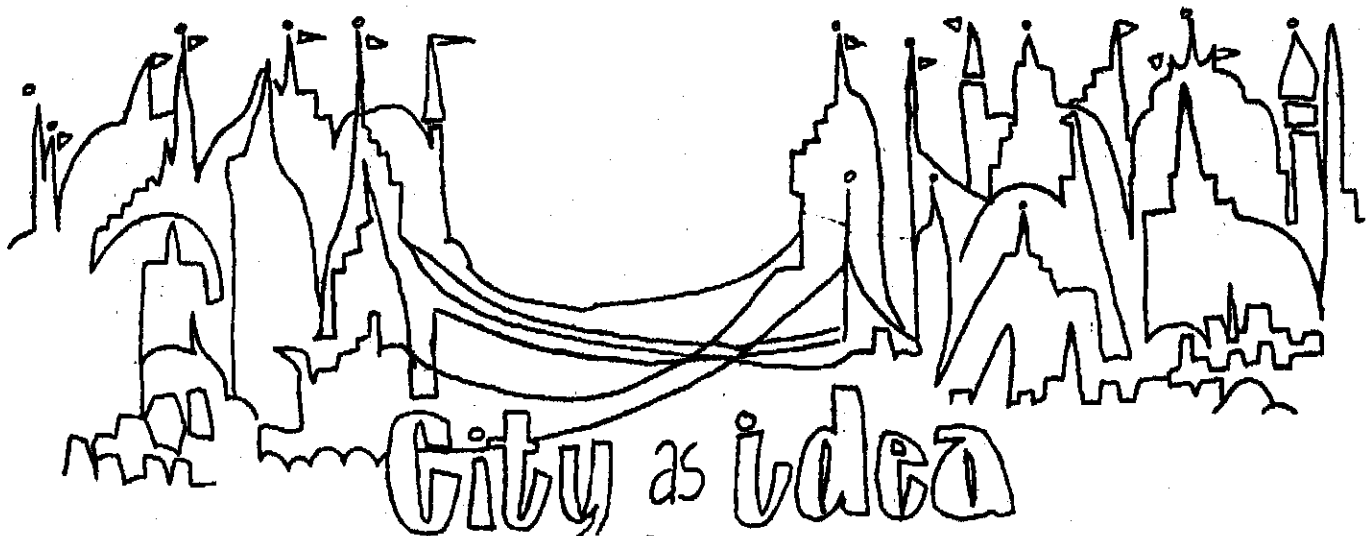
I just wonder about how many people They've been doing this to, how many neurons snags getting selectively blocked out, strings jerking...

I really wish that They hadn't told me...

I really wish that...

All those things I used to do...





by Jeanne Gomoll

At my feet lay a great city. Miles of broad streets, shaded by trees and lined with fine buildings, for the most part not in continuous blocks but set in larger or smaller enclosures, stretched in every direction. Every quarter contained large open squares filled with trees, along which statues glistened and fountains flashed in the late afternoon sun. Public buildings of a colossal size and architectural grandeur unparalled in my day raised their stately piles on every side. Surely I had never seen this city nor one comparable to it before.¹

Titan city of a Titan race! The towers glowed with sun-filled opalescence in the golden light of the sun . . . Sheer colossal mass, immeasurable weights and loading they were - and they seemed to float there on the grace of a line and a curve, half in the deep blue of the sky, half touching the warm, bright green of the land . . . lines and curves and sweeping planes . . . opal crystals and vast masses.²

Thus do two authors, Edward Bellamy (in Looking Backward) during the late nineteenth century and John Campbell (in "Forgetfulness") more than a half a century later, conceive of certain future utopian cities. Although there is a long tradition of fascination with the idea of creating in writing such fantastic future possible cities -- Plato's Republic, Cyrano de Bergerac's Histoire Comique des Etats et les Empires de la Lune, St. Thomas More's Utopia, Thomaso Campanella's The City of the Sun, Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels, H.G. Wells' Men Like Gods, A Modern Utopia, and When the Sleeper Wakes being a few examples of this literary obsession -- It is interesting to note the peculiar sorts of "Utopias" fabricated by the social critics of the late nineteenth century and of the science fiction writers of mid-twentieth century.

As a theme in literature, especially in speculative literature, the city grew more obvious and important toward the end of the nineteenth century, at a time of increasing industrialization and urbanization. One historian noted that following the Civil War, "the city came to dominate literature as it dominated the economy and society."³ And since then, the use of the city as theme has not decreased in intensity; it has flourished throughout modern literature and has been particularly exploited by science fiction authors of the twentieth century. As a gimmick, the future cities quickly grew into cliches - "cities of tomorrow," of sterile sculptures connected with improbable functionless spiral ramps. But as an idea, the city has inspired an extraordi-

many number of fabulous chimeras and often brilliant commentary and projections. Through the years, since the writing of the early utopian novels during the 1880's and '90's, the city has become a contemporary metaphor in literature for human existence, and has been characterized more recently as a vital organism, a living thing and even a philosophical concept expressing life in an urban, industrial society.

...some government buildings go mad and mosques make love... [Thomas Pynchon, V] ⁴

As such, the city theme presents itself as an obvious means of comparison between the late nineteenth century and modern times. And this article was drawn from a paper that did just that in much detail. However for the sake of brevity, there is edited some twenty pages, and for the sake of relevance appropriate to an sf fanzine, there is edited most of the results of my research into the basis for, the actual work of and the impact made by the early social critics. Instead, I will set my conclusions before you and request that you suspend your disbelief with regard to evidence or read my thesis unpurgated, before you argue. In the aforementioned paper, I attempted to compare and contrast the works of utopian novelists of the late 1800's (which can be considered a rather homogeneous group of works by authors following or critical of two primary novels, Bellamy's Looking Backward: 2000-1887 and William Dean Howells' A Traveler From Altruria) and recent (1930-1970) sf, primarily of the short story variety.

Both the utopian novels of the 19th century and the sf of the 20th can be called literature of revolution, because they both deal creatively with reactions to contemporary society. In each genre, one can perceive the problems of the current age being dealt with through the fabrication of alternative societies. The nineteenth century utopian novelists commented upon the problems of capital-labor relationships, the farm crisis and economic recessions, and suggest reforms based on accelerating industrialization, increasing urbanization and the growing labor class. In combination with these economic and social problems and inequities observed by the utopian writers of the time, the influx of stories containing fabricated societies can also be explained by the end of the American frontier. It was no longer possible to put utopian ideas into practice in actual experiments which characterized the half-century before the Civil War. Although modern sf is characterized less by the conscious motivation for reform that perhaps most typifies the utopian novels, and stresses instead, a sense of wonder with regard to any change; a sense of discontent can still be regarded as the source of its antagonistic reaction to the actual state of affairs. Sf writers constantly communicate to their readers a feeling of expectancy, a real desire for "something-to-happen." And thus, for somewhat different reasons, both sf authors and utopian novelists write what can be called, the literature of alternatives. The substance of the alternatives they offer - in this case, in terms of the city - presents an ideal tool with which to compare their visions.

In order to discuss the alternatives offered by the utopian novelists and sf authors, I discuss the works with regard to three elements and compare the genres on the basis of how individual stories treat each of these elements. They are:

1. the author's conception of the archetypal city
2. the problem(s)
3. the solution(s), i.e., alternatives

The first of the analytic elements, "the author's conception of the archetypal city," refers to the author's idea of the primary factors of urban pattern and process. That is, with this view, they lay down the basis for their theories of the basic problems of the city and for later suggestions for the solving of these problems.

This element is emphasized most strongly by the 19th century utopian novelists because of their inclination toward criticism and reform as opposed to science fiction's toward speculation. On this basis, in fact, the utopian novels miss being labeled as, for their substance consists primarily of propaganda for certain political or social ideas. "The utopias ... are as a rule part of the apparatus of criticism directed at the existing social order rather than blueprints of an ideal social structure."⁵ The utopian novels make use of more direct comment while sf authors exaggerate and extrapolate the conditions they see around them.

For Bellamy and Howells, the city is a set of economic relationships that can be perfected to produce a situation in which all wealth is equally divided, the city is converted into "the City Beautiful" with the excess profits, and everyone is happy. As a set of economic relationships, the city is an easily manipulated plaything to these utopian writers: all human problems are reduced to enforceable financial or political relationships. No urban enigmas (labor problems, recessions, crime, racism, war, pessimism in the arts, or even the protagonist's identity crisis) is unreachable through manipulation of the economic structure.

In modern sf, the vision of the archetypal city is far more variegated. To a few, the city is not menacing in its complexity and power, but offers excitement, great beauty and tremendous potential. The protagonist of Walter M. Miller, Jr.'s "Dumb Waiter" (1952) exclaims, "'To a man born and bred to the tune of mechanical thunder, amid vistas of concrete and steel, the skyline looked good--'"⁶ Most of Robert Heinlein's stories and novels (such as Beyond This Horizon, "It's Great to Be Back!" and The Moon is a Harsh Mistress) and Isaac Asimov's Foundation series and Caves of Steel also exhibit this enthusiasm. But for the most part, the city is viewed by sf authors as potentially destructive to human society.

There is the common theme of the empty city, monument to the hubris of mankind, the charred remnant of a Babel-like civilization that perished long ago in a fire storm or was drowned in the muck of its own wastes. "Ozymandias," Robert Silverberg's reworking of Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem of the same title, and Stephen Vincent Benet's "By the Waters of Babylon," (1937) are classic examples of this theme. As expressed in the latter story, the lesson to be learned from these urban corpses is one of temperance: "'Perhaps, in the old days they ate knowledge too fast,'"⁷ together with the notion that virtue is irreconcilable with man's nature, for the same pattern of pride begins to emerge again as the story ends.

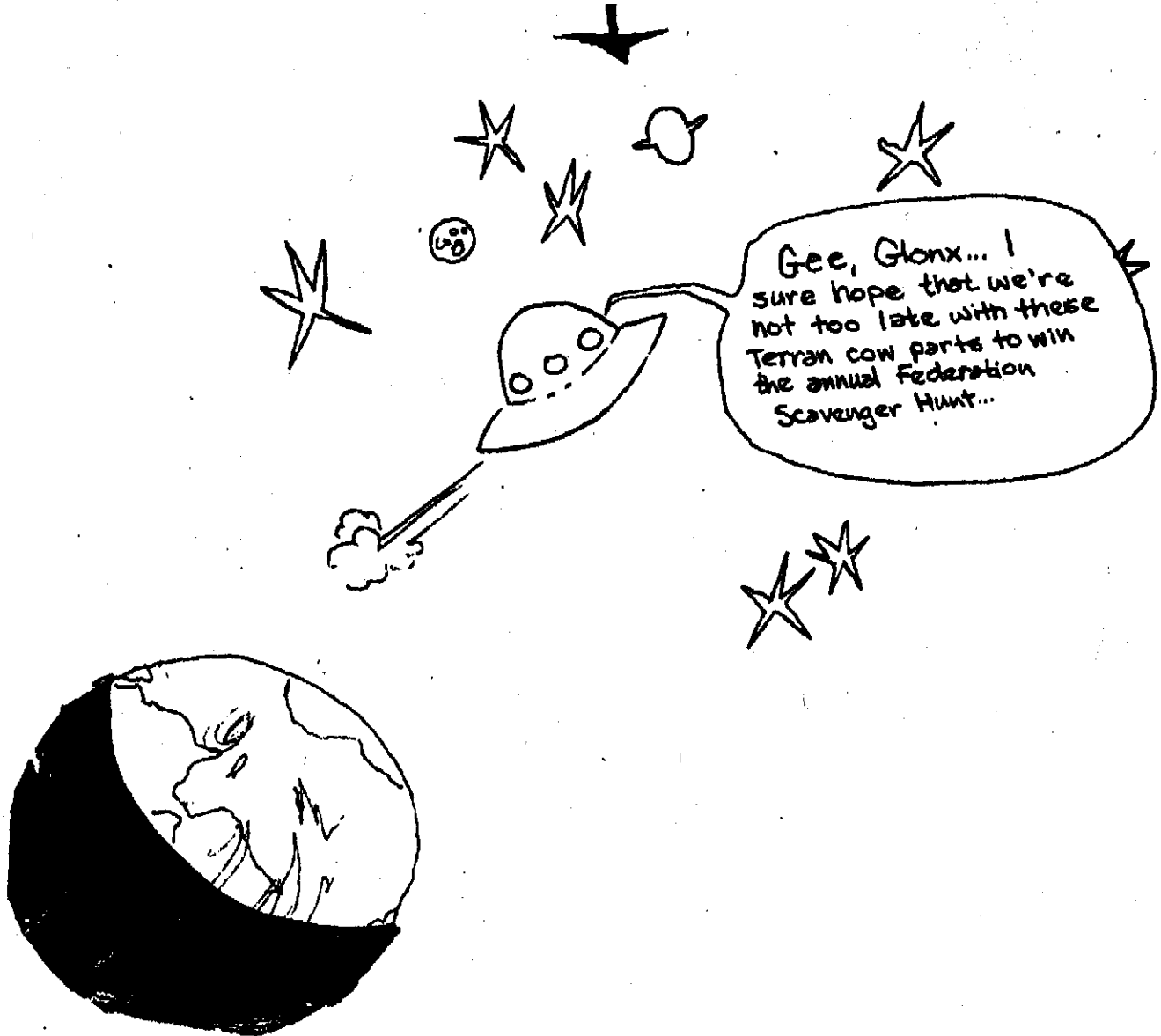
On a less drastic scale - for the city survives man - but not any less terrible, the authors personify the city and give it the power to revenge itself on man. In Ray Bradbury's "City" (1950), the city speaks:

Who built me? The City. The men who died built me. The old race who once lived here. The people whom the Earthmen left to die of a terrible disease, a form of leprosy with no cure. And the men of that old race dreaming of the day when Earthmen might return, built this city, and the name of this city was and is Revenge, upon the planet of Darkness, near the shore of the Sea of Centuries, by the Mountains of the Dead; all very poetic.⁸

Similarly, Robert Abernathy's "Single Combat" (1955) portrays the city as, "whole, immense, living - the true Leviathan," that over hundreds of years grew "like a cancer," drawing nourishment from the hinterland, voiding its wastes into the ocean, and breathing its poisons into the air.

(continued page 9)

AT LAST → EXPLANATION FOR MYSTERIOUS COW MUTILATIONS..



AN ANECDOTE - Jeanne Gomoll

Last Wednesday night I ran in 15 minutes late for our weekly MadStf meeting - but then I had been having difficulties with time all that day.

That morning, the room still dark and happily still too early to have to begin to get ready for work, I stretched out and turned over under my quilts to enjoy the last half hour of drowsing before my alarm clock would go off. I began counting off in my head all of the many projects, chores and commitments I had scheduled for the day, half of which I knew would not be done.

Time, time, time ... I wish I just had more time!

In answer to my silent pleading, a little gnome appeared with a gift of a special time machine, one that I had imagined during times of similar pressure. The time machine was a small box with a single button protruding from its surface. The gnome was short and purple.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 16)

It developed by degrees a central nervous system of strung wires and buried cables, a circulatory system with pumps and reservoirs, an excretory system. It evolved from an invertebrate enormity of wild growth to a higher creature having tangible attributes that go with the subjective concepts of will and Purpose and consciousness . . . 9

Thus aware, the city in Abernathy's tale stalks a man and kills him. "the city was merciless."

The theme of the city revenging itself on man is a popular one in sf, although most authors do not resort to personifying urban forces as do Abernathy and Bradbury. The urban prisons of Jack Williamson's "With Folded Hands," and E. M. Forster's "The Machine Stops," the radioactive inferno of Fritz Leiber's "Coming Attractions," the concrete wasteland of Gene Wolfe's "Three Million Square Miles," the gutted resources of the world in Philip K. Dick's "Autofac," the hopelessly crowded conditions in Harry Harrison's Make Room! Make Room!, and J. G. Ballard's "Billenium," and Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.'s "Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow," all depict times when the consequences of the cities we build must inevitably be turned upon their builders.

Cities based primarily on an economic interpretation of society are far more scarce in sf than in utopian novels, but they do exist. Both Heinlein (in "The Roads Must Roll") and Clifford D. Simak (in City), portray cities that are functions of transportation innovations.

Additionally, there are many sf stories that deal with the city as an archaic and outmoded expression of human community. John Campbell's "Twilight," for instance, portrays the descendants of man (much as H. G. Wells described the Eloi in The Time Traveler), as grown soft and devoid of curiosity, so that they can no longer manage the cities. Alternatively, in "Forgetfulness," Campbell (under the pseudonym, Don A. Stuart) deals with a similar situation - a deserted city of some godly race - but utilizes a different explanation for its abandonment. The city had been forgotten, replaced by new social and technological organization, forgotten for the same reasons we have forgotten how to make fire with two pieces of flint, how to make a bow or how to cure and tan an animal skin.

However, two of the best sf works that deal with the idea of the city, Henry Kuttner's "Jesting Pilot" and Clifford D. Simak's City, try to depict the city as a primary expression of human (or societal) nature. The theme of Simak's work is that the city is the image of man, and although the very nature that reflects itself in the city must inevitably cause self-destruction, man is inseparable from that concept. Similarly, Kuttner also defines the city as the product and reflection of human nature but expresses some hope (in the form of a brilliant twist ending/question) that man might be able to escape his self-imposed city-environment once he gains a real understanding of it.

Finally, it must be said that although both utopian novelists and sf authors depict their archetypal cities based on contemporary reactions to the cities of their times, the utopian novelists have limited themselves considerably with regard to possible descriptive models, to an almost exclusively economic interpretation of the city. Sf on the other hand, though further removed from immediate commentary on the contemporary situation, is considerably more open-minded and imaginative when suggesting possible basic frameworks for the concept of the city. Certainly this is in no small part due to the expanding consciousness of the city in a growing number of fields other than economics. Reflecting this expanded groundwork, sf has therefore depicted the city from technological, environmental, social, political, philosophical as well as economic standpoints.

The second of the analytic elements, "the problems," is closely related to the first element in that both the utopian novelists and sf writers base their conception of urban problems upon their design of an archetypal city. As a result, SF is again more variegated in its approach and describes many more types of problems than is generally considered by the utopian writers whose range of vision is hampered by a set of blinders which permits them to see reality only in terms of economic relationships. They considered unequal wealth distribution and its consequences to be the major, overriding factor determining the quality of urban life. Thus all solutions had to address this one aspect; the upshot being that given such a simplistic and mechanistic understanding of urban life, utopian authors were able to predict quite optimistic and early results to their plans, were they only to be heard and accepted.

Modern sf is less optimistic in hoping that urban problems can be fixed through an easy, uncomplicated economic adjustment. In fact, in the few instances where economic manipulation has taken place to fabricate a future society (as in Heinlein's Beyond This Horizon) the authors suggest that the quality of life lacks something basic that must be supplied before the society is completely successful. Sf authors, when viewing the city, do not tend to be too optimistic about its potentially "good" effects on human society. In "Dumb Waiter," Walter M. Miller, Jr. argues that the city is only a tool that must be understood and manipulated in order to render desirable service.

"You're one of the machine age's spoiled children," he fumed.

"Technologists gave you everything you could possibly want.

Push a button, and you get it. Instead of taking part in the machine age, you let it wait on you. You spoiled yourself.

When the machine age cracks up, you crack up too. Because you never made yourself its master; you just let yourself be mechanically pampered.¹⁰

Together with "Okie," which tells the exciting story of one of James Blish's "flying cities," these are two of the very few stories that, while considering the city, do not attack a problem that is implicit in the city's structure.

The major urban problems attacked by sf can be generally classified into three areas: 1) technological, 2) environmental, and 3) social political.

Of these categories, the first - technology - is probably most often represented in modern sf. Except for a few isolated examples, such as Heinlein's "The Roads Must Roll," in which "the real hazard is not the machinery but the men who run the machinery,"¹¹ the more usual case is for sf authors to take precisely the elements of an efficiently-run technocracy that Heinlein describes or that Isaac Asimov depicts in The Caves of Steel, and describe the adverse effects implicit in this kind of society. Clifford D. Simak's City is a good example of this, since the very same elements characterize both that novel's society and the one painted in Heinlein's "The Roads Must Roll." And yet in City, the extrapolation of suburban exodus trends brought on by a new power source and increased ability for the citizen to commute to work from nearly anyplace (which is the identical situation that Heinlein extrapolates), results in a city crisis that makes today's city-suburban inequities look trifling.

Another theme that deals directly with the technological types of problems implicit in urban life, is represented in the works by authors who warn of the evils of total or over-automation. This theme runs through all of Ray Bradbury's works. It forms the basis of his masterpiece, The Martian Chronicles, and is very beautifully and concisely expressed in "The Pedestrian" (1951) in which a man is arrested for exhibiting "regressive tendencies" primarily because he is out walking in the city for no particular reason, instead of behaving normally and watching his TV. The fact that he worked at a useless profession - writing - and was unmarried also worked against him. For Bradbury

and other writers, the city stands as the epitome of the growing automation and dehumanization of man's life.

Most dramatically, Jack Williamson's "With Folded Hands" (1947) depicts the "death" of the human race as a result of a scientist's perfect and completely rational plan to put an end to human suffering. But certainly the classic story dealing with the problems of automation is E. M. Forster's "The Machine Stops" (1928). In this story, the "city" honeycombs the earth with hexagonal rooms (one per individual) which through their connection to "the Machine" provides for all human needs. The people never leave their rooms but communicate with each other via a sort of telephone/view screen. The people worship the Machine and exist only for "ideas" - and stale, rehearsed, unoriginal ideas at that. ("Let your ideas be second-hand, and if possible tenth-hand, for then they will be far removed from the disturbing element - direct observation."¹²) The city is in fact characterized by the complete lack of real contact between humans and nature. The people live in the earth, but are no longer of it; they have isolated themselves entirely and made their limitation a virtue. It is decreed that to stand upon the earth is "contrary to the spirit of the age, contrary to the Machine;" and thus made so totally dependent, when the Machine stops, mankind perishes.

Fear of and dissatisfaction with the urban environment provided by a technologically based society is associated quite closely and often overlaps with a feeling of discontent with man's relation to his environment that results from his dependence on urban props. And recently, with the current feeling that we are fast approaching an ecological crisis of some sort, this type of story, based upon environmental-type problems, has been frequently seen in all of our publications. In these stories man is often shown to have adopted an unnatural role, one that overrides the concepts of interrelationships between man and his environment - which makes man unnatural and a disease that must eventually destroy or be destroyed by the earth.

One possibility, as suggested in Gene Wolfe's "Three Million Square Miles," is that we may simply pave over the whole country with concrete, considering the fact that in downtown Los Angeles 66% of the space is already taken up by parking lots or streets. More usual however is a more conscientious attention to the basic conflicts between man and environment. Philip K. Dick, for instance, projects a future in "Autofac," in which men have lost control of the cities which continue to manufacture products and plunder the earth for a wartime situation and population that is no longer at war but has no choice except to depend upon the endless ruinous production.

But by far, the most popular of stories that treat environmental problems, are those that comment upon human over-population. Harry Harrison's Make Room! Make Room! and Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.'s "Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow," depict societies characterized by incredible numbers (which in the latter story, are the result of "anti-gerasone drugs" - dirt cheap and available to all because their ingredients consist of dandelions and mud). Whether because of advances in our medical, agricultural or mechanical capabilities, we are able to support such phenomenal numbers of human beings, these authors seriously question whether we will be able to sustain an adequate quality of life. In Vonnegut's "Tomorrow," to deprive a person of anti-gerasone is "against nature," but

"Who knows what nature is like anymore?"¹³

The denizens of Silverberg's "Urban Monads" (The World Inside) find themselves inexplicably unhappy confined in their 1000-storied building-cities where all but hydrophobic life - and man - has become extinct.

"The boundaries of our world, that is to say our building, seem too narrow. Our inner resources become inadequate. We are grievously disappointed in our relationships..."¹⁴

Yet another - much smaller - problem considered by sf authors in connection with future cities, comes under the category of the "social/political situation."

In "Coming Attractions," (1950) Fritz Leiber paints a gruesome picture of a New York, that after an atomic war, has been cordoned off into safe areas and the "infernos" (an area of undecontaminated radioactivity). Reflecting the neuroses of the cold war that raged around him, Leiber describes a society which is characterized by personal and national paranoia, which he labels the "American brand of misery."¹⁵ Robert Abernathy is also concerned with the neuroses produced by living in an urban situation. His protagonist in "Single Combat" is compelled to try to destroy the city because of its pounding, dehumanizing conditions.

The stench of many summers ... GET UP, I SMELL GAS. NO, ITS THE WIND FROM ACROSS THE RIVER. THE REFINERIES THERE. WELL IT'S MAKING THE BABY CHOKE. CAN'T WE DO SOMETHING?

The everlasting cough and rumble, the voice of the city ... GOD-DAMN TRUCKS, GOING BY ALL NIGHT. CAN'T SLEEP FOR THEM. IF I COULD JUST GET SOME SLEEP...

The raucous voices, the jeers, the blows, brutality of life trapped in a steel concrete jungle ... HIT HIM, RUN HIM OUT OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD. HIT HIM AGAIN. DIRTY NIGGER, DAGO, KIKE...

The pavement burning through worn out shoe soles, after miles of tramping on pavement ... YOU'RE TOO LATE, THERE'S NO JOBS LEFT. MOVE ALONG. NO, I TELL YOU. NO NO.

The hate growing always.¹⁶

However, sf unfortunately stands with nineteenth century utopian novels in barely scratching the surface of possible social and political problems concerning the city and human society. Racial prejudice in the urban setting is seldom mentioned (except to say that it has been "erased"). A case could be made however to the effect that BEM's have become sf's oppressed Blacks, Chicanos and Indians. Politely disavowing any openly racist themes, invading aliens or undesirable outer-space monsters are suspiciously endowed with certain familiar stereotypical characteristics as prelude to and often reason for their glorious extinction and final solution. The tendency toward violence in urban areas has been treated somewhat (Harlan Ellison's The Prowler in the City at the Edge of the World, and Frederik Pohl's Gladiator At Law). But sexual inequality has been left largely untouched, stereotypes remain nakedly unadorned by BEM analogies, and women characters in sf remain the walking and talking wombe of Bellamy's Looking Backward. Political systems are usually variations of the ideal American style of democracy or different variations on an Ayn Rand type of society, and the idea of revolution is nearly always restricted to an individual, personal level of rebellion; it is almost never based on massive popular roots.

Having elucidated the problems, how do the writers - utopian and sf - propose to solve them? As might be expected, some of the "solutions" suggested by the 19th century writers have been reviewed and found lacking by modern commentators - in fact, many of those same "solutions" have been transformed into the nightmares of modern sf. For Bellamy, and nearly all the other utopian novelists of his time, the solution to wealth-distribution inequities and labor disputes was nationalization, (i.e., "the final consolidation of the entire capital of the nation ... a single syndicate representing the people, to be conducted in the common interest for the common profit," - "The Great Trust").¹⁶ And of course, the "Great Trust" acts the part of a changeling in Orwell's 1984; while decentralization of urban centers, as suggested by both Bellamy and Howells and most originally by Henry Olerich, precipitates man's extinction in Simak's City; and the wondrous potential of technology as preached by H. G. Wells comes under fire in countless sf stories, as described in the previous section of this article.

It has been said of Howells - and in retrospect, it seems to apply equally well to Bellamy and the other utopian novelists, that

profound as was Howells' revulsion from the economic order, it was in its literary form, curiously unreal and ineffective ... His economic arguments remained pale abstractions...¹⁷

Lao Shaw's story, "Everybodyovskiyism in Cat City," [translated from the novel Mao Ch'eng Chi (City of Cats)] is a satire on the use of precisely the kind of naive "abstractions" that Commanger was talking about. "Everybodyovskiyism" is a kind of political system "in which everybody lives for everybody else. Under this system, everybody is happy, everybody is secure. Society is a great machine and all the people in it happily working, well-integrated little pins and cogwheels. A great system!"¹⁸ When the Everybodyovsky Bunch (i.e., party) took control of Cat City (on Mars)--

"...the idea was to kill off everybody except the peasants and workers so power would fall into the hands of the common people."

"How about the members who ran this Bunch," I broke in. "Did they themselves come from the masses?"

"Good heavens, no! How could they? They had no education, no knowledge, no brains - nothing! Still the idea was to exterminate everybody else and leave the masses to run their own affairs...But nobody in the Everybodyovsky Bunch had the faintest understanding of economic matters, and even less of educational reform so as to teach everybody else. The result was that people were being killed every day with nothing to show for it. They made a mess of rural reform because nobody in the Everybodyovsky Bunch understood a thing about agriculture or peasants; the workers were only too willing to work, but there were not enough industrial jobs. So more people must be killed - get rid of embarrassing surplus and everything will be all right...now the head of the Everybodyovsky Bunch has become Emperor. Small wonder in a country like ours. Everybodyovskiyism didn't work out the way it was supposed to, but at least we got an Emperor out of it."

The Martian began to cry.

The utopian novelists' suggestions have become outmoded. Their championship of a monolithic governmental structure controlling the economy has been in part, realized already, and the consequences are not utopian. Their advocacy of a bureaucratic, centralized government has been criticized in that they surrendered too much individual freedom. And as Erich Fromm points out, the novels were characterized by a shallow materialism that replaced the ends (a higher quality human life) by the means (mass production).¹⁹ Similarly, the utopians' ideas concerning structural changes in the city were totally surface ameliorative ones (the absence of chimneys, mobile roofs, and grand cities). The cities described in modern sf are also filled with the ornaments of their author's fantasies, (moving walkways, chimerical architecture, bizarre advertisements, etc.), but far less emphasis is put on these ornaments in modern sf than was the case in 19th century utopian literature. Instead, sf writers stress inner structure, pattern and function.

...this was a city of men.

It was not merely a matter of parks and roads, of rolling ramps and paragravity currents for levitation, not simply a question of design and architecture. The city was planned according to rules of human psychology. The people fitted into it as into a foam mattress. It was quiet. It was beautiful and functional. It was perfect for its purpose.²⁰

The major difference between the utopian novels and modern sf however, is the respective genres' attitudes toward the idea of the utopia. Looking through modern sf, one seldom sees any utopias in the true sense of the word. The authors can conceive of dystopias but have practically given up on the search for the form of the perfect society, whereas the assumption of such a possibility was never seriously questioned in the 19th century literature. Utopias have become the perpetual-motion-machine myths of modern literature. Solutions are nearly all partial - they do not have utopian consequences.

James Blish's flying cities ("Okies") migrate under the power of "spindizzies" from star system to star system, doing work in return for resources on the planets they are contracted with. Each Okie city is "stable, self-sufficient, static,"²¹ but even the mayor/captain of the flying city must admit that their society is flawed by a lack of freedom. It is no utopia. The major solution sf offers is that rational men and women, and rational institutions be supported in order that the complexities of modern cities be better managed in Skinnerian tradition. Robert Heinlein, for instance, favors the placement of men-who-know-how-things-work in positions of power, and in "The Road Must Roll" he uses carefully trained (to be spiritually and rationally "good") men to protect and run the primary industries and uphold the "logic of empire." But suggestions that Technocracy is the best answer are few, Heinlein and Asimov being prominent exceptions now. Most sf writers will admit that they have no real solutions. As a result, it is clear that sf today offers fewer solutions than problems. Its role in modern literature is more often that of exorcist than healer. But as such, it performs a valuable service.

The major difference between 19th century utopias and modern sf lies in each form's attitude toward man. This dichotomy presents itself most clearly in the manner in which the authors' solutions are enacted in their worlds and in the pattern of these solutions.

In nearly all of the utopian novels, the revolutions take place with absolutely no violence. In Looking Backward, people simply saw the rationality of the new order and accepted it. (Apparently there was no struggle from the losing capitalists). This assumption of non-violent revolution was based on a kind of optimism that has characterized all utopias since Plato's Republic, "an unshaken faith in the power of reason to control men's actions ... [which] Bellamy seems to have had, along with other liberals of his day."²² In order to believe in the idea that a utopia was actually possible, these novelists had to believe that man was a rational being and that he could become more so. From this, follows the assumption that individuals will work for the good of society. The equation of rationality with "good" was certainly a factor here.

This extreme optimism or naivety also manifested itself in the pattern of solution described by the authors. By "pattern of solution," I refer to the plot form utilized in all the utopian novels, that is, reform followed by an instantly flourishing society with absolutely no problems. Howells sneers at the idea of using "human nature" to excuse the various and many injustices of modern urban life, for Altruria, his utopia, is by definition a place without these injustices and is populated by humans. However, without that assumption - i.e., that such a place as Altruria does or could exist - Howells is left with an equally indefensible assumption, that is, that a "good" human nature exists. Beyond the assumption made by all the utopian novelists that man's nature is good and rational, they further postulate that it is plastic and flexible, and that if the structure of society changes, so will man's nature. Revolution is declared, honesty proclaimed the rule, and dishonesty and corruption impossible occurrences. With one sentence, like Nixon's "Peace With Honor," Happiness is proclaimed with words.

It is on this issue that utopian novels and modern sf are most severely divided. Sf relies far less on assumptions of man's basic "nature" (unless it is defined as erratic)

than utopian literature. Even when "solutions" suggested by the respective novelist and sf author are roughly comparable, as in, for example, Heinlein's "The Roads Must Roll" and Bellamy's Looking Backward, the sf solution solves only the problem at hand and has some but not nearly as much of the paradise-producing-impact-level effects that appear in Bellamy's novel's utopia. Sf authors generally dispute the claim that an environmental change can radically change man's nature (or produce one), as the historian in Silverberg's The World Inside discovers. His thesis ("The Urban Monad as Social Evolution: Parameters of Spirit Defined by Community Structure.") attempts to prove that as a result of monad living conditions:

a more pliant, more acquiescent mode of response to events, a turning away from the old expansionist-individualist philosophy ... toward a kind of communal expansion centered in the orderly and limited growth of the human race. Definitely a psychic evolution of some sort, a shift toward graceful acceptance of hive-life.²³

But the historian soon discovers the truth in himself and must revise his opinion of society from that of a shaper of man's nature to merely a provider of a thin "veiner of urbmomism," with all the old, contradictory, individualistic characteristics barely hidden beneath the surface. Modern Sf (except for those stories which support Skinnerian societies), no longer attempts to treat situations of social interaction as if they were engineering problems.

Thus Sf offers fewer solutions "by proclamation," and does not attempt to define a utopia. Since the word "utopia" originally is Greek for "nowhere," it can be said that sf has given up searching for "nowheres;" they are perhaps more disillusioned in the possibility of attaining the American dream, but they write of actually potential futures, definitely "somewhere" places.

THE CITY AS METAPHOR

In Clifford Simak's City, the city metaphorically epitomizes the disparate qualities present in man: the tragic limitations and flaws that in the end, mean his doom, together with the greatness of soul that brings about his apotheosis. As the city disperses, so too does man - his social order breaks down and component groups (the robots that epitomize logic and rationality, the mutants who carry the ideal of individualism to an extreme, the cavemen, who symbolize the building, inventive, violent spirit of man, and the few remaining decadent city-dwellers), dwindle in numbers or destroy themselves finally. Most men leave for Jupiter to become transformed (in the spirit of Clarke's Childhood's End) to alien beings in search of a new revelation. The inheritors of man's earthly supremacy, the dogs, look back in horror on the city and man's nature, for they are man's antithesis and cannot conceive of life as it was.

Thus Simak equates the city both with man's doom and his glory - the city IS man. Henry Kuttner's "Jesting Pilot" suggests a similar metaphor. The city becomes the projection of man's limitations which prevent escape from his present condition to a better, higher potential. As a consequence of the increasingly urban nature of our society, the city - as theme - has become an expression of or the metaphor for modern life. Some newer sf writers, Harlan Ellison particularly, have developed the theme of the city as the malevolent expression of the violence and paranoia that they see the city's conditions as having produced. In Ellison's "The Whimper of Whipped Dogs," (based on the murder of a girl in New York about seven years ago that occurred in front of some twenty or more witnesses), he imagines that the reason none of the witnesses notified the police or tried to do anything, was not to stay uninvolved, but because of some mystical membership in a new primitive cult spawned by the city, in which one must either participate in the violence of the city or be its victim.

Thus, the city has become much more powerful an element in modern sf, when compared to its role in the late nineteenth century utopian novels. At the same time, the attitude with which the authors look at the city has changed drastically. Writers of the late 1800's looked with hope upon urban conditions believing not that these conditions were admirable but that they were most certainly amenable and that the potential existed in man to build a perfect city, a perfect image of man's society capable of making all levels of human life good. Besides seeing this basic optimism for man's capabilities, modern sf has ceased to consider the city as a thing separate from man's nature and essence. They disapprove of the city and consider it destructive to the individual and in the end, to all humanity (like the 19th century writers), but they refuse to disassociate man and his creation, the city, by pretending that man could instantly disavow it and build a new shining castle in the air, a utopia, a nowhere-place. Modern sf has lost faith in the perfectability of man and his creations; along with mainstream literature of our time, they have become disillusioned with the American Dream.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹Edward Bellamy, Looking Backward: 2000-1887 (New York: New American Library, 1998), p. 43. / ²Stuart, Don A. [John W. Campbell] "Forgetfulness," in Cities of Wonder, ed. Damon Knight (London; Dennis Dobson, 1966), p. 230. / ³Henry Steele Commager, The American Mind: An Interpretation of American Thought Since the 1880's (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), p. 61. / ⁴Thomas Pynchon, V (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1963), p. 66. / ⁵Robert Philmus, Into the Unknown: The Evolution of Science Fiction from Francis Godwin to H.G. Wells (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), p. 13. / ⁶Walter M. Miller, Jr., "Dumb Waiter," in Cities of Wonder, p. 17. / ⁷Stephen Vincent Benet, "By the Waters of Babylon," in Cities of Wonder, p. 224. / ⁸Ray Bradbury, "The City," in Illustrated Man (New York, Doubleday & Co., Inc.), p. 227. / ⁹Robert Abernathy, "Single Combat," in Cities of Wonder, pp. 7-8. / ¹⁰Miller, p. 35. / ¹¹Robert A. Heinlein, "The Roads Must Roll," in The Past Through Tomorrow (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1967) p. 39. / ¹²E. M. Forster, "The Machine Stops," in Cities of Wonder, p. 184. / Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., "Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow," in Welcome to the Monkey House, (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1970), p. 293. / ¹⁴Robert Silverberg, The World Inside (Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1970), p. 166. / ¹⁵Fritz Leiber, "Coming Attractions," in Science Fiction Hall of Fame, ed. by Robert Silverberg (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1970), p. 368. / ¹⁶Bellamy, pp. 53-54. / ¹⁷Commager, p. 253. / ¹⁸Lao Shaw, "Everybodyovskism in Cat City," [translated by Leon E. Stover from the novel Mao Ch'eng Chi (City of Cats)] in Apeman, Spaceman: Anthropological Science Fiction, ed. Leon E. Stover & Harry Harrison (New York: Berkley Publishing Corp., 1968), p. 272. / ¹⁹Erich Fromm, "Forward," to Looking Backward, p. xiii. / ²⁰Henry Kuttner, "Jesting Pilot," in Cities of Wonder, p. 135. / ²¹James Blish, "Okie," in Cities of Wonder, p. 135. / ²²Elizabeth Sadler, "One Book's Influence: Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward," New England Quarterly, XVII (1944), p. 532. / ²³Silverberg, p. 69.

[ANECDOTE, CONT'D]

The time machine worked by stopping everything and everyone else's time but mine. And so while you all would be frozen in paralyzed no-time, I would get all of my papers written, sleeping guiltlessly enjoyed, books read, drawings drawn, etcetera...

I sighed with relief, accepted the marvelous gift-box, and pushed the button... I would sleep for an hour more...

But the button turned out to be that on my alarm clock, and the real world callously moved on while I overslept an hour and was late for work.

All characters and events described in the following work are fictional; any semblance to any real person living or dead is purely incidental.

The Kaboodlian Chronicles

by

John Bartelt

Being a revision of THE SECRET OF KABOODLE for the uninitiated, which was originally written in seven installments, the third and fifth of which have been omitted; also, I had to change ~~the~~ Kaboodle's name to Fubel Kaboodle, because ~~the~~ didn't want his name to be used.

Once upon a time, there was an EE known as Fubel Kaboodle. No one was sure what an EE was, but everyone used the term. Some said it stood for Evil Entity or Empty-headed Elf or Exaggerated Excrement or Eccentric Eggplant or Educated Eel or Extraneous Expert or Eloquent Emetic or Elegant Infant-terrible or Encyclopedic Elephant or Edgy Egoist, or, possibly, Easter Egg.



Fubel Kaboodle was stupid. Actually, all EE's are stupid. Fubel Kaboodle was also lazy, ugly, and completely useless. But let's face it. Aren't all EE's lazy, ugly, and completely useless? Not to mention, a bit wierd.

Fubel Kaboodle was aware of the natural superiority of a dog, and it bothered him. Secretly, he wished he were a dog. Once he was outsmarted by a dog (an ordinary dog at that);

he resolved to never again try to match wits with a dog.

Fubel Kaboodle also owned a mysterious and much-worshipped device called a "Ham Radio". With his Ham Radio, he tried to contact everyone from Elated Eskimos to Ecstatic Egyptians who also had one of the mysterious (and much-worshipped) devices. After a haphazard and arcane ritual called "Tuning", he would send a "CQ". CQ didn't mean anything, but everyone knew what it meant. Ham Radios frequently interfered with the more ordinary devices of the more normal people. Ham Radio Operators infrequently cared.

Fubel Kaboodle was an official "Trekkie": that is, he belonged to an organization dedicated to bringing back Star Trek. He was not, however, an ultra-radical Trekkie; they believed Star Trek was the new Gospel. He was on the border of being an ultra-radical Heinleinian. They held that the writings of Heinlein were the true prophecy of the future. Why he liked these writings so much is unknown. Possibly because his heroes were often EE's or similar creatures. His stories usually ended with "Then everybody was hit by a truck", or something equivalent. Someday Fubel Kaboodle might be hit by a truck.

* * * *

Since it was unlikely that Fubel Kaboodle would be hit by a truck, he tried to get himself killed in other ways. The foremost of these was skiing. Skiing was an activity in which the participant strapped thin pieces of wood on his feet and slid down hills at breakyourneck-andotherlimbs speeds. The purpose was to freeze your fate and other extremities (skiers tended to be masochists, and vice versa). Before skiing, Kaboodle had to go through the strange ritual called "waxing". Skiing was his primary source of social intercourse (Kaboodle associated very little with women. He rarely drank. No wonder Fubel Kaboodle was aware of the natural superiority of a dog).

Fubel Kaboodle received packages in the mail with amazing frequency (this might have something to do with his secret, but I wouldn't bet on it). These usually contained some miniscule objects for his bizarre and aberrant mechanisms (sometimes the objects were to help eliminate the evil effects of the Ham Radio on other devices). The "Keyer" was one such outlandish mechanism.

* * * *

In the same land as Fubel Kaboodle (in fact, next door to him) there lived John Bartelt, an AP. What AP stood for is disputed. Some say Absolutely Perfect or Almost Perfect, or that it is a contraction for APAP, meaning As Perfect As Possible; a few say it stands only for AstroPhysicist. According to legend, it was wise John Bartelt who named Fubel Kaboodle (who was aware that a dog was naturally superior to him). Fubel Kaboodle was short.

Even shorter than Father Robert. Father Robert lived in the same land as Kaboodle and Bartelt (fortunately, next door to neither). Father Robert was an ME, which is somewhat even more obscure than EE; it would probably take a couple of pages to list all the dumb things that that could stand for; in the guise of mild-mannered Mr. Widdienmeyer, he swept up (which might have a lot to do with being an ME).

It was rumored that Fubel Kaboodle had a secret (if he didn't, I've done a lot of typing for nothing). No one knew what the secret was about, but they all wanted it (not that it would be useful; they probably wanted a good laugh). As was previously mentioned, Kaboodle was working on a mysterious device known simply by the code name "Keyer". It supposedly was to be used in connection with the sacred "Ham Radio" and had magical powers: it could correct its users mistakes! (Lord knows, Kaboodle makes enough mistakes to keep a centillion keyers busy day and night, but it only corrected a certain type). He had designed the device himself (a mistake right there), but his associates (note: not "friends", but "associates"; anyone who had associated with him would not call him "friend") had seen his whimsical depiction of the Keyer. It was not hidden. Could there be a deeper, concealed meaning to it? Considering his level of intelligence, it was doubtful.

Another of Kaboodle's associates was Pavel Nelizov (or some such name)(he supposedly was a Black Russian Jew)(he claimed to be a physicist, but whether he ever attained such intellectual heights (one notch below an AstroPhysicist, which was but one notch below a Science Fiction Trufan, the extreme height of intellect)(Bartelt and Father Robert were SF Trufans; Kaboodle (whose Science Fiction tastes have already been discussed) may have been a Fan, but not a Trufan; neither was Nelizov) is doubtful). (The preceding has been constructed like a typical German sentence, ~~except~~ in German, the parentheses would not have been used). Nelizov was also at work on a Keyer,

though his would not be so magical (but of course, he had as many or more mistakes to correct than Kaboodle).

There were also other people hanging around, including one who was even shorter than Kaboodle! He had a name something like "Dextrous Hinder", or something.

There was also a guy named Brown, but what can you think up about that that's any funnier than the original?

Some famous quotes (to take up space):

"You can't fart without changing the balance of the Universe." (Philip K. Dick)

"Reflect that whatever misfortune may be your lot, it could only be worse in Milwaukee." (Tony Hendra)

* * * *

As things will be getting more complicated now, it is absolutely essential that the reader understand completely everything that has gone before, and especially (what originally constituted) Parts 3 and 5.

John Bartelt was stationed on top of Sterling Hall, using the telescope to watch Fubel Kaboodle at long range; Pavel Nelizov monitored the airwaves, but being a novice and fairly incompetent, he couldn't be depended on; Father Robert took a swig from a bottle of "Ole Mister Widdemeyer's Irish Whiskey and Floor Polish"; other people were around, too.

Meanwhile, Kaboodle lurked in the shadows of Bascom Hall, trying to look inconspicuous. He was carrying his sacred Ham Radio on his back, trailing a long extension cord into the bowels of Bascom Hall, the hiding place for innumerable types of demons, and holding a 63 foot long antenna over his head. He was awaiting the proper moment to radio the Head Kaboodle (even the Head Kaboodle was lazy, stupid, ugly, and completely useless, not to mention, inferior to a dog) to tell him his Secret, and then try to escape with his life, while the agents of the Grand Pooh-bah try to stop him (in case you haven't been paying attention, John Bartelt, Pavel Nelizov, Father Robert, Brown (in the guise of Brother Braun), Ole Mr. Widdemeyer, and Irving the Horrible are agents of the Grand Pooh-bah).

So as to be less noticeable, Kaboodle strapped on a pair of skis (up until now, he had been undergoing that strange ritual "waxing"-- with Blue wax!).

Bartelt descended into the bowels of Sterling Hall,

the hiding place for innumerable types of demons. As he was entering one of the labs, he met Father Robert and Brother Braun. Five minutes later, they had constructed three rocket belts. Bartelt said, "But what will we use for rocket fuel?" Wordlessly, Father Robert withdrew his bottle of "Ole Mister Widdeymeyer's Irish Whiskey and Floor Polish" from his cloak. After nods of approval from his companions, he split the bottle's contents between the three belts, consuming the last few drops himself.

As the trio was leaving Sterling Hall, they met Pavel Nelizov; he was trying to look inconspicuous, wearing a pair of roller skates (nothing else, just roller skates).

Nelizov stationed himself outside Birge Hall, the hiding place for innumerable types of demons; Bartelt took up his position on top of Bascom Hall; Brother Braun stood outside North Hall, the hiding place for innumerable types of demons; and Father Robert lay down in the middle of Bascom Hill, watching the females, holding his groin, and screaming, "I've got the screaming purple hornies!!" The sun was shining; it was pleasantly warm.

Just past noon (because the revolution begins at noon), a group of Leninist-neo-Marxist Trotskyists began a demonstration outside of Bascom Hall. This was the break Kaboodle was waiting for! He darted from the shadows and began his descent down Bascom Hill (which was quite a trick, seeing as how the last snow had melted three weeks before)! Simultaneously (and at the same time!) he began his transmission to the Head Kaboodle. Spotting Kaboodle fleeing down the hill, Bartelt fired up his rocket belt and leaped off Bascom Hall! Unfortunately, there was insufficient thrust to hold him aloft, and he crashed on top of one of the demonstrators, who, thinking he was some sort of Fascist Pig, began to club him with her sign. Grabbing the sign away from her, Bartelt squatted down on it (the sign, not the demonstrator) and rocketed off, in pursuit of Kaboodle. The demonstrators pursued Bartelt.

Nelizov also spotted Kaboodle, and began roller skating towards him, gradually gaining speed! Spectators, watching Nelizov, thought he was a streaker. Nine of them shed their clothes and took off after him.

Father Robert screamed, "I've got the screaming ultraviolet hornies!"

Meanwhile, Kaboodle was having trouble with his Radio! The six flipflops of his peanut-butter-and-jelly-sandwich boarded Keyer were not working! "Repent, Kaboodle!" said the flipflopman. An evil omen! Instead of repenting,

Kaboodle cross-circuited the Keyer. It worked!

Kaboodle was also spotted by Brother Broun. He ignited his rocket belt! Unfortunately, it could not lift him either, and he didn't have a sign to ride on (and not even a pair of roller skates). Hence he began to tumble. In fact, he began to somersault down Bascom Hill.

Father Robert also noticed Kaboodle, particularly when he skied over him. Father Robert joined in the pursuit of Kaboodle (not to mention the four female streakers) still holding his groin, but now shouting, "I've got the screaming X-ray hornies!!"

Meanwhile, Kaboodle was still trying to reach the Head Kaboodle, while skiing down Bascom Hill (sans snow), jumping the sidewalks, and trailing the extension cord, which led into the bowels of Bascom Hall. Bartelt was pursuing on a protest sigh, being chased by the protestors; Nelizov was chasing on roller skates, with nine streakers following; Brown was rolling down the Hill, while Father Robert chased on foot and screamed.

Kaboodle jumped Park Street and sped along the State Street Mall (which in those days was but two blocks of street with barricades at each end), with the whole mangy herd in pursuit. Ahead he saw the Hofferdower, who said, "Yeah, man. I see it too." From the direction of Lake Mendota, Irving the Horrible led a band of vicious, barbarian Pollocks (now you people from Poland, or of Polish descent, don't get all uptight about me making fun of you; I said Pollocks, not Polacks; Pollocks are something entirely different). Bartelt, Broun, Robert, and Nelizov gained on Kaboodle! The demonstrators gained on Bartelt! The streakers gained on Nelizov! Father Robert gained on the streakers! The fuzz gained on the whole bunch!

Kaboodle neared Lake Street, still travelling by his momentum! Suddenly, he realized, there was not much slack in his extension cord! Just as he crashed through the barricades, into Lake Street, it went taut! Kaboodle was snapped to a sudden halt. He was dazed. All at once, Nelizov, Robert, Bartelt, Broun, Ole Mister Widdemeyer, Irving the Horrible, the demonstrators, the streakers and the fuzz smashed into him. He happened to be on top of the Hofferdower, who said, "Oh, wow, man. What a High!" The Flipflopman looked over the pile, and climbed on top. Just then, there was a crackle, and the Ham Radio said, "Come in Fubel Kaboodle. This is the Head Kaboodle. What is your secret?"

Kaboodle, regaining his senses, responded, "Head Kaboodle! This is Fubel Kaboodle. My secret is-". Out of nowhere, a huge, double trailer truck, carrying Res Halls (the hiding place of innumerable types of demons) weekly

supply of sawdust, careened! It hit every single one of them! Every single one! (Of course, it had to back up twice to do it). Kaboodle, Robert, Bartelt, Brown, Nelizov, Ole Mister Widdemeyer, Irving the Horrible, his horde, the streakers, the demonstrators, the fuzz, the Hofferdower, the Flipflopman, every single one of them! The driver hopped out of the truck, scraped up the remains, put them in a bag labelled "Savory Meat Loaf Meat", threw it in the back of the truck, and continued on.

* * * *

But, you ask, how can the story continue? They've all been mixed with sawdust and turned into Savory Meat Loaf.

Simple, I reply. We now go to Heaven, Hell, Purgatory, the Elysian Fields, Hades, Valhalla, Cleveland, Philadelphia, or which ever abode of the dead you prefer.

"Where the Hell are we?", asked Brown.

"Damned if I know," replied Nelizov. They were all standing around in white robes.

"Hey, what's that little sack?" asked Kaboodle, pointing to a little sack.

"It's me, you dimbulb," replied the sack.

"It's Heimdexer," said Father Robert. "Where did you come from?"

"I was with you all along," Heimdexer replied.

"Gee, I never saw you," they all replied.

"Well, I know one thing," Bartelt said. They all asked Bartelt what it was he knew. He replied to their question as to what it was he knew, "The one thing I know is that, whatever misfortune may be our lot, it could only be worse in Milwaukee." They nodded in agreement. In the background, Irving mulled around with his horde, a couple of streakers were beginning to make it, the fuzz were looking for some heads to smash, and Father Robert screamed, "I've got the screaming cosmic ray hornies!" then pulled out another bottle of "Ole Mister Widdemeyer's Irish Whiskey and Floor Polish", took a swig, and passed the bottle around.

After Kaboodle had taken a couple of shots of "Ole Mister Widdemeyer's Irish Whiskey and Floor Polish", he said, "Well, I might have died doing it, but I kept my secret safe. The Head Kaboodle will learn it in time, but the Grand Pooh-bah never will; it's all over for the Grand Pooh-bah!"

"Say, Kaboodle," Father Robert began, "now that

we're all dead, couldn't you tell us your secret. I mean, we were almost friends, even when we were enemies, but that's all behind us now. We're just dying to know what it was we were after."

"Well, I don't know... It's still supposed to be a secret...but..." Kaboodle replied.

Father Robert handed him another bottle of "Ole Mister Widdemeyer's Irish Whiskey and Floor Polish", and said, slipping into an Irish brogue, "But, laddie, surely you ken tell me, one Irishman to another."

"Well, when you put it that way," Kaboodle said, chugging the contents of the bottle, "I guess I could." He whispered something into Father Robert's ear.

Father Robert began jumping up and down, screaming, "I know the secret of Kaboodle! I know the secret of Kaboodle!" The others implored him to tell them. But first, he stripped off his white robe and shouted, "You fool! I have duped the Fubel Kaboodle! We're not dead! I faked the truck accident! I planned the whole thing! I've been watching 'Mission Impossible' reruns!"

"No! No! This can't be! I remember being hit by the truck, repeatedly, and being made into Savory Meat Loaf!" Kaboodle replied.

"We tricked you!" Father Robert replied. "While you weren't looking, we substituted someone else for your body! We faked the accident, the being made into Savory Meat Loaf, we even set up the demonstration, the streakers and the fuzz! We're not in purgatory-- we're in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in the parking lot of McDonald's!"

"No! No! This isn't possible!" cried Fubel Kaboodle. "I've been tricked by an agent of the Grand Pooh-bah--by an ordinary agent of the Grand Pooh-bah, at that. But-but- in every 'Mission Impossible', there was a van--you used a truck!"

"What's the difference," Father Robert said still bouncing up and down. "Besides, we've got a van. Brother Brown-- bring the van around."

"I've already send the Hofferdower to get it," replied Braun.

"You what!!" Father Robert cried. In the distance they heard the squeal of tires. They saw the van speeding towards them. They tried to scramble for cover. Unfortunately, Kaboodle was still trailing several hundred feet of extension cord. The van neared, gaining speed! They tried to untangle themselves! The van was almost on top of them! In unison, they made a last, desperate lunge to one side! The van swerved! Unfortunately, to the same side! Then everybody was hit by a truck.

A LETTER FROM A. BERTRAM CHANDLER, AUSTRALIA

Dear Janice,

Thank for JANUS #1. A nice, bright newzine.

I particularly enjoyed (I would) Tom Murn's DOWN THE BUNNY HOLE, although I have a few whinges about the review of the Rim Worlds series. Mr. Murn seems to believe that socialism is inevitable. I used to hold the same belief myself once but now I'm not so sure. I have consistently voted Labour (Socialist) both in England and in Australia for many, many years - but, insofar as our impending General Election is concerned, I doubt if I shall ever do so again. My attitude towards Whitlam and Fraser is: A plague on both your houses! What is so hard to forgive is the Jesusless balls that Labour has made of the economy during its spell in office. Also hard to forgive has been the Party's attitude towards the PLO and the allegedly neutral stance taken during the Yom Kippur War.

But I seem to have gotten sidetracked. The point that I meant to make is this: It doesn't matter a damn what the socio-economic system is or will be, ships will still have to be organized on the lines on which they have been organized ever since there have been ships, with a master, no matter what his actual title is, responsible for everything and his departmental heads doing all the work. Has Mr. Murn read THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE? The space fleet in the Pournelle/Niven novel was run on strict Royal Navy principles.

Insofar as Grimes is concerned, I must confess that at times I feel like Frankenstein. And every time that I try to retire the old bastard there are so many demands for further appearances by him that I just have to prop him up, dust him off and then boot him into the middle of some fresh imbroglio. I've tried writing novels (a) without Grimes and (b) not set in the Rim Worlds - but either they don't sell or they get very poor reviews. But he does seem to have made his last bow in GALAXY. A certain editor whom I met at the recent Aussiecon pressganged him to become one of his crew.

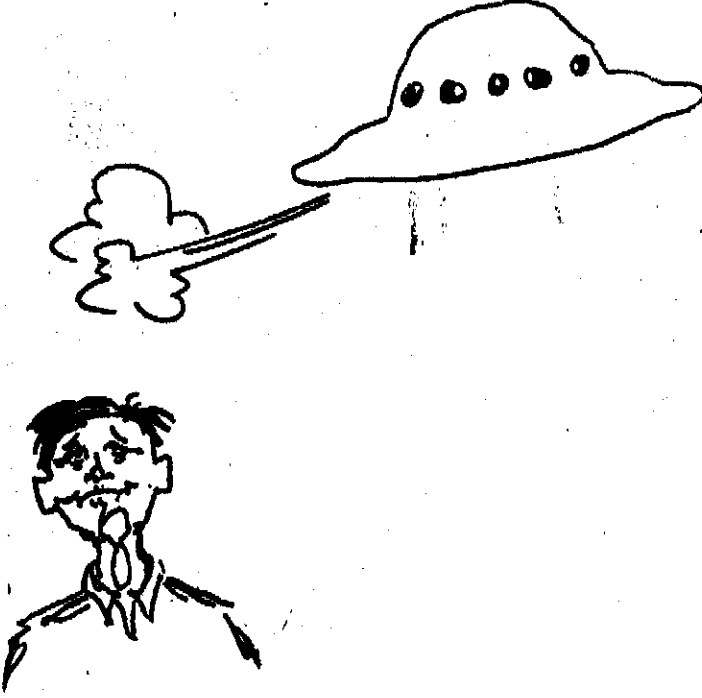
When I get around to it I shall be writing THE Australian Science Fiction Novel. It will be one of those Ifs of History efforts. If Ned Kelly had succeeded in derailling the special train at Glenrowan. Just as Washington had his British shipmaster John Paul Jones to handle the naval side of the War of Independence, so Kelly will have his British shipmaster John Grimes to do likewise. After all, the Rim Worlds Grimes must have had some ancestors. (My Japanese publishers are trying to prove that he's descended, somehow, from Hornblower...)

Finally, one of our leading daily newspapers is running a short story competition. One of the rules is that contestants must use a pseudonym. The one that I typed on my entry just came naturally. I hope that Grimes' luck holds.

With best wishes to yourself - to all of you - and to Janus.

ENCOUNTER WITH A UFO

by John Bartelt



It was a slow Wednesday night, and Ted and I and the new deputy, Jake (there's always a deputy named Jake, isn't there?), were playing hearts. About 10:30 the phone rings and I lean back, pick it up and say, "Washaca County Sheriff's Office, Deputy Thomson speaking." And there's some woman on the line, babbling about some flying saucer in her field, and that it's trying to kidnap two people. Well, I figured she was drunk or something, but I had just succeeded in losing the game (by taking the queen of spades and twelve hearts), so Jake and I hopped in the squad car and sped out there, a place a couple miles northeast of town on one of the county trunks.

We pulled up to the house, a one story frame with a lot of trees around. And there's this

strange glow coming from behind it. The woman, about forty, came to the door, and her hands were shaking and her face was as white as a sheet. Something sure had scared the hell outa her. We went in the house as she explained what she had seen. She led us back to the kitchen. From the window we saw it - an honest-to-god flying saucer. No shit. A flying saucer. I didn't believe it myself. It was just sitting in the field, about a quarter mile back. The woman handed me a pair of binoculars (I'd forgotten to bring ours along); she seemed to have calmed down some now that we were there. The whole thing was glowing a little, but most of the light was pouring out from an opening in the side. And sure enough, you could see two men and these two ugly creatures. The men were hanging on to the opening for dear life and the things were trying to pull them off. The things had arms like tentacles - anaky, with feelers on the end; and they were only about five feet tall, with skin hanging in folds. They were horrible to look at. The men were struggling to keep their hand holds.

I didn't really feel like attacking a flying saucer with a pistol, but I didn't know where we were going to get reinforcements, and who knows how much longer those guys were going to hold on. So Jake and I headed out there with guns drawn. The opening faced east, so we stuck to the trees to the west, trying to keep out of sight. We didn't need our flashlights, because the moon was almost full. It was eerie, flitting in and out of the shadows, in the moonlight, with the glow of that saucer. Damned scary, too.

Well, we got up close to the saucer, around opposite the opening. It was about 10 feet high, 35 feet wide... We could hear the men yelling, "No, no you can't make us, you can't make us!"

I gave the signal, and Jake and I ran around opposite sides. The men were half inside, half outside the ship, and the things were still trying to pull them off. We surprised them and grabbed the men. The men were surprised too; we had to pull them

off. We got them a couple of yards from the ship, and they're still screaming, "No, no, no!" Just then the ship shoots up suddenly. After a couple of seconds you couldn't even see it.

They calmed down a little then, They were both in their twenties. The one guy, about six feet tall, glasses, brown hair, just sat down and started swearing softly. The other guy, black hair, about three inches shorter, just stared off into space where the ship had disappeared. Then he turns to me and says, "You goddamned idiots." Obviously hysterical (who'd blame them?). The taller guy's still sitting and swearing.

"What's your names?" I asked. They just glared at me. "Where ya from?"

"Howard's Grove," the taller one says. "It's near Sheboygan."

"That's two hundred miles away," Jake says. "What're ya doing here?"

We get glared at again. I'm thinking we ought to get these guys to a hospital, cause maybe they're going into shock or something, when the taller one starts swearing at us something fierce.

So Jake says, "You guys oughta be grateful we saved you from those things."

"Saved us. Ha!" The taller one says.

"What would you call it? Jake says, getting a little mad. "Those things were trying to pull you in and take you who knows where."

The shorter guy says, "Curmudgeon. You still haven't figured it out."

"What's to figure? Them creatures were trying to pull you into their ship an' we saved you," Jake says, and suddenly I'm getting this funny feeling.

"Idiots," the other one says. "We were picked up in Howard's Grove. The aliens were trying to get rid of us out here!"

* * * * *

I remember alone in the broadleaf tree again
reminiscent of old chaise lounges redolent in the spring
aghast at the heat swinging softly
to the music sprinkler on the grass.
Taken by surprise a summer breeze hits softly and
retiring early the sun streams down and is
gone before the telephone rings saying nothing but
recipes and spiders encased smothered by words we spin lies and counterfeit.
Sanguine is the water it flows from nowhere and
releases all lordships from their cages coming proudly
and without hum.
The music spills and makes nuances of them all.
We sick and deign to judge, we cannot see
we can only leg our ways through the Jaspers
crying loudly but no one hears but the woodpecker
(blunted now) and only chews tobacco on the tree limb brightly green and
impenetrable oh god impenetrable.
(Once upon a time the leaves grew without tears and babies cried without sobs.)
We do not course we do not listen and adjust to a world that we cannot encompass
with myth,
no more no more we only see it disconnected
bluebirde and dandilions and then the lake shivers
the storm passes and the clouds droop in sorrow for having failed again.

Jeanne Gomoll



Philip K. Dick, Flow My Tears, The Policeman Said. DAW paperback, \$1.50.
(review by John Bartelt)

By this time, most of you must have heard the premise: one night, Jason Taverner is a rich and famous man, with a television audience numbering thirty million; the next morning he wakes up in a fleabag hotel a complete unknown (though still rich - he has a wad of bills big enough to choke a cliché). He doesn't even have the ID cards without which he can not survive a day in the police state that envelopes the world of 1988. The novel is his story, the story of a man trying to regain his identity at a time when students hide out under the ruins of universities, ringed by "nats."

It is also the story of the policeman, of how he tries to cope with the unprecedented - the existence of a man on whom there is not a bit of information (how big a conspiracy would be necessary to remove every bit of information from all the data banks on the Earth, Moon and Mars?).

The other characters are also very real and very strange; there's Kathy the forger, to whom Jason goes for ID cards, and who is also a police informer. And Alys - but you'll have to read about her. You'll also have to read the reason for Jason's sudden transition; you'll never guess it, and I'm certainly not going to tell you.

It's not perfect; it ends with an epilogue that tells everything that happens to everybody after the end of the story. I could do without it.

Isaac Asimov (ed.), Before The Golden Age. Fawcett Crest, three PB vol., \$1.50. 1100 pp.
(review by John Bartelt)

Before the Golden Age is a huge anthology: totalling 1100 pages and 25 stories (plus a John Campbell science essay from that period). Together they form the first part of the Asimov autobiography, from his birth, up until the time he started getting

published - where The Early Asimov takes over (the third part of the autobiography is now coming out in hard cover).

Thirty thousand words of it are Asimov's own (personally, I found them the most enjoyable typical Asimovian wit). Book 1 covers his life from 1920 to 1932, and includes eight stories from 1931 and 1932. In many of these stories - as with stories in the other two books - the emphasis is on action; some are little episodic odysseys. Women, for the most part, are to be fought for or saved. But many are still fun. The stories: "The Man Who Evolved," Edmond Hamilton; "The Jameson Satellite," Neil R. Jones; "Submicroscopic" and "Awlo of Ulm," Capt. S. P. Meek; "Tetrahedra of Space," P. Schuyler Miller; "The World of the Red Sun," Clifford D. Simak; "Tumithak of the Corridors," Charles R. Tanner; "The Moon Era," Jack Williamson.

The second book includes six stories from 1933 and 1934. There is Murray Leinster's classic of alternate universes, "Sidewise in Time;" also Jack Williamson's "Born of the Sun," one I particularly liked. The others: "The Man Who Awoke," Laurence Manning (the first in a series); "Tumithak in Shawm," Charles R. Tanner; "Colceus," Donald Wandrei; "Old Faithful," Raymond Z. Gallun.

Book 3 covers from 1935 to 1938. The stories: "The Parasite Planet," Stanley G. Weinbaum (sort of "A Martian Odyssey" gone to Venus); "Proxima Centauri," Murray Leinster (another classic theme); "The Accursed Galaxy" and "Devolution," Edmond Hamilton; "He Who Shrank," Henry Hasse; "The Human Pets of Mars," Leslie Francis Stone; "The Brain Stealers of Mars" and "Other Eyes Watching," John W. Campbell, Jr.; "Bag Game," Isaac Asimov (a previously unpublished, very short story); "Minus Planet," John D. Clark (another good one; though it does have a scientific flaw even Asimov doesn't mention); "Past, Present and Future," Nat Schachner; "The Men and the Mirror," Ross Rocklynne (another very enjoyable story).

Asimov doesn't hesitate to point out the flaws, the wordy style, or the simplistic representation of minorities that appear in some stories, or to say that they don't all excite him as they once did. Stories he missed when they first appeared, or couldn't appreciate at the time are not included. It is a very personal anthology. You may have to push yourself to read it at times, but people interested in Asimov, the history of SF or in writing SF should make the effort (it's interesting to find your great idea for a story was already used forty years ago).

A few words about Larry Niven's new collection, "Tales of Known Space." As part of his "known space" series, they range in time from the present to 3100 AD (but not the next ten thousand years, as the back cover states). They include his first sale ("The Coldest Place") and a very recent story, and eleven others in between. They haven't been rewritten, so you can see his development as a writer. They are told in order of the known space chronology, with some notes added by Niven. Special added attractions: an introduction and afterthoughts by Niven; a timeline for known space; a very complete Niven bibliography; a cover by Rick Sternbach; and drawings of a Kzinti and a Kzinti skeleton. I thoroughly enjoyed the book (a paperback from Ballantine, \$1.50), and if you like Niven, so will you (of course, if, somehow you've gone this far in life without being familiar with Niven's work, let me just say it's good, "hard" science fiction).

Reginald Bretnor, (ed.), Science Fiction. Today and Tomorrow. Penguin Books. 342 pp.
An essay on bad SF and its effects on the genre by
Thomas J. Murn

SF criticism is a floundering field. It should have been out of an 'infancy' stage long ago; Extrapolation was founded in the late fifties, and anthologies of critical essays date back to 1953. The Fan press, of course, has made its varying contrib-

utions in critical pieces appearing here and there. And here in 1975 we have Science Fiction. Today and Tomorrow, a collection of fifteen essays edited by Reginald Bretnor, who twenty-two years ago edited the 'first' comprehensive anthology of sf criticism. And what have we learned in those twenty-two years?



Today and Tomorrow is definitely comprehensive, as far as topic material goes. There is a section on sf and the visual media; a piece about the mechanics of publishing sf, by Fredrik Pohl; an excellent technical description of how to fantasize a rational universe ('world-building,' if you will) by Poul Anderson, and an adequate essay on the finer points of constructing alien eco-systems, by Hal Clement.

But scope is one thing, and attitude quite another. Most of the serious essays rehash the old lines about 'a literature of ideas,' 'sense of wonder,' etc... This kind of approach is not the kind of analysis and perspective which some of the more contemporary sf works warrant.

There are a few encouraging signs in Today and Tomorrow. Alan E. Nourse pictures sf as a literature of change, as having the ability to identify changes in an accelerated technological society, illustrating methods by which people can cope with/react to/limit or influence directions of change. Jim Gunn's essay explores sf's separation from the mainstream and lists some reasons as to why the twain should never meet; perspective, optimism, individual importance vs. 'species' literature, and so on. Thomas Scortia sees sf's role as a creator of 'thought-experiments' by which new directions may be tested. (Is there a link to the nature of philosophy in these arguments?)

The views of these writers, however, require a literature that has more to offer

than does sf today. Nourse writes: "Readers of sf must immensely expand the demands that they place upon the sf medium."

But we must know what to demand; and here the anthology fails. Most of the essays do not show any progress in the assessment of serious sf and its implications, literary and otherwise. What is needed to make sf criticism a valid exercise is an influx of new perspectives, new approaches. I find it shocking that no mention is made in any of the essays in the volume of Delany's inspired critical essays (particularly "About 5,175 words"), which seem to point in a new and justifiable direction.

Delany uses terms such as 'aesthetic form' and 'level of subjunctivity' in his criticism. He points to divergences and makes generalities. Bretnor's new collection fails to make any fresh appraisals, strike out in any new direction. The chance of failure must be taken, if the criticism of a promising field is to stake out its position as a knowledgeable and dynamic area of study of literature.

A Review



Gail Kimberly, Flyer. Pyramid Books, \$1.25.
(A review by Thomas J. Murn)

From out of the depths, the true slimy mire of the real pop writers, comes Gail Kimberly. Yes, Flyer is an amazingly proletarian novel, accessible to twelve-year-old slow learners as easily and completely as a McDonalds hamburger, or Kolak. The characters are economy cardboard. The plot simply sticks in your throat - something about (I cringe even as I write) post-holocaustal homo-differentis mutated in tres partes: The Flyers, the Walkers, and the Swimmers. The time is close enough to the year 2000 to make any bio-timespan knowledgables hear symbolic squeaky chalk. Ya see, each of the three races has some sacred techno-remnant that they of course blindly worship. The key is to get the three remnants back together again to make the (god--) machine functional, after which presumably a million Sears-Roebuck and Jewel stores will appear all over the landscape.

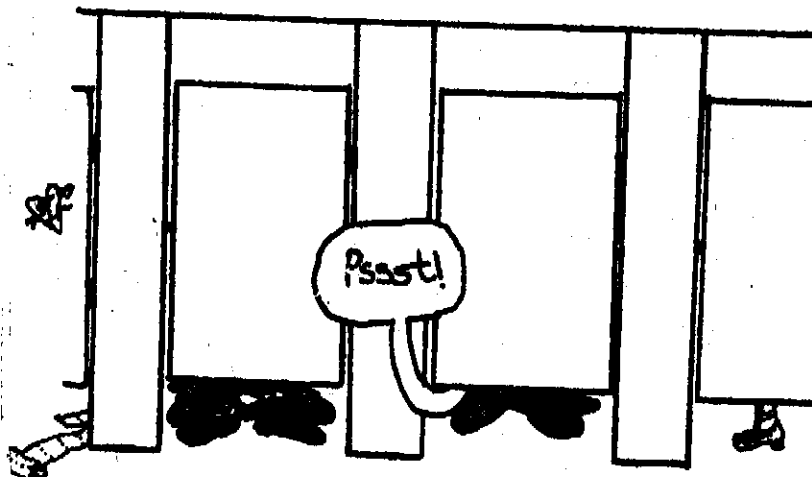
There's more, but it's been disturbing enough to relate the basic plot of Flyer. In plain conception and design it resembles a standard Lost In Space episode. -So I rec't my case on the book itself, but where, I ask you, does this leave sf?

Jim Gunn, in a recently-released anthology essay, points out the impact of the monster-child Technology on Ninteenth Century Western Culture. With certain scientific and industrial advances, along with a new emphasis on educating the masses, came a market for 'popular' prose. Enter pulp magazines, dime novels, then popular music,

radio &c.---

Yeah, it's a market allright, and perimeters of simple taste and judgement are bent helterakelter to fit those capitalistic tastes. In the early 1800's, English and French writers regularly published fiction in the form of serials (which later were collected for book publication) published in the newspapers and periodicals of the period. But people who read newspapers in Nineteenth-Century Britain were principally da monied class. There was just an abundance of money (Hence, private tutors, books, sometimes resulting in literacy) in the centers of colonial exploitation.

Nowadays, we get National Enquirers, distributed and read on a scale undreamed of by Dickens. And we also get books such as Flyer, darkening the shelves of bookstores everywhere. I only hope that no intelligent life forms from Out There are currently monitoring such aspects of evolved life on our globe.



—and the rumor spreads...

...For as long as compound abbreviations have existed as a tradition in sf-dom as convention site designations (Mid-American, Windycon, etcetera), one particular such con-name has been threatening reality with the very temptation of its existence.

In Madison, Wisconsin (affectionately known as Madcity to its inmates and those in the know), what else could a convention be called, but MADCON of course?! One notes that in other, more sane, more healthy, more normal, communities, the procedure has been that the desire for an sf gathering generates a title for that convention. Here, in Madcity however, by its very attractiveness, the title may have created the con! (...By

words, we are created anew...)

But of course it may all be a rumor. Things do get out of hand here in Madcity.

Nevertheless, the "rumor" is quite detailed in its forecast. For instance...

It is said that MADCON will have a female sf author as its guest speaker, as well as a feminist workshop!!

It is said that in a spirit of competition with a certain other con, that the MADCON will have truly secure, non-losable identification system, and that if these examples of gadgetry-genius are lost, the clutzy individual shall have their ear cut off and be rendered, thus, identifiable for the duration of the con.

It is said that, being located in THE movie campus of the world, that the MADCON will boast a film-show extraordinaire matched by no other!

It is said that the MADCON program will depart (in spirit with the deranged nature of its site) from other "normal" and "sane" cons!

It is said that H.G. Wells will preside as fiddler and M.C. during MADCON's tri-world orgy which is said to be scheduled for the senate chambers of the Wisconsin State Capitol Building! Rubber boots, de rigueur!

It is said that May will be the month of Madcity's - nay! - the World's!, first MADCON!!!!



ALIKS

A BOY AND HIS DOG
THE STEFFORD WIFE*

A review by Phillip Kaveny

After seeing the movie "Boy and His Dog," I found myself in a bad, almost surly mood. What was it about the film that spoiled my day? I concluded that the film was structured in such a way so as to not allow any sort of interhuman relationships to develop.

In summary, the film is about a triangle between Albert, a young fellow, Quilla June, a girl he meets, and Blood. Blood

is a dog, well..., not exactly... What is Blood? I'll get to that later. The story is set in 2024, after the fourth world war. Life exists in two places which are inhabited by people, 'Above-ground' and 'downunder.' 'Aboveground' is a sort of post-Armageddon garbage dump. Life 'Aboveground' is, to quote Hobbs: "Nasty, brutish, mean and short." Dogs have become telepathic and can communicate with man, plus being a lot more intelligent than men. In the film this is presented as being gratuitous. Dogs have lost the ability to hunt and fend for themselves. This is supposed to somehow be a result of their development of other powers. Man's mental powers have not increased and he has thus not lost his ability to hunt. The usual roles of man and dog have been reversed. In the case of Albert and Blood, a trade is made with Blood using his ESP to present Albert with 'cunt' and Albert making sure that Blood gets fed. As the film starts, Albert is a little miffed. Blood has been eating more often than he has been fucking.

Albert and Blood go to a movie house. Yes, there are movies even after Armageddon....and the quality of these movies is about the same. Blood smells some 'pussy' in the movie house, Quilla June who is disguised in a fatigue hat and outfit. And the, by now, expected happens. Albert, with Blood's help, is planning to rape her. Surprise, it turns out that she likes it and lures Albert home with her to the 'Downunder.' Against the express wishes of Blood, and without him, he follows her.

'Downunder' is where everyone lives who doesn't like the disorder and danger of 'Aboveground.' 'Downunder' is just like a small pre-WWI Western town might have been. It is run by a committee of three people who have the power to grant life or death to the other inhabitants of 'Downunder.' Well,... it seems that everyone has been downunder too long. One of the ruling committee members breaks it to Albert that: "Our girls have been underground too long and they can't get pregnant anymore." (Or rather, the men are unable to impregnate them...) Guess where Albert fits into all this? Too bad that wasn't the end of the movie.

In the next scene, Albert is gagged and strapped to a hospital bed with a tube attached to his penis. Albert, it seems, is to be the major depositor to the Topeka sperm bank. Whether He Likes It Or Not. Quilla June informs him that he is to be killed after his last deposit, whereupon she helps him to escape. She is hoping to use his manhood and vitality to put herself in charge of the committee.

All Albert wants to do is escape from 'Downunder.' Quilla June has to leave with him because, having defied the committee, she is now as good as dead underground. They flee up the ventilator shaft (through which he had originally entered). Good ol' loyal

* or, Vic, his real name. ("Albert" is Blood's nickname for him.)

true-blue Blood has been waiting at the shaft entrance for three days... He has not had anything to eat in that time, and he is also badly hurt. He can't move. There is no food around and no way to get it in time to save him. So, Quilla June ends up being dog-food and Blood and Albert lope off into the sunset licking their chops.

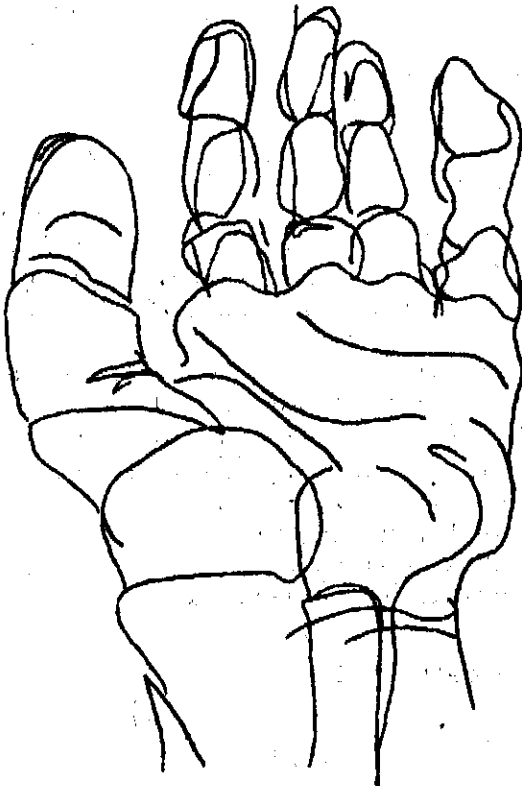
Contrary to popular opinion, I found the ending of "A Boy and His Dog" to be in no way a surprise. It follows, from the world presented in the film, that Quilla June must end up as dog food.

Albert and Blood are predators who have formed a pragmatic alliance. It would be impossible to form the super-predator relationship that the boy and dog have without Blood's superhuman perceptive powers and intellect. The two would, in any other relationship, instantly become the prey of someone else in the Aboveground world.

On a gut level, I resent the film for making inter-human relationships equal to self-destruction. For a short period of the film, Albert seems capable of having feelings of love for another human being. For a short period, he assumes a heroic dimension. His life is something more than groveling through gutted National Ten Food Stores, looking for food alternated with combing the countryside for someone to rape. In one scene, when he and Quilla June hide out in a boiler room, he is starting to sense the unique character of other human beings. These emotions are represented by Blood for what they are: a threat to the rational, logical, (for the world presented), hunting, foraging relationship that the two have...

Quilla June is presented as a nasty, selfish, hateful, bitch. She is lacking in all attributes of humanity and is a total opposite of Blood. You are supposed to hate her in the context of the film, and yet she does save Albert's life Downunder, helping him to escape. Even this cannot make her equal to Blood in terms of devotion and desirability. And most important, she does not approach his worth in survival value.

The world presented in the film is, of course, a doomed one. The people Downunder cannot reproduce themselves. Aboveground, there are children present. How did they get there? Within the world of this film, children would logically be nothing but an unnecessary impediment to survival. In forty years all that could be left would be a few old people and a bunch of starving dogs. The only thing that could keep mankind alive in the world of the film would be the impulse to form male-female relationships and these are prevented by definition in that world, as being suicidal.



hands

By Jeanne Gomoll

My Hands

Always my hands in a hundred different ways.
I use them to mold the universe
Into shapes that amaze and cause
Me to smile content
With a corner of the world
That does not hurt.

Harlan Ellison, "A Boy and His Dog" in The Beast that Shouted Love at the Heart of the World. New York, New American Library/Signet, 1969, pp. 217-254.

A Boy and His Dog [the film]

(a review by Jeanne Gomoll)

Vic Wanders through a flattened and barren Phoenix, Arizona during the course of the movie, A Boy and His Dog. But in Harlan Ellison's short story, Vic originally prowled among the ruins of a blasted but still recognizable Los Angeles as a lone urban guerilla, a "solo." It is probable that the main reason for the film's dramatic shift in locale is due primarily to considerations of expense - for the backdrops of barren salt flats (or conceivably: a well disguised set?) are undoubtedly easier to produce than a painstaking reconstruction of L.A. following a catastrophic nuclear explosion in the near-by hills. In fact, the practical adjustments from story to film are made with genuine sensibility and considerable originality.

The scenes in which nomadic gangs are seen screaming and flailing across the vast wastelands creates an illusion of sheer poetry with their depiction of a disintegrating, self-destructive remnant of society. --A perfect opposition (at first) to the downer society of universally enforced conformity where the sterility and self-destructive elements are hidden beneath sickening façades of unconvincing naivety. The early-1900's American town of Ellison's story is replaced by a grassy park where parades and ice-cream socials take place, and the "church" where government and judgments (upon the non-conforming) as well as the year's fruit preserving contests, are conducted. Through the use of these characteristic and suggestive locales, together with the pasty theatrical/doll-like made-up townspeople, Ellison's conception of the downer is marvelously captured.

The characterization of Blood, the dog, and the recreation of Ellison's dialogue is adept and excitingly satisfying if you come to the film looking for Ellison's humor and inventiveness. And - thank heavens, perhaps we've arrived! - the level of sophistication is high!

But real differences between story and film exist too. And these are crucial to whether you will enjoy one over the other.

In the movie, both societies, above and below, are doomed. Above, nothing grows - sustenance comes from left-over, pre-war canned goods, and finally, the ultimate suggestion of social self-destruction, cannibalism. Below, though, the problems of sustenance have been solved with hydroponic agriculture, the human spirit fails, and men are frequently sterile, a fact which must eventually destroy the society. Temporary rejuvenation is obtained from Vic and others like him who are used to replenish gene pools. But such a temporary salvation is only possible as long as the fight for survival goes on above, and that fight seems to be a losing one. With women the most scarce but paradoxically least cared for commodity above ground, and food running out fast, the movie presentation of earth's chances are not promising. Blood speaks of a place, "over the hill," where agriculture is still practiced or possible, and this is the only hopeful element allowed by the movie version.

Ellison's story however, presents an above-ground world in which things are not quite as bad. Gangs are neither small nor nomadic, but are work-forces operating the city power supply, working in the marijuana fields and running the movie houses (keeping all of the really "indispensable" services going, you know). Considering the movie's decision in locale-change, L.A. may be the place "over the hill" that Blood has heard about, for in Phoenix, the only visibly organized gang is that operating the movie projectors.

[About both movie and story, I have the objection that given the circumstances, women might very well be scarce aboveground, but (1) would thus be treated with more care (of a pedestal/property variety) than have been so callously used and discarded/ murdered, and (2) that women would in many instances have banded together for mutual

self-protection, if they indeed were unable to count on any help whatsoever from men. Certainly there is ample room here for a discussion of sexism with regard to both movie and story.]

But the really major difference between story and movie is the treatment of Vic and Quilla June Holme's characters, and of the resolution of conflict between them. Ellison's reasons for having Vic murder Quilla June in the end of his story are not because she is a "bad 'un" anyway, and his dog needs food (which is precisely the reason offered by the film version), but because, though he loves both, he loves Blood more. Both Quilla June and Blood are people, both worthy of Vic's loyalty, but Blood has been his friend and comrade longer and in a more important way than a sexual partner has been. And so, not wanting to present a relationship of real love between Vic and Blood, (who must be seen as an alien being who despite normal prejudices, is quite human), the movie adds a subplot revolving around Quilla June's aspirations to power in the downunder. She is rendered thus, morally unscrupulous in that she would lie to Vic that she loves him in order to obtain her nefarious goal. She counsels Vic to leave Blood to die for her. So, at the end, we are glad that she dies instead of Blood - not because Vic loves Blood and we admire his loyalty, but because we have been manipulated into a dislike of Quilla June.

The final moments are thus converted into relieved humor. Blood borrows Jubal T. Harshaw's line in Stranger in a Strange Land concerning Michael's tastiness and makes a comment about Quilla June's need for salt. This episode in Ellison's story communicated instead, the tragedy of the choice and the meaningfulness of Vic's new understanding of his relationship with Blood, sentiments which are blended skillfully with horror, to create a far more complex ending and impact upon the reader.

Although this variation between film and story changes, in an important sense, our reaction to the conflict between the downunder and aboveground cultures, the filmed result is not crucially flawed. Relationships are simplified in the movie - we are manipulated toward giving our approval to the ending; whereas in the book, we understand a far more complex situation, and accept the resolution as the only one possible. However - notwithstanding my objections - the film was still an enjoyable transcription of Ellison's story, even excellent at times, particularly in its depiction of the postwar world itself.

The Stepford Wives [the film] (A review by Jan Bogstad).

My first reading of Ira Levin's short story, "The Stepford Wives" left me cold. For some reason the story seemed both impractical and flat. When, some weeks ago I saw the movie, I received it with coldness also...cold fury. It was not the flat characterizations of men and women alike that distressed me. There are even deeper reasons to resent "The Stepford Wives."

"The Stepford Wives" is founded on premises which are not only untrue; they are simplistic and even harmful to one's point of view of the relationships between men and women.

First, the movie-story assumes that these relationships are a simple matter of women wanting to be one way and their husbands wanting them to be another. A case in point is the female tennis player whose husband wants a swimming pool where her tennis court is. For the offense of liking tennis more than she does housework, she is changed into something that is a willing slave of her husband and a devotee to the House Beautiful code. It seems to be a simple matter of forming her to her husband's wishes so that he can be happy. One may ask, Why did he marry in the first place? Even in the most husband dominated marriages, in real life, the wife brings some qualities to the union that her husband doesn't have. This is why people get married.

"The Stepford Wives" assumes that ~~a marriage will be happier if only one personality and consciousness is involved, that of the husband.~~ This premise implies that a man can love a woman who does nothing but what he wants her to do, and that all that is, is to keep their house beautiful and cozy for him and the children. And as for the value that a mechanical sexual partner might have to her husband, only the positive aspects of such an abomination find their way into Levin's story. What can you say about one-party sex between a man and a woman? That it takes the traditional role of the passive woman to ridiculous extremes? But it is emphasized in the film that the men want their wives to be obviously appreciative of their sexual prowess. One begins to wonder if this slavish appreciation would not begin to pall after awhile... The men of Stepford are presented as being rather insecure. They have trouble functioning outside of their little men's group. But the logical extension of this insecurity is never taken up. Would they not begin to feel insecure about this continual praise coming from their mechanical wives? Would they not begin to wonder how well they were really doing?

If Levin had shown how this false system had broken down elsewhere in the story, with an old resident-husband of Stepford becoming disillusioned with his mechanical-wife, then I could see the reasoning for the creation of such a horror story. But Stepford seems to operate, for the purposes of this tale, as nicely as a well-oiled machine, with wives doing nothing but what their husbands want them to. Phewey.

The other two false premises about reality grow out of this first one.

It is assumed that a wife cannot be a good Housewife/mother and do anything else. Is this the case? If it is, if "being a good little wife" takes all of a woman's resources, or if diverting some of her resources to other things causes her to fail at her "primary task," then how did all of our mothers manage to be in church groups, run charities, volunteer for non-paying service jobs? And how is it that so many women go crazy trying to do just their "primary" job? It has always seemed to me that a woman is as capable of having a home and a career as a man, but her husband must share in that aspect of the partnership. None of the fellows in "The Stepford Wives" seemed to be so over-

erworked that they couldn't have been a part of the family group as well as their wives.

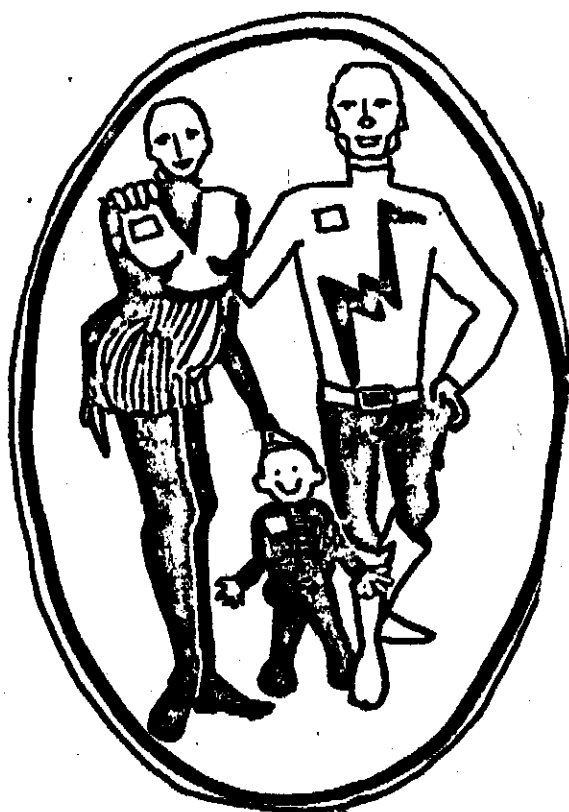
Thus, women are seen as imperfect in the dynamics of the movie-story, if they have outside interests.

Thirdly, the story is downright offensive in its assumptions about the very nature of men and women. It assumes, first that men want their wives to be simple automatons. This is already clear from my other comments. What this also implies is that they will take steps to implement this view. Secondly, it assumes that their wives would let them get away with it over and over again. Really, the women come off a lot dumber and less capable of taking care of themselves than I could believe they could be.



The ultimate affront, for me, comes with the last few scenes of the film. Picture a woman who is faced with the possibility of losing her life to a mechanical dummy-imitator. In the movie, she is trapped in a room with the evil-mechanical person maker at the door. The woman screams and then the movie fades to a supermarket with all the women of Stepford dressed in long feminine gowns and floppy summer hats, including the female protagonist who appeared in the previous scene. We are to assume that she is the dummy and not the original woman, who is now dead. That is, the men of the town have decided to have their wives replaced and the **WOMEN LET THEM GET AWAY WITH IT.** I ask you, would you, male or female, not struggle for your life with more than an ineffectual scream? Such an ending is doubly offensive in its implication of the passiveness with which the Stepford wives bowed to their fate.

The whole conception of the film is insidious. It presents the problem of liberation as if it were one of escaping the clutches of demonic men. Premise: Men, if given their way, want lifeless mechanical obedient wives. Premise: Women must strive to escape their attempts to make this out of them. At a time when women and men are only beginning to realize the two-way nature of their communication problem, such a group of premises can only feed the persecution-fantasies of women and make men more secure in affirming their non-sexism. Surely most men are unwilling to have their wives become automatons, therefore they are "not so bad after all," and do not need to change.



YOU WILL FIND SOMETHING FOR THE
WHOLE FAMILY IN THE SPECIAL
(NAMESAKE) JANUARY ISSUE
OF JANUS!!!!

this quite well, creating worlds and even universes that are logical extensions of trends in the present day world. Thus John Brunner mixes politics science and urban planning in his Stand on Zanzibar and Squares of the City, Larry Niven explores the possible consequences of organ transplants in A Gift From Earth, and Frank Herbert extrapolates a future interplanetary society based on worlds organized around a feudal governing system. The list of sf works which use the past and present creatively is, thankfully, quite extensive. What concerns me is the, often quite sloppily handled, wholesale transposition of a past culture or mixture of past cultures to a future setting. I'm sure any sf reader has come in contact with this phenomenon. It can even be entertaining but it is certainly not creative. I began musing about this type of sf while reading a recently published first novel. It was actually two novelettes in one volume; The Way To Dawn World and Dawnboy by Bill Starr. Here is created a planet where a group of people supposedly preserve the cultural traditions of two groups from earth's past. These are the Apaches and the Scottish Highlanders, although the personal male code of ethics seems to be Apache dominated. The idea is not untutilizing especially in the positive light in which the book presents it. I might note that neither of these cultures are too inviting for the female members, as is emphasized in the latter half of Dawnboy, the chronologically earlier of the two. One young woman tries to escape her future as a tribesman's wife. Another has been badly disfigured by a jealous husband. And yet our author does not see the majority of women as being distressed with their fate.

The Way To Dawnworld is a bit more offensive in its obviously capitalistic oriented view of free enterprise. Dawnboy's father, a sometimes -victim of this system, has nothing but good to say of it. And this sort of one-sided moralizing goes on throughout the whole book. It is not that Capitalism is a part of the future culture which offends. After all, Feudalism is part of Herbert's future. Rather, the 'obvious superiority' which Dawnboy's father attributes to free enterprise is not even borne out in the novel much less in the real world.

Actually, I was entertained by Starr's two novelette's. They merely provide a good illustration of what can happen with Past As Future in sf. A much more offensive example is John Norman's Gor series. The Gor books could be a lot of fun as swashbucklers. They revolve around a primitive world where masculine strength is at a premium, but they also seriously flawed. In the Gor novels, all eight or perhaps even nine of them, earth people are captured by aliens and taken to a primitive, male oriented planet where women (most women that is) exist at the suffrance of and for the sole pleasure of their male masters. Female dominated cultural pockets exist on the planet Gor but they always fail when the women are made to recognize their true inferiority and the total unnaturalness of their wish to dominate.

Yes, I confess, I have read the Gor novels. But I do not identify with the slave women nor the sex starved amazons who are a female's only alternative to the acceptance of slavery(you see, the amazons must deny themselves male companionship if they wish to keep their strength and independence-shades of Medieval witch tales). I enjoy the swashbuckling, adventuresome male characters, a trick I acquired from reading juvenile sf in primary school. Still, I have to admit the Gor novels are rather sloppily done. For example, we are supposed to believe in some highly developed future culture which captures pretty young girls from earth for the sole pleasure of seeing them made into slaves. Come now, is this believable when one remembers that one aspect of advanced culture is the freedom it gives its women? Or, what about this: all these former earth beings are transported to a primitive cultural setting, a mixture of early roman or nomadic slaviv lifestyles with a little tribe life thrown in for good measure, yet they never seem to succumb to disease. And where are the old people or the non-five-foot-two-eyes-of-blue women? Do they kill themselves at birth?

Contemplation of the faults of the Gor novels leads conveniently to a statement about the feminist perspectives presented in JANUS.

I have been reading sf since I was about eight. There is much in good sf for every mind to chew on, be it male or female. Still, I have never understood why it is so unflattering to women and so unaware of our strengths and talents. Thank heavens for the growing number of female authors and truly perceptive male authors. There is a lot of fault to be found yet, however. Take Alan Dean-Foster's recent Icerigger where one female character is noted only when she screams at the wrong time or otherwise gets the rest of her party into trouble. Sorry, but I don't believe that women inevitably break down in dangerous situations. This is not the case in the present nor could it be in the future. We non-silent minority of fem-fans don't intend to let this sort of clumsy writing escape criticism.

JANUS is not entirely a feminist sf magazine, but the Editor and Managing Editor are longstanding sf readers. You can therefore expect us to respond to and print sf which presents women as the many-faceted beings that they are in real life.

Be heartened Ye who seek to change the status quo. Be warned Ye who perpetuate its faults.

Jan Bogstad
Editor
Janus

