

AFTER ALL, THIS IS THE YEAR OF THE MONKEY, Y'KNOW...



Tightbeam

JAN. 1980

* FOR THOSE WHO DON'T KNOW, THE CLASSIC FLICK "GODZILLA VS. KING KONG" WAS MADE WITH TWO DIFFERENT ENDINGS...

[Handwritten signature]

TIGHTBEAM

© Lynne Holdom January 1980

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--- front cover by Anji Valenza ---
back cover courtesy of Andy Andruschak

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----- If you have an "X" here, this is your last issue of TIGHTBEAM unless you
send \$6.00 renewal fee to Janie Lamb, Rte 2, Box 272, Heiskill, TN 37754

editorial

by Lynne Holdom

Well here it is the first month of a new decade -- yes, I know not technically, but all the news media are saying so. It has been a mild winter so far and the ski slope operators are in despair and skiers are snarling at the weatherman. We have had rain rather than snow.

All this makes it easier to get TIGHTBEAM. My mimeo doesn't like cold weather. And since I got the new windows that save heat, it has been working better. Notice I said better. It still chewed up a few mailing envelopes. The humidity is too low for its liking even though I've been using the humidifier.

Kris Andrews wanted to know how to submit a cover or backcover for TIGHTBEAM. Just send it to me. If you want your artwork back, say so and enclose a SASE. Small art is submitted exactly the same way. However, I often do not use artwork right away. It depends on how topical it is and a number of other things. The piece by Vernon Clark has been around for a while as one example. So has the piece by Bill Bridget.

My small editorial helper, my cat Najji, is no longer around. She died the day after New Year's in the vet's office. I have absolutely no luck raising grey cats. My other cat got sick also but she is all right now. So don't blame me if this issue is rather bland.

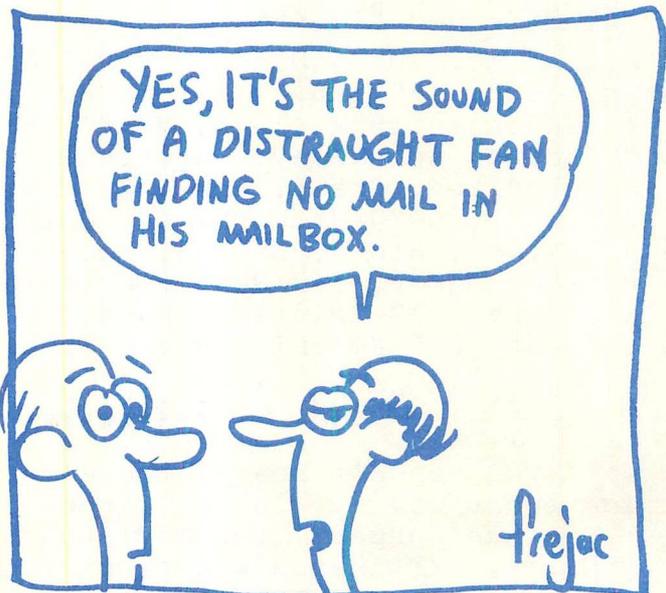
I am trying to get TIGHTBEAM out earlier in the month as a lot of people complain about it being late. However you can help by getting locs in early. Since I have not been using all the locs I have gotten recently, the earlier (and the more topical) your loc is the better the chances of its getting printed. About four pages of letters were postponed from last issue so the fact that a loc does not appear right away does not mean it will not be printed.

I do want to apologize to Pat Turner though. Her loc apparently got mislaid during the period when we were redecorating the house. I definately wanted to use it. If it ever turns up, I will. It wasn't topical.

I saw THE LATHE OF HEAVEN on TV. Now that was a well done film. Ursula LeGuin worked with the production company and it shows. The film was extremely faithful to the novel. If this is SF produced by PBS, let's have more of it.

Frejac Funnies ⑧

DID YOU HEAR AN ISOLATED SCREAM OF DESPAIR?



DIES IRAE, reviewed by Hills, con't from page 12)

Now we have the stage set. The style, etc, are very much like that of Homer's ILLIAD, if that helps you. Very very much like that right down to where each man is in it for himself, and does not hesitate to withdraw or change sides as suits either him or his honour (women are semi-chattels; women's lib beware!). When an important man does this, he will often take his personal following with him -- except where individuals of that following go their own ways.

The names match this background -- Richard Stormwind, Mark Chaos, Daniel Skywolf, David Starbird, Ralph Eagleheart. The nasty is Heljanita the Toymaker; his opponent is Darkscar of Despair.

As in the ILLIAD, it all starts over a woman (Angeline of Sula) who is desired by two men -- Beast Lord Daniel Skywolf, and High Lord of the House of Stars, David Starbird. Apparently Heljanita had a hand in this.

The fight starts small, in THE DAYS OF GLORY, with it all apparently merely an affair of honour between these two proud lords. But it goes beyond this; gradually it is turned into a crusade of Beast versus human ancestry under the subtle behind-the-scenes urgings of Heljanita, until it evolves into all-out war. A war which the humans lose, being driven back to their world Home, and the fortress of the House of Stars (more shades of the ILLIAD?), where they are first besieged and finally their fort is taken by treachery.

All this takes care of THE DAYS OF GLORY and IN THE KINGDOM OF THE BEASTS. DAY OF WRATH is the final stage, where Heljanita and Darkscar join in the duel to end all. It sways back and forth, and is only ended when both are dead. Then comes the mending of the damage they have caused to time and space, in an ending that is full of power and empathy and strength -- and none of your gooey kiddie stuff love conquers all. What do you think you would do, given the chance to be God? I guess if you look deep, it has conventional attributes -- but none of the important, explicit/implicit factors descend to the Good Guy bumping off the Bad Guy and Walking-Off-Into-the-Sunset with the Lovely Maiden. None of this. The DIES IRAE series recommends itself for just this reason -- it truly expands the vision, forces one's imagination outwards.

In short, I pity anyone who never does read even one of these books. They are missing a sadly overlooked concept in SF.

THE DAYS OF GLORY, IN THE KINGDOM OF THE BEASTS, DAY OF WRATH by Brian Stableford

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS AND RENEWALS

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In case you haven't heard, the election results are printed on the inside front cover. In the Directorate elections, the order of finish was: Joanne Burger, Stan Woolston, Andy Adruschak, Fred Jakobcic and Greg Hills. Art Hayes was first runner up. I imagine that Stan will be the new Directorate Chairman but haven't heard officially/

president's message

Donald Franson
6543 Babcock Ave.
North Hollywood, CA
91606

I've been busy in December writing letters and making appointments for 1980. These are mostly re-appointments, but I've made a few switches, changed some personnel around, and re-activated some bureaus, all with a view to getting the N3F rolling again. More activity is the goal.

I've asked Lynne to print the confirmed list of bureau heads so far, with addresses, and they will be on another page. Members shouldn't have to wait two months between TNFFs to find out who is in charge of what. The February TNFF should have the complete list. I won't print any names until I get acceptances, unless they are carry-overs.

We've got to have active officers and bureau heads. A name on a listing is not enough. The N3F has no activity requirements, for its members. It does, for its officers. Anyone who wants to have his/her name mentioned has to do something to deserve it. No more long lists of inactive "activities".

I'm not against deadwood. I'm deadwood myself, in several other clubs. I pay dues, read the publications, occasionally vote, and that's all. If I weren't satisfied, I wouldn't be doing any of those things. I feel I'm supporting the club, merely by my dues and membership. And there's always the potential of being active some time.

Deadwood (inactive members, if you don't like the word) add numbers to a club and support the active members. We couldn't do without a background of deadwood. Stay with us out there, you Silent Majority.

But there's one thing that deadwood can't do. They can't hold office. They can't hang onto important positions indefinitely, just as names on a list, keeping others from doing the job, crippling the action by their inaction. This has been the bane of the N3F from the beginning, so there's no long-term solution for it, but the obvious immediate one is to require activity of bureau heads. I aim to do that. I believe I set an example with the NEW FANZINE APPRECIATION SOCIETY for three years. Nothing spectacular, but always visible in every issue of TNFF. How else can new members know that there is such an activity if it is not mentioned anywhere, or is just one line on a list?

I've been talking here about activity, but I realize there are other problems facing the N3F. Membership is down to 200 again, and the Treasury is at a new low. But that doesn't discourage me, nor should it discourage you. The only way to go is up.

% % % % % % % % % % % %

Editor's note: I agree wholeheartedly with the activity comments. Nothing is more discouraging to someone to see and activity listed, write to the activity head for details and receive no answer. If that happens to anyone, write to Donald Franson about it. Don't just sit and stew. I know I had problems reactivating the Writers' Exchange because the previous head never returned any stories sent her for criticism. This (understandably) upsets people. I am now having problems because the Post Office apparently lost a story between here and Colorado -- a risk of anything done by mail.

% % % % % % % % % % % %

Andy Andruschak
6933 N. Rosemead Blvd #31
San Gabriel, CA 91775

Once again I invite and urge all Neffers to write to the Directorate about anything they feel needs to be done, or considered. Write seven copies of the letter, and send it to the five Directors, the President, and

the Secretary/Treasurer. We cannot function properly without your feedback. You might send an eighth copy to TIGHTBEAM for possible publication also. I answer most mail the same day it comes in, and fanzines within a week.

((Yes, anyone can write to the Directorate. You may have an excellent idea that should be considered. I plan to write to them, even though I'm no longer a Director.))

B/U/R/E/A/U/S / & / A/C/T/I/V/I/T/I/E/S / O/F / T/H/E / N/3/F/-/1/9/8/0

Compiled by Donald Franson, President.

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(This will soon be taken over by Edward W. Ludwig.)

Note that there are some old bureaus being re-activated, and some so-called "private projects" are restored. Other re-activations I have in mind are LENDING LIBRARY, MEMBERSHIP SERVICES(stationery, buttons, etc.), RENEWALS COMMITTEE, and TAPE CORRESPONDENCE(should include tapes for the blind). There are no more "Divisions." Backups may exist, but only in the mind of the President. A long list of backups discourages volunteers, and the backup may gafiate before the bureau head does. Stand-By Publisher is provided for in the Bylaws, so is the only "backup" I'll list. And I'm not appointing sub-heads. Any bureau head is free to appoint assistants. Write me if you want work. I'm reviving the Information Bureau and will be glad to answer questions on what the bureaus do. DF.

star trek the motion picture

A Review by Sally Syrjala

It is said that scenes from your entire life pass in front of you as death becomes imminent. If this be true, the crew of the Enterprise must be sure of an immediate demise as this motion (?) picture contains quite a few episodes from their past.

The film seems to have picked an appropriate date for release -- December 7. That date in itself could be a capsule review -- a bomb, not to mention boring.

The movie even contains subtitles for those unable to speak Klingonese or Vulcan so that conversations of these peoples can be understood. It would seem that the producers are assuming some degree of literacy among their audience with this tactic. However, it would seem that they are not assuming the ability to correlate various events to realize the film is a putting together of aired episodes of TREK, music from SUPERMAN, special effects from STAR WARS and CEJK and one shudders to speculate how many other vehicles.

How many times has STAR TREK employed a "cloud creature" to endanger the lives of Federation citizens? There was one in "Obsession" which this film could have been subtitled. In that episode Kirk was obsessed with a desire to track down and destroy a creature he had failed to eliminate while serving in another star ship. In the movie Kirk is obsessed with a desire to resume command of the Enterprise. He doesn't seem to care that the lives of every person on Earth are hanging in the balance. His main concern is being in command of his Enterprise once more.

In "The Immunity Syndrome" Spock "felt" the deaths of the Vulcan crew destroyed by the amoeba-like creature that was daring to enter Federation space. Here he experienced the thoughts of the cloud creature that was seeking out Earth, along with Adama of the Galactica and how many others? It is staggering to think of all these beings that will one day discover the reality of what they seek. It is interesting to think of the combined disappointment in discovery might be the final straw in Terra's existence.

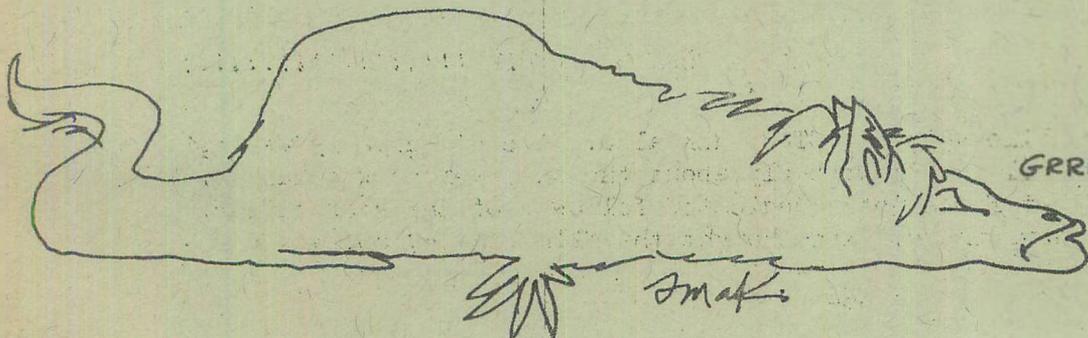
Spock's obsession in the movie was to find that great logical mind in the sky and make connections. This makes two obsessions already -- Kirk's and Spock's.

Then we have "The Doomsday Machine" in evidence via Decker. In that episode, Commodore Decker was the one who took command of the Enterprise and nearly lost her to the Doomsday weapon prowling space and devouring all. In the movie Captain, temporarily Commander, Decker gets to seek some revenge for his namesake. He does this by countermanding an order Kirk gives which does not take the new design of the Enterprise into consideration.

The episode most in evidence was "The Changeling." In that one Kirk outwitted Nomad who had gone astray in getting mixed up with a space probe of alien ancestry and having its programming altered. Here Voyager 6 is the misguided probe. It has been alienated and in typical Star Trek fashion become a living machine. As much as Spock seeks to become one, he should realize by now Kirk has outwitted each one

of these contraptions they have thus far managed to encounter.

We also have our third obsession in the cloud creature. Its obsession is to find its creator.



In "What are Little Girls Made Of?" there appears on board the Enterprise, a clone of Kirk which had all of Kirk's memory patterns intact. In the movie it is the bald headed navigator who gets cloned. (We all must get cloned?)

In "Who mourns for Adonais" the angry god throws lightning bolts at Kirk and crew. Here static electricity flares overhead when our hardy band of obsessed finally manage to meet.

In the aired TREK, there was an episode where the blind, but always beautiful Federation woman "sacrificed" herself to become one with the alien Kolloos. In the movie it is Decker who gives himself up for the healing process.

One begins to wonder if TREK doesn't have something against individuality. Not only is there constant merging via mind meld, but also several permanent bonds as here with the transmuted Voyager and two living beings.

At the very beginning of the film, the merging concept came to mind as the music came blaring into the audio circuits. It was highly reminiscent of the score from SUPERMAN.

The more things change -- the transporter was STILL malfunctioning. After all these years, I would think the best engineer in Starfleet could get it to work without splitting people in half or otherwise doing them harm. I wonder if Lloyd's of London would insure anyone using such a method of travel? It does seem like a very bad risk.

When the Enterprise goes into Warp Drive, it brings to mind Han Solo and his ship. The space station orbiting Earth had a likeness to a scaled down version of the CEK ship configuration.

I can't say as I cared for any of the characterizations. For a show which is supposedly about caring for one another, they seemed only to care for themselves and their own needs/obsessions.

Even the women were not in keeping with the advances that have been made in female portrayal. Rand turned her face when the unpleasantness at the transporter happened. The men looked straight ahead. Uhura didn't seem to be saying "hailing frequencies open," but she didn't seem to be saying much else either. When someone cried for a "medic" on the bridge, the next scene showed DR. Chapel being the one who was caring for the injured Chekov. Interesting to see how equality has spread.

Kirk's character seemed to have degenerated into a second childhood. Much like the "Squire of Gothos" status in his being a little boy who wanted his toy without considering others and how his actions would effect them.

The movie about a merging of human and computer seems to have decided to merge the entire being of itself. It is too bad it could not have had a little more originality within it. Surely some of the \$40+ million could have seen a better plot and SOME story line emerge.

The little girl who sat in front of me made the best critical assessment of the movie -- she fell asleep.

THAT'S IT FOLKS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

* * * * *

((My neice Amy fell asleep while watching STAR TREK also. I can't give my own opinion as I haven't seen the film. I'm probably about the only person who hasn't. Of course, I must admit that I was not a dedicated follower of the show either. My brother Ken has the honors there. Ken thought the film was so, so.))

motherlines

by Suzy McKee Charnas

reviewed by Linda Frankel

Warning: This book is not for the squeamish. I say this not because of what is explicitly in print, but because of what is unstated. I grant that a horse is a beautiful animal, but parthenogenic reproduction by way of horses You will excuse me, but it isn't exactly my cup of tea. I won't specify how it's done. Some fen will scream at me for giving even this much away. I think it's only fair for readers to know what they're getting into in advance. Horse enthusiasts may also be alienated because the same society finds it necessary to slaughter horses for food. You can already see that this is scarcely a pleasant book. So what redeeming value does it have?

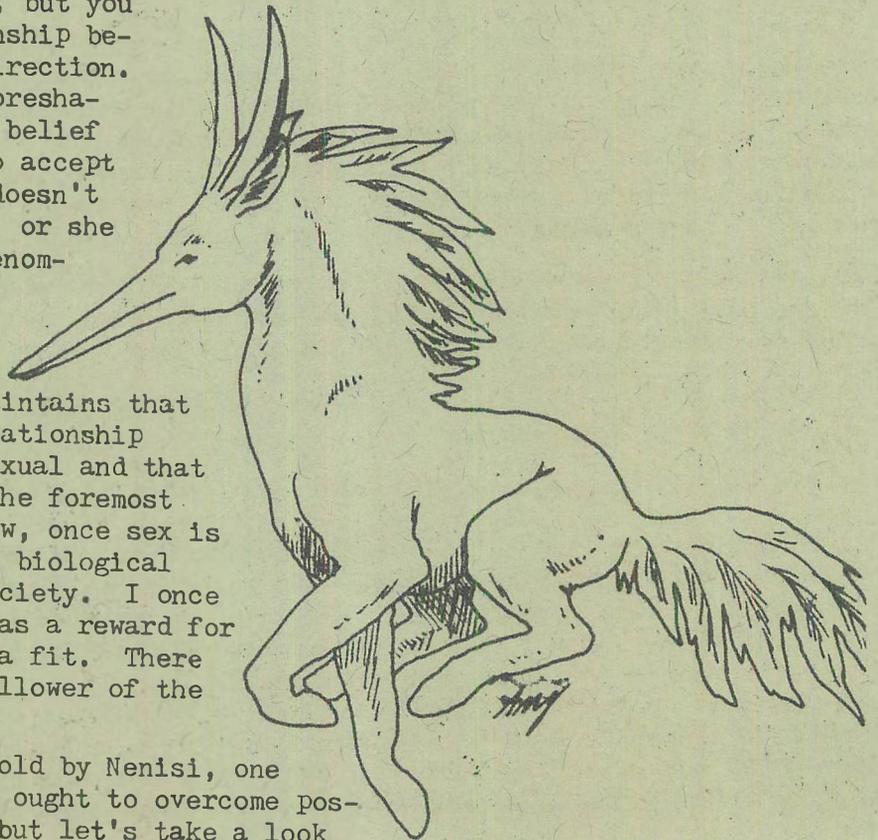
Well, I will say that the author has imagination. This book exhibits a good deal more originality than the first Charnas novel to which this is the sequel. Who would ever think that such a society would be feasible? Would anyone ever have thought that you can write a novel without a single male character? All right, Charnas has proven her point. It can be done, but there are a few mainstream novels (also feminist) who've managed this feat with better success.

Most novels based upon ideology suffer from stereotypical characters invented solely for the purpose of occupying various philosophical positions which the author either applauds or condemns. Charnas has attempted not to do this, but in a sloppy and half-way sort of manner. Her characters are hybrids of the artificial and the well-realized. Motivations are alternately drawn from life and far-fetched. The slipshod characterization occurs when she is attempting to score feminist points at the expense of the plot. What is my reaction when I see characters without psychological underpinnings to their behaviour? I suspend my suspension of disbelief and get very cranky.

Let me give you an example. Would you say that someone who earlier in the novel framed the protagonist could eventually become a close friend and lover of said protagonist by the story's end? It could occur, but you need a preparatory transition relationship between the two that points in that direction. That's called building a plot and foreshadowing. You need more than a vague belief in sisterhood to allow the reader to accept such a resolution. Either Charnas doesn't understand the dynamics of intimacy, or she doesn't consider love a positive phenomenon.

When I say that I'm not wildly speculating. There are different schools of feminism. One of them maintains that love is a destructive dependency relationship whether it is heterosexual or homosexual and that it must go. Ti-Grace Atkinson was the foremost advocate of this theory. In her view, once sex is "demystified" and made into a simple biological function, it can be beneficial to society. I once stumbled upon her scheme to use sex as a reward for good little revolutionaries and had a fit. There are indications that Charnas is a follower of the Atkinson philosophy.

Alldera, the central character, is told by Nenisi, one of the parthenogenic women, that she ought to overcome possessiveness. That's well and good, but let's take a look



at the reason she states. (p. 84 hardcover edition) "It's as if to say that only I and my lover are true women, the rest of you false and worthless." This is not an attack on jealousy, but on love. Respect for others is an entirely separate phenomenon. Love means choice, but it doesn't imply that those not chosen are worthless. The opponents of love want us to believe that choice is immoral. By their theory we ought to love everyone or no one at all. It isn't possible to love everyone. (I am not defending monogamy. It is certainly possible to love more than one individual. In this society non-exclusive relationships are both rare and beautiful, but there too choice is exercised.) If the response of individuals to one another's unique qualities is subversive to the feminist faction to which Charnas belongs, it is because they fear autonomy and want to establish a society where the needs of the "collective" are observed first. (For "collective" read totalitarian state.) Nenisi rewards Alldera with sex and punishes her by withholding it. If this is the radical feminist version of utopia, then I'm heading for the wilderness to build a blessedly imperfect society that has not achieved the highest plateau of revolutionary sisterhood.

Lynne wanted me to deal with the lesbian aspect of the novel. On the surface it would seem to be prominent. If you define lesbianism as a sexual act, then I would have to say that it is indeed very present throughout the book. If, on the other hand, you define it as commitment and love between women, then you will look in vain for lesbians in the pages of MOTHERLINES. They simply don't exist. There are morality lessons aplenty, but not an ounce of true feeling in the entire novel. Frankly, Charnas gives me the cold shivers.

MOTHERLINES by Suzy McKee Charnas

Berkley Oct 1979 \$1.95

#

floating worlds

by Cecilia Holland

reviewed by Cathy Howard

This is what I refer to as a sneaky novel. I don't like preachy novels telling about man going to hell in a collective handbasket or, even worse, constant speeches on the nobility of man. The plot in this novel is fast paced. I was half way through before I realized that the author was making definite statements about pollution, feminism, forms of government, and racism. The sneaky part is that it's all so much a logical part of the background one doesn't notice it. No long boring speeches mar the book, but the author gets her points across.

This, as far as I know, is her first science fiction novel. I grabbed it immediately as I've read Holland's historical fiction and could scarcely wait to see if she could handle the SF medium. She did and in such a way that makes me suspect she's been a closet SF fan for years. Her characters are a strong point in any of her books. One feels they not only know her characters, and what they'd have for breakfast; (though not what they'll do next) but would instantly recognize them on the street.

In the novel quite a bit of the solar system has been colonized. Earth has bad pollution problems. All cities left are surrounded by domes which also cover large areas of land around the cities. The pollution outside the domes is so bad they even have jokes about it. Such as a rubbish heap outside one dome called "the Throne". It is said that if a person sits on it for 12 hours, they'll be king of Earth. Pollution would kill them in six. All factories are outside the domes. Some animal life can exist only inside the domes and others only outside. A few birds do both. They can pass through the domes and these are force fields of a sort, not an actual material object. The Earth's moon is colonized and run by a military style government. Unhappiness with the presiding ruler is shown by a coup which more-or-less violently removes him from office. Mars is run by a stubborn bunch convinced they're superior to every-

one else. Unfortunately they have the technology and power to give backing it a whirl. Uranus has a population calling themselves Styths. They're mutated human stock. When the original colonists found the radiation was mutating the babies born there, they moved to one of Uranus' moons and left the mutants on Uranus as slave labor. The mutants are quite different: much taller, heavier, and stronger than the average person with most effective claws rather than finger nails. They give off a distinctive odor when their emotions are aboil. The Styths revolted against the moon people and won their freedom. In turn they enslaved them. The Styths' government is rather medieval in nature. To be supreme ruler, one has to fight his way up the ranks. This is done in a pit in their legislative hall. The fight is mostly with claws but also involves some wrestling. Venus and some asteroids are mentioned as having been colonized but do not figure in the book.

We follow Paula Mendoza whose home is Earth. She becomes accidentally pregnant by a Styth while negotiating a trade treaty with them. She goes to Uranus to have the child as it will have a Styth's body and would be more at a disadvantage on any other planet. Paula, in spite of being a trifle careless in getting knocked up, is not a poor little helpless female. She is involved in a major way in politics among Earth, Earth's moon, Mars and Uranus. The Moon, Mars and Uranus all want to be top dog in the solar system. Earth no longer has an army. Paula is a person not to cross as she always gets even though it may take her a while to arrange this. She also tries her best to keep a balance of powers but doesn't quite make it.

I just skimmed the surface of the novel as I would hate to give anything away, especially the ending. \$2.95 is a lot for a paperback but keep in mind that it's 535 pages long and well worth the price.

FLOATING WORLD by Cecilia Holland

Pocket Books \$2.95

#

the prophet of Lamath

by Robert Don Hughes

reviewed by William West

1979 was the year of the dragon in fantasy literature. Having exhausted the supply of gnomes, fairies and giants in previous years, and perhaps encouraged by the success of Anne McCaffrey's THE WHITE DRAGON, publishers inundated the shelves with books featuring the mythical reptile. The main focus was on the more expensive, illustrated books, but a few of the smaller paperbacks managed to slip by with little fanfare, and, as is usually the case, they contained the more memorable members of the species. One such book is THE PROPHET OF LAMETH by Robert Don Hughes.

Hughes' dragon is unique in that it is one of the rare two headed variety. One head is named Vicia, the other Heinox, and for several centuries they have been the controlling force in the history of three nations. For Vicia/Heinox had settled in the only usable pass through the mountains separating Chamonous, Lamath, and Ngandib Mar, which means that neither armies nor merchants can get through without paying his price. The usual price is jewels from the mines of Ngandib Mar and a flock of slaves. Vicia/Heinox hoards the jewels and uses the bigger ones to play catch with himself; he uses the slaves for food. Since only the richest merchants could afford to placate the dragon, they became the rulers of the economies of all three nations. Meanwhile, worshipped by commoners and kept content by merchants, Vicia/Heinox shares his body with himself in peace.

But the great merchant houses are not content with financial power and seek to expand into political control of the three nations. It is for this end that the House of Ognadzu kidnaps the Princess Bronwynn of Chaomonous, and attempts to smuggle her through

the pass. In the same caravan is Pelman the Player, a mysterious rogue who has thwarted the plans of the House on several occasions and is now destined to do so again. For it is Pelmen who, in an attempt to engineer the escape of himself and the princess, asks the question that destroys the harmony of Vicia/Heinox and sets in motion the chain of events that will lead to his own fate as the Prophet of Lamath.

The author has a gift for developing interesting characters with believable personalities. There is Rosha, the son of Pelmen's old friend, who seeks to become a hero, but must first conquer his affliction; Tohd mal Neelis, who must choose between his loyalty to his House and his love for his adopted homeland; and Pelmen, who shapes the powers and is shaped himself by a higher Power. There are so many characters to hold the reader's interest that they sometimes make it harder to keep track of the plot. Hughes cuts back and forth, from one scene to another, which toward the end of the novel becomes a little tiring. It is, however, his only flaw, and a minor one at that. Most books suffer from the opposite problem of not having enough interesting characters.

Most of all Hughes shows a remarkable sense of humor. His United Dragonfaith Church, suffers a schism that is a delightful spoof of the theological hairsplitting that often plagues modern religions. Especially biting is the encounter between Vicia/Heinox and a group of his worshippers. And the conversations between Vicia and Heinox as they try to sort out their mutual identity crisis is a masterpiece of dragon double talk.

Mercifully, THE PROPHET OF LAMATH is free of the now obligatory jacket blurb hailing it as the best fantasy since LORD OF THE RINGS. It isn't. It is a warm, funny, and entertaining book that leaves the reader with a smile. That, in itself, is an accomplishment.

THE PROPHET OF LAMATH by Robert Don Hughes

DelRey \$1.95

& & & & & & &

DIES IRAE

a series by Brian Stableford

reviewed by Greg Hills

The DIES IRAE series has its core in three books, respectively DI #1, #2, and #3: THE DAYS OF GLORY, IN THE KINGDOM OF THE BEASTS and DAY OF WRATH. I have the first and third, and would dearly love to see the second.

POSTULATE 1: Imagine a universe in which human beings cannot populate the stars in the numbers they must. This unlikely suggestion is carried off skillfully and with irony. To make up the required numbers, the humans have used their science to create the Beasts -- entirely human in all respects, save that they originated from genetically-tailored animal bases. Rather like Cordwainer Smith's Underpeople, but more so; once created, they are human, with no trace of their origin except the Mark of the Beast that is impressed on wrists and forehead.

POSTULATE 2: The humans rule through the institution of the House of Stars, which only humans may enter. They have so ruled for over ten thousand years, in which there has been no war as such because.....

POSTULATE 3: The culture is oriented toward the individual. Two people may have personal level duels and vendettas, and their immediate kin may join together to avenge them, but for ten thousand years there has been no large scale war. The weapons are still there (the personal duels, remember?).

POSTULATE 4: A nasty comes back in time from a future era. He sets about trying to take over the galaxy. Two other men come back from his own time to fight him, but no more -- the future they came from has ceased to exist. One of these latter men gets croaked early in the game.

Letters

Paula Crunk
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The folks who are arguing in TB's letter column over whether an author can create a completely believable/realistic alien ought to comment on the flick of that name. I don't know if I could sit through THE ALIEN again -- I let out a shriek in the middle of the picture that had heads swiveling in my direction. Still, it's a classic SF film and one helluva good movie. As one mainstream critic remarked, it's a welcome change from some current films where human-offworlder contacts are all bathed in sweetness and light. Did anyone out there catch the explanation as to the Alien's peculiar biology or physiology? It all sorta went by me as I sat stupefied in horror.

~~~~~

Wilson Goodson  
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Stay with TIGHTBEAM as it is. It is much more your zine than the N3F's and I like it that way.

I feel it is a mistake to always be looking for the ultimate SF movie. I prefer to judge a film by theme, within certain production values. Not every film needs the same kind of effects or the same kind of acting.

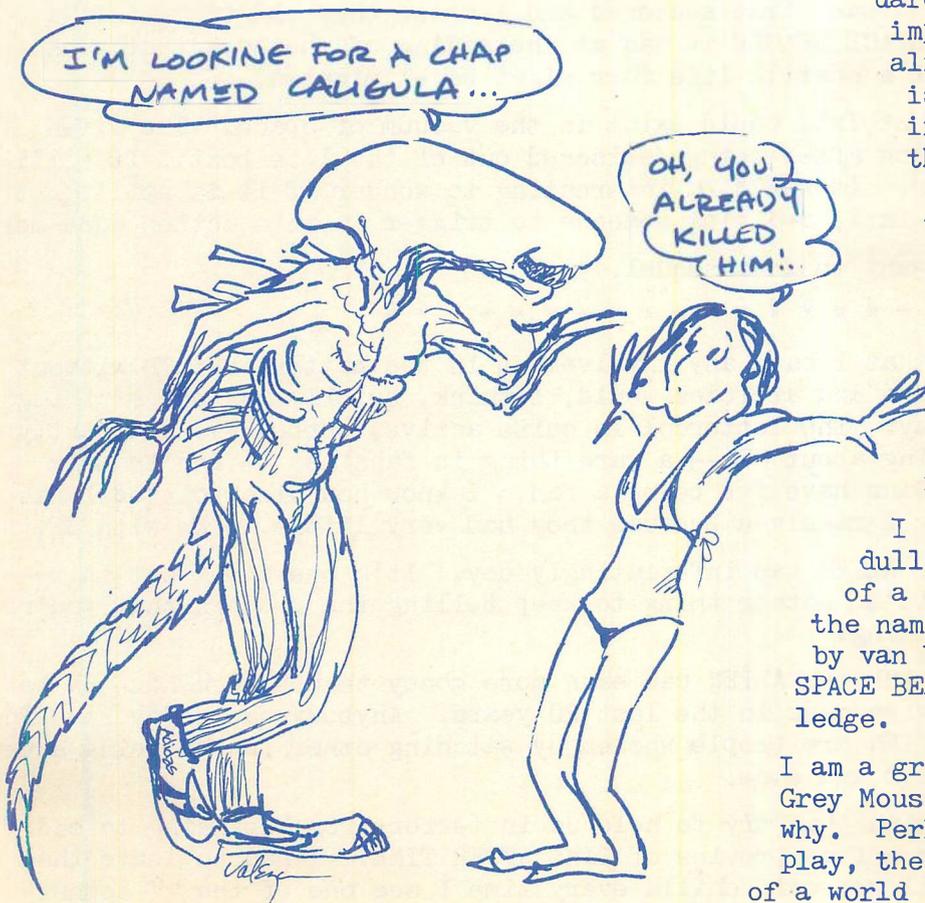
To name some films most fans are familiar with: ALIEN is a simple horror film. One only needs simple one dimensional characters to get knocked off, a space ship of no particular design, and good artificial blood. STAR WARS needed effects which showed death without bad smells and gorey messes; character who were evil, and people who cared about other people. It is about the growth of an inexperienced young jerk to become a hero involved with humanity. CLOSE ENCOUNTERS is about a man being caught up

in a vision to the exclusion of the mundane world. For that film the appearance of the standard suburb Neal lives in is as important as the beauty and alienness of the UFOs. Acting is of the utmost importance in impressing upon the viewer the awesomeness of what is occurring. 2001 is a trip picture, an epic in which details are not important, and yet are given immense attention.

Since ALIEN is dealing with fear, it should be compared in effectiveness with FRANKENSTEIN or THE BEAST FROM 2000 FATHOMS, not STAR WARS.

I might add I think ALIEN was dull and disgusting -- a ripoff of a 1950's film I cannot remember the name of, and the theft of an idea by van Vogt in THE VOYAGE OF THE SPACE BEAGLE which it does not acknowledge.

I am a great lover of Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser, but I cannot really say why. Perhaps the complicated word play, the subtle cruelties, the vision of a world where magic works, not in



dark little corners or as an abomination to be destroyed, but as one of many natural forces to be dealt with.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sally A. Syrjala  
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Forrest J. Ackerman in his introduction to A.E. van Vogt's MONSTERS said of VOYAGE OF THE SPACE BEAGLE, "...a book which may one day inspire a scientific classic if properly produced." ALIEN seems to have many of the elements of SPACE BEAGLE within it.

Ash remarked in admiration of the alien creature that it had no concept of right or wrong to hinder its actions, that it operated on pure hostility. This would seem to be a characteristic of the Coeurl of SPACE BEAGLE. This was a creature that sought out life forms to consume. It sensed neither right nor wrong in its actions, only a compulsion necessary for its continued existence.

The Ixtl in a later portion of the book resembled the fully mature version of the alien. Both instances had a creature who sought out living bodies in which to incubate its young. The continuation of the species via this method was of prime importance to the creature.

In both the movie and the book a systematic search was carried out for the creature. In neither case was it clear how the creature would be eliminated should an encounter actually take place. ((Nothing like planning ahead.))

It is interesting to note that the survivor in ALIEN was the skeptic -- the one who questioned Captain Dallas about company policy. In SPACE BEAGLE the hero is the next-alist and van Vogt advocates skepticism as the first step toward its goal. It could be said that both survivors in ALIEN were skeptics. What better example of skepticism is there than the feline species? Jones was a wary of his environment as was Ripley.

Another connection between the two mediums is the talk of a continued space voyage. In ALIEN it begins when the crew was first awakened and learned they had to investigate the signal from space. In SPACE BEAGLE it was at the ending of the book that such a happening took place so that a hostile life form might be eliminated.

It is interesting to note that Ixtl could exist in the vacuum of space. The alien seemed to be still functioning after being jetisoned out of the life boat. It still sought access to its interior. It would be interesting to wonder if it is still just resting in space as was the Ixtl, awaiting someone to trigger it into action once more.

((Only if the movie makers want to do a sequel.))

\* \* \* \* \*

Brian Earl Brown  
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Not that I have any involvement in the matter, but TB without reviews and articles would, I think, quickly run out of things to say. The lettercol is quite active, currently, and mostly talking about SF -- a rare thing in fanzines -- and in many cases the only reason many fans have for being a fan. I know how disappointed I was in the first couple fanzines I received because they had very little to do with SF.

Perry Glen Moore's review of ALIEN was infuriatingly coy. It's one thing not to reveal the end of something, it's another thing to keep telling the readers that you're not going to tell them something.

Perry is kind of naive to think the ALIEN can earn more money than STAR WARS. SW is one of the finest family movies made in the last 20 years. Anybody can enjoy it. The only people who can enjoy ALIEN are people who enjoy watching other people being eaten alive -- that's a much smaller audience.

Personally, I'm tired of movies that try to hold us in terror from beginning to end. I made the mistake of seeing a free preview of TIME AFTER TIME. I had to leave the theatre beofre the end, still get cold chills every time I see one of the TV commercials and have been too afraid to see any other movie since -- including THE LIFE OF

BRIAN. That, my friends, is one set of bad vibrations. And the whole terror aspect of the movie doesn't seem terribly essential. The best parts of the movie had nothing to do with people being chopped to bits.

Someone should also ask Perry Glen Moore to justify calling ALIEN an SF movie since the alien is so biologically impossible. Its body fluid will eat through layers of steel, but what keeps such a corrosive acid from dissolving its body? How did it grow so large, so fast, with only one meal? How come it's not vulnerable to flame-throwers? There are limits to the stress chemical bonds can resist and a flame-thrower comes pretty damn close? ALIEN is a monster movie of the first water. It's not good SF. STAR WARS was better SF, dogfights in space included. And the only thing older than the plot line of STAR TREK -- THE MOTION PICTURE is the plotline for ALIEN. Several people have mentioned the resemblance between ALIEN, THE THING, and IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE.

All this talk which is the "ultimate" SF film is a bit beside the point as science-fiction isn't, strictly speaking, a genre like westerns or romances. Rather SF is closer to a different perspective applied to different genres. We've had SF/Westerns (STAR WARS), SF/Romances (McCaffrey's RESTOREE), SF/Horror (ALIEN) and so on. Each genre will have its own ultimate flick.

The fashion for special effects is not limited just to SF films, though theirs tend to be gaudier than most. Special effects are common to many movies today, and I trace it to a need for movies to be spectacular. In order to compete with TV, films must do something TV can't and that often amounts to flashing lights and poofs of smoke.

\* \* \* \* \*

Lisa E. Cowan As a new member of the N3F,  
P.O. Box 5276 I would like to thank all  
Orange, CA 92667 the people who have already  
written to welcome me into  
the 'fold.' I have now received a copy of  
both publications, and have a better idea of  
what N3F is. I enjoyed all the letters in TB,  
and thought I'd add a few comments of my own.

What is all this gushing over the movie ALIEN? While I enjoyed the movie, it was definitely not the greatest SF movie ever, and certainly not of the calibre of 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. ALIEN had a simple mystery plot, (who is next), glazed over with horror and set in space. It was so terribly predictable: whoever went wandering off to find the squalling cat was the next player in the monster's game of "hide and eat." It was scary, yes. I did leave the theatre with shorter fingernails, but also without the wonder, intrigue, and beguiling feeling I had with 2001, all 15 times I saw it.

For those of you blasting away at the STAR TREK, STAR WARS II, and BLACK HOLE flicks, how about letting them at least get to the theatres so a few people can see them before you bombard us with your verbal lasers?

If anyone out there in Middle-Earth has ever heard of (or even if you haven't heard of) the MYTHO-POEIC SOCIETY, I am the corresponding secretary



for this literary society devoted to the study of the Inklings' works, and other "mythopoetic" authors. We have been around for over ten years, and had our share of ups and downs, and are looking forward to a bright and prosperous future.

So if any of you have any questions or complaints, please write to me at my P.O. Box and I'll see if I can help. Next year we will be seeking good articles on Tolkien's SILMARILLION, for our quarterly journal, MYTHLORE.

So, as some of you may surmise I am into things 'mythic' Celtic, Nordic, Fantastic, and Equine-ic, (I have an Arabian horse). I would much rather ride my Asfaloth through Middle-Earth, than voyage toward Arcturus.

\* \* \* \* \*

R Laurraine Tutihasi I, for one, do not think TIGHTBEAM should be just letters.  
1217 Majestic Way I would like to see longer articles on topics of concern.  
Webster, NY 14580 Anyway, you've been doing a good job as editor, and I'd like you to continue.

In Perry Glen Moore's review of ALIEN, I object to his differentiating "actresses" from "actors." As far as I'm concerned, the word "actress" doesn't belong in our vocabulary. It's redundant and unnecessary. Moore's parenthetical remark should have been edited out for his own good.

There's an even bigger danger in the computer field than Chris Martin mentions. That is government over-regulation. There is a bill currently in Congress, unless it has already been quietly passed, that would effectively make it illegal, not just unethical, to play games on company computers. The wording of the bill is too broad. It just says that unauthorised use is illegal. Does a corporation authorize its employees to play games? Readers who are concerned about this should write to their Congress people. That's Senate Bill S240.

This issue was one of the best I've seen in quite a while. The lettercol was excellent. I, too, wonder what writers Chris Martin thinks are good. I've never been able to get into anything by Poul Anderson, so we seem to be in agreement there.

Nick Grassell wants to take over TIGHTBEAM? Don't let him. I never received the TNFF that he edited, and I plan on letting him know how I feel about this. I want my money's worth!

((I have heard from quite a number of people who said they never got either issue of TNFF that Nick Grassell edited. I got one in March and one in June. Therefore anyone who did not get either of these issues -- and was an N3F member at the time -- write here or to Janie Lamb.))

\* \* \* \* \*

---And now positively the last two letters discussing Chris Martin---

Frank Lee Linné First of all I'm glad to see you're not quitting after all.  
P.O. Box 45, I sent Don Franson a card asking him to reconsider his plans.  
La Vernia, TX 78121 I was troubled by his plans for TB but I didn't think it worth quibbling about.... but if you threaten to quit, that's another matter. ((I would only quit if I felt I could not do a zine I would want my name associated with; if I felt that I could not write what I wanted to.))

Well let's get the Chris Martin thing out of the way. He doesn't want a putrid debate and I don't either. He becomes unduly shrill, but really, could you expect anything else from a man who likes Gor!!! ((I did not get that impression.)) The proverb, as amended, goes; time wounds all heels, but it heals them too. I'm afraid Mr. Martin will just grow into a snide old man like Archie Bunker who reads comic books on the sly.

Anyway I hadn't realized that I used words like 'dismayed', sounds almost professorial, by damn.



Be that as it may, the Sept ish was really quite good. The front cover caught my eye and I murmured, "Bet Greg Hills drew that!" I don't think he draws sheep, but ever since I read about his part time job in a wool store well.... you know. And the backcover looked like Christmas (which restored my good humor after Mr. Martin. Why'd you print his anti-medievalist thing anyway?)

((Actually Pat edited that section of TB and Pat is rather anti-medievalist himself. However I do like to present different points of view, not just those I happen to agree with.))

Re: Laurraine Tutihasi's reply to Linda Frankel. I'm inclined to think that Chris Martin watches LOU GRANT and is trying to model himself after the reporter Rossi.

I do hope that Steve Duff's story was fiction as you say. I'd hate to think that a well-known SF writer could end up like that. I hope it is Dwight Swain

I remember too.

And speaking of book reviews if it wasn't for Greg Hills' thing on Jack Vance's PLANET OF ADVENTURE series I would have missed that one since they are not on the bookshelves where I usually shop. So reviews DO belong in TB.

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Susan Shwartz  
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My apologies to Perry Glen Moore for giving away the plot of DRAGONDRUMS. Suspense means very little to me; since I intend to read a book, I don't especially care whether or not I am surprised. (mostly I'm not.) What interests me is the quality of the world created, and the level of writing and ideas. So....

as for suspense.... it's not the what, but the how that fascinates me. And McCaffrey's book, as much fun as it is, is fairly predictable.

Of course, when a surprise comes, or a writer does something violently unexpected, I'm delighted. I refer you to MZB's killing of Donal in STORMQUEEN, or Kurtz' sudden dispatching of Kevin and Bronwyn in DERYNI CHECKMATE, or C.J. Cherryh's treatment of... never mind that, or Perry'll get me for destroying suspense again. Suffice it to say I just finished FADED SUN: KUTATH, and Cherryh surprised the hell out of me.

I thank Deirdre Murphy for her suggestion to me of FACE IN THE FROST, which I'll read as soon as I can find it and my employer gives me a chance to breathe. Deirdre, if you haven't read it, let me recommend PAVANE to you. ((By Keith Roberts.)) I know what you're talking about as regards teachers and what they call "sci-fi". (ugh.) I somehow suspect it's a way of gaining caste: if you can knock SF then presumably you're exalting something else -- for example my idiot colleague in grad school who assumed that if people didn't read Heinlein and Norton, they'd probably read Samuel Johnson... for pleasure. No way, at least not for me. There is a refusal here which, in the so-called intellectual, is willfully anti-intellectual. And what's more, I suspect they get off on it. Their loss...

And while I do hate to pander to Chris Martin's ego, which seems to be about the size of Antares already, I'm going to have to pick a few bones with him. First of all, this question of medievalists. Really, his terminology could be more accurate. A medievalist is a person engaged in the study of medievalia -- texts, language, history, art, philosophy, theology; and I like to think that I am one. Certainly, I sweat blood for five years to gain some faint claim to the title... and I make my living teaching it. (Not a very good living, but good teaching and a lot of it.) What he's condemning isn't medieval studies per se but medievalism, the adoption, in this century, of medieval folk-

ways.

While, by in large, I agree that medievalism is dangerous, leading as it may do to escape from reality and human interaction in a world which is after all primarily composed of non-fen, I've absolutely got to reject the terms in which he is so well-pleased to define it on two grounds: he is off on an appalling ego-trip and he is being incinsistent by his own standards (which I infer from his letter) of being non-neurotic, non-maladjusted, non-infantile and well-informed in SF writing and fandom.

Oh my God, I actually said it. When I thought to myself that slamming fen in zines was pointless... here I actually went and said it. Well, if he's inconsistent, so am I.

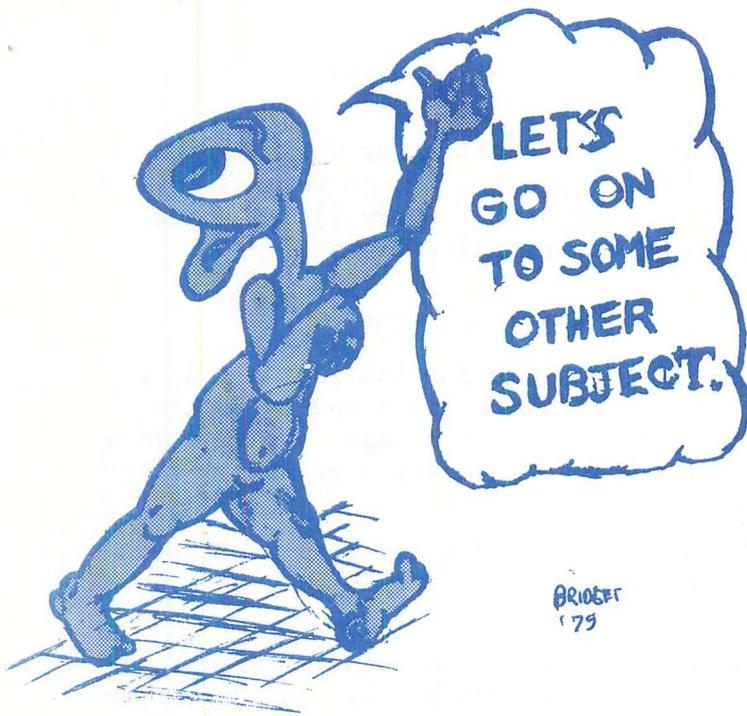
First of all, about that ego trip: blanket condemnation and coyness don't seem to me a good way of condemning any writer or fan. A lot of Anderson's stuff isn't especially attractive to me either, but so what? There are other books on the bookshelves; it is a waste of time to insist on his merits or lousiness at such raucous length... unless you seem to have a vested interest in exalting your own views. And as for the (to me, purely gratuitous) attack on Anderson and MZB for helping to found the SCA, what of it? Both writers have shown -- by life and works -- to my satisfaction, that they are able to function in the real world. Some people hunt deer, others collect stamps or lipsticks or first editions; others jog. If Anderson prefers to joust, why not just shrug it off? Of course if Chris' contention is that SCA people are seducing other people into solipsism and escapism, surely that is something about which he can be worried. At the same time, he is establishing the possibility that someone might say that he's working on the assumption that he's considering himself so above the crowd of "space cadets and medievalist" that he can make stern-parent noises at them.

Now for the inconsistency. Fen seem to regard themselves as somehow more open, more tolerant of strangeness than mundanes. By in large, I've found this true, in relation to acceptance of concepts in SF. But Chris' condemnation of "space cadets, fantasists, neurotics, and maladjusted" fen as not true fen strikes me as shatteringly intolerant. And this seems inconsistent to me with fen's self-definition as accepting and tolerant. I had cherished my own perception of fandom as a place where most ideas and behaviours (the exceptions being hurtful ones) were at least given houseroom. But when I hear people described as "twonks, nerds, flamers, twitches, and just plain weirdos" and as "mediocre" by a fan, I really don't like it. I don't like the arrogance, I don't like the hurtfulness, and I reject the idea that Christ (oops, but I'll leave the typo in) has the right to present to the world what is and what is not a fan. Granted change is better than escape: it is probably better too than long, hurtful letters in which one fan takes delight in putting others down.

And finally, I am distressed by Chris' aspersions on Arthur Hlavaty's writing, for which courtesy would seem to me to demand an apology. Of course, I'm a neo and, as Chris would doubtless say, immured in classroom, library, and semi-pro writing myself: for all I know, Chris may have some sort of license to be fandom's Don Rickles. In a world that produces Edsels, Richard Nixon, and the Ayatollah, anything is possible.

Quite enough. I found the comments to Chris' letter extremely intelligent and soothing; Pat said sane things (sane probably because I agree with them), though I see no reason for anyone to say "don't look at me" about either medieval studies or medievalism before talking about how they may be hazardous to one's mental health. As an educated Jewish woman with terrible eyes, I know what my life would have been back in 1300 -- nasty, brutish and short. Even a reality in which people write insulting letters is preferable to that.

((I have never seen exactly why disliking a certain novel should be a reflection of one's moral character. I also think it does take a certain sort of arrogance to dismiss as worthless, the works of an author one has not bothered to read. pwd))



Greg R. Hills  
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On the subject of  
letting out plots,  
I must administer  
a hearty rap to the  
knuckles of Sally

Syrjala. Chalker is a writer with whom plot is important, and Sally has just finished describing that of DAN-  
GERS IN THE AFTERGLOW to us. About half of her 'review' is devoted to describing it, in fact.....

Another rap for Mary Frey. You (lynne or pwd or Mary) should have cut out the sentence beginning "She gets her snake...". Destroys the whole review for me! But I did like Pat's review of BLIND VOICES -- it was exactly the succinct, inveigling sort of thing I consider the 'best' review. Patrick's "Read it" hit me harder than did Mary's, precisely because he did not tell me how the story goes -- just gave me the

premise and left it to my imagination.

John DiPrete says in his A HERITAGE OF STARS review that Simak seems to have a bone to pick with technology. Maybe so. But he is far from being antitechnology (as the implication in John's statement runs). In fact, I would interpret his tendency more as pro-technology and traditional virtues, anti-technology minus the virtues. He seems to prefer a world that is mechanized and advanced, but which is not inhumane or con-  
straining. He dislikes big, complex machines that are only under minimal human control; and he dislikes labour-saving devices that lead only to laziness (ie the auto-  
matic lawn-mower in one book, that goes mad at the end...). You'll note, by the way, that in (I think it is) CITY, in the same story as the amok lawn-mower, the plot in-  
volves the saving of the city from destruction! In point of fact, I suspect Simak was parodying today's tendency (and the tendency that has been plain for many years) to  
destroy wilderness and such on the part of city-dwellers. In CITY (the story, not the  
collection), the wild-dwelling people want to destroy the abandoned (almost) city. --And  
just as today those who live in the wilderness are trying to get injunctions to preserve  
same, so the city-dwellers in CITY are trying to preserve the city -- and do eventually  
get it declared a national ~~park~~ memorial.

My BRASS DRAGON review: I stand behind everything stated in that review. Even now,  
when so much of that book has already receded from memory (sometimes a bad memory is  
a positive asset!), the many bad points and the few good points still stand out like  
beacons. I can still pick out other bad points such as the convenience of what the  
brass dragon is and how they realise it at the right moment. One good point I forgot  
to mention is that it's fairly short. Some authors would have padded what should  
have been a novelette, into a monstrous tome reeking of drama and characterisation.  
The sort of people who would call it DULLGRIN or I STILL FEAR FOR WEEVIL or some such.

A. D. Wallace on THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE TALISMEN. "...I think, yes, that's what it  
would be, don't you -- of course, then again this could mean...naturally of course  
this all hinges on what I said earlier and it may be different to what I implied..."

This was a really bad review. Alex sounded like he was talking to himself. Alex,  
when writing a review, you should state all your thoughts that are relevant to the  
matter. Otherwise it just ends up stream-of-consciousness, with the juicy bits locked  
up in your head and unavailable to the readers.

Frejac's cartoons this time were weaker than normal. The strips were quite quaint.  
Frejac, old son, I delighted in your previous style -- please revert to it, at least  
for TB.

Wot not any Anji? ((She did the back cover.)) Arthur Hlavaty assures me she has changed her name to Iforgetwhatnow. ((Fmaki.))

I am displeased. You may or may not realise this, but in cutting my Chris Martin comment for the Nov TB you distorted the intensity and meaning of the remark. ((I get attacked for what I put in and also for what I leave out. Sorry.)) My comment was designed as an organic whole and, I am afraid I did not like the shading it gained by the cutting.

Otherwise the Nov TB was another excellent reason for staying in N3F.

Besides, you gave me another \$1.00 stamp. Now I can pay Nan for the last Round of the Writing SF Robin! That Robin has now passed this point 6 times and it is beginning to acquire 'tradition'. By which I mean that it is of an age to make anyone who gafiates with it a cur and a scoundrel. (Now there is an example of Sexist speech. It assumes that any such person will be male...)

SOUTH OF THE MOON -- a special pub of the N3F? Very good. Just so long as it is kept running, not dropped by some overzealous (or underactive) people at a future time.

Sharron Albert: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING is not and never has been intended as a novel. It is the first two books of the novel THE LORD OF THE RINGS. As the cumbersome single volume paperbacks show, printing it as a unit would be difficult in the extreme for a new release. The single volume hardback avoids being ponderous by using expensive rice paper.

Consider: LotR is twice the length of THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE or LUCIFER'S HAMMER: both massive weak-spined paperbacks.

Are the US editions different to the British editions I have? The British versions all bear the legend 'being the cth part of THE LORD OF THE RINGS' (where "cth" can be 1st, 2nd, or 3rd). Hardly no warning!

Otherwise I agree. A series should comprise of interconnecting components that can be read and enjoyed on their own. Each part a unit, but the whole adding up to a narrative greater than any single work could be. The art of writing good series seems to have died with C. S. Lewis. Will anyone name me an author who has succeeded as well with later series as Lewis did with his SILENT PLANET and NARNIA books? (I'll name one for you first, though: Vance does pretty well with the Durdane books, as I'm sure people who have read same will agree. On the other hand, neither Asimov's FOUNDATION stories nor Vance's own Kirth Gersen (DEMON PRINCES) works are particularly exemplar of what I seek.) ((I was very annoyed at the ending of THE ANOME, not realising at the time that it was the first book of a trilogy.))

An author is not remembered or revered for their best works. They are remembered for the works that survive, and no way does this correlate with 'best'. Take Verne, He wrote a lot of good stuff, a lot of bad. He wrote all sorts of stuff. Yet when I mention Verne to you, what do you think? You think: SF writer and one or more of 20,000 LEAGUES, JOURNEY TO THE MOON, FIRST MEN IN, ROUND THE WORLD, ((INTO THE NIGER BEND, MASTER OF THE NORTH POLE, THE CITY IN THE SAHARA, OFF ON A COMET, FIVE WEEKS IN A BALLOON, THE BEGUM'S FORTUNE ETC.)) to mention but a few. But how many of you have read THE VILLAGE IN THE TREETOPS? ((I have.)) TARZAN is pallid stuff! VILLAGE is not SF. It is a Victorian African tale. Verne's SF is actually the minor part of his writing.

Take Heinlein. What is his best work? I can already hear the conflicting cries! To some people, STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND is the best, the Only True Heinlein. To others, STARSHIP TROOPERS. ROCKETSHIP GALILEO, even, has supporters. ((?!?!)) Me? I incline to THE DOOR INTO SUMMER; and I'll bet a good many of you, maybe even some who are into Heinlein, have not even read it. ((DiS was my father's favorite Heinlein book. And favorite need not be the same as best. My favorite Heinlein book is DOUBLE STAR but the best, in my opinion, is STARMAN JONES.))

Moorcock. Some people slaver over Jerry Cornelius, some the END OF TIME works, some such strangers as THE BLOOD RED GAME. This is without opening the Elric/Eternal Cham-

pion spaghetti. By the way, THE BLOOD RED GAME is the true core work (to date) in Moorcock's Multiverse. It gets nearest to the truth.

And back to Anderson. The man has written a wide variety of works, and they all have their followers. "Weak", Scott Bauer? What is a "weak" novel? Do you believe that whatever definition you may use will be met with agreement should you divulge the font of your knowledge to us? What of those authors-- such as 'Doc' Smith -- who are revered by some and reviled by others for the same works? The very works which make 'Doc' a household BNP even today, are the same works that the 'Literary' folks use to relegate him into the dregs of the filthy pulp-magazine hacks (their words). No, a writer is not remembered for his best works. Otherwise why do John Norman and Perry Rhodan sell so well? I think they're both poor works; and the works I remember are both the relatively good and the relatively bad. I remember them by inconsistent examples and also by an average quality. How I remember any author varies with the author. It's not an absolute, and can never be (label: opinion).

James JJ Wilson leadeth with his chin. I detect a distinct tinge of defenseness in his comments to Vernon Clark. Witness the careful quoting of the prozines and semi-prozines he has contributed to and, which, he implies, been paid for. On the other hand, looking back, Vernon Clark was wrong in jumping in so strongly on the rather meaningless and innocuous comments by Wilson in the May TB. I trust the feud has been cut from TB? ((Yes.)) Otherwise I might start making comments myself, undercutting lovers of both Leiber and Ellison and also turning the screws on someone who feels their achievements elsewhere mean that they are right everywhere. Especially when they show definite signs that their 'opinions' of authors are, in their view, the correct ones. This is the sort of 'opinion' that makes of UK zines a running battleground. Your own mettle is pitiful next to that, JJJ.

((Pat and I both spent a lot of time in early August reading British zines in preparation for Season. I'm beginning to think that a lot of British influence crept into the Sept. TB helped along by the fact that Pat grew up in the UK. TB - Sept was a semi British zine.))



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Please note the new address. Permanent this time. New York City is finally behind me. And since it is, please also note the new name. (Actually, most of you've been calling me "Fa" or some variation all along.) Anji Valenza is also behind me now. It will be used by the IRS alone. Will not expound upon why the change and why the change to this -- whatever folk and filk can think up will undoubtedly be better than I could do.

Now on to TB. Of all the nerve! The P.O. didn't postmark the damn thing! Now I can't tell how late it is. ((It was mailed Nov 26.)) This is Beethoven's Birthday and also my computer's...

So this is the special "ALIEN" Debate issue (SAD). Gee, I dunno. ALIEN didn't frighten me in the least. It also did not impress me in the least. I walked out of the movie feeling I'd been sorely cheated, and was sort of "don't-it-figure" amused to hear that the sequel was then already three months into production. Before I left New York City, the most often heard comment about the movie was, "Hell, those people would never have survived in my neighborhood." I don't think they would have survived growing up in my family! ((Funny, Pat made that same remark.)) I dunno. ALIEN will never make my top ten list.

Oh, the ~~re~~really has gotten to be an Artist's Workshop, hunh? How do you workshop art? (This straight line here is spelled wrong -- it should be a curve...)

Is it Harry or Andy Andruschak? Or are these two different people? (Maybe you are clones?) ((Harry Nicholas John Cameron Andruschak is the person. He told me he prefers to be called "Andy" as Harry was his father's name as well and they did not get along. However he does use Harry on letters but then signs them "Andy". You figure it out.))

Richard Jasinski: I sorta don't believe what happened to you re: your club, but then again I recall things like that happening as politics among "friends". I have always abhorred the idea of people "appointing" other people to do stuff -- especially without making certain they understood what to do -- and perhaps this is a good illustration why.

My ghod! I missed that. Are people calling each other assholes again?! What an asinine thing to do. I always found that in any given argument, regardless of who's right and who's wrong, he who yells first, loses. Is a character attack the equivalent of a verbal yell?

James JJ Wilson: I agree. Enough ALIEN reviews. What's worse though, are the STAR WARS and SUPERMAN reviews I'm still seeing -- enough already!!

Sharron Albert: My usual distinction (not definition) between SF and fantasy is that when you write SF, you start out with X amount of givens, and extrapolate from there. In fantasy, you need no givens and only personalities and strategies need extrapolation -- not the environment or the psychology, at least not to any large extent. (There, that sounds suitably vague and controversial...) I still haven't read FELLOWSHIP after ten years.

Mary Tyrrell: Of all the animals I've ever had or worked with over the years, only my horse has ever shown me any consideration or sympathy, or taken a genuine interest in what I was doing or feeling. But, as Vernon Clark says, this was only after hours a day together. Yet the same hours, and more, spent with a beloved dog never had the same results -- and yes, that was a sorta Thelwell.

Vernon Clark: I dunno, I still feel it's a bit premature to say that the "common ground" of being descended from/of the same place enables a relationship. It certainly may facilitate it greatly, no doubt about that. I've been studying on cetacean intelligence for twenty years now, though, and I'm not sure what you mean by that last sentence. At any rate, I'm not saying either of us is wrong or right -- just that until an alien comes along, it's really too early to say.

\* \* \* \* \*

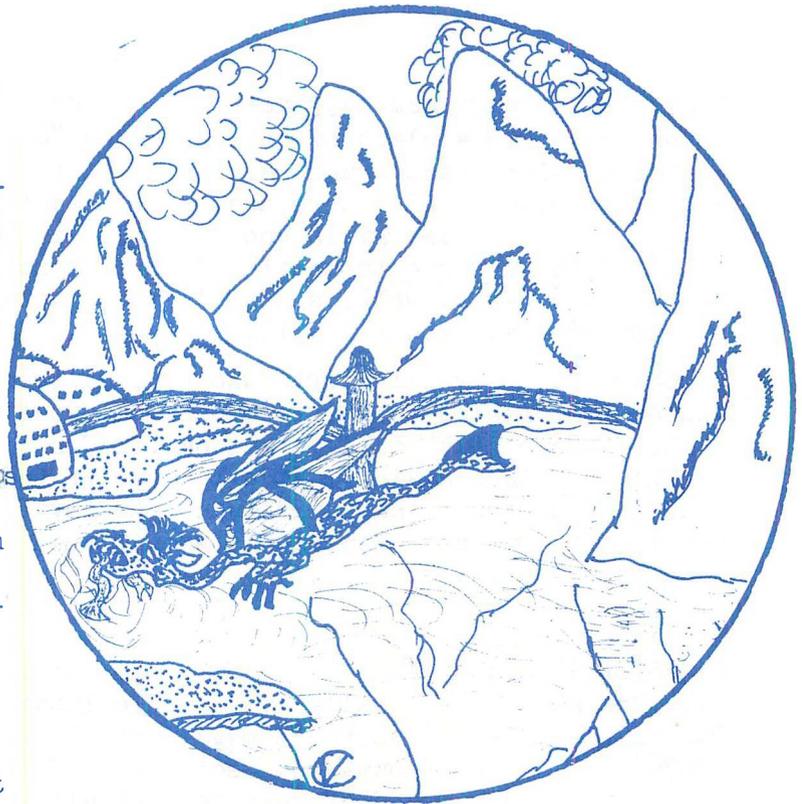
Bill West  
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I was relieved to read that my vote on the all letters format was not a minority of one. This should indicate to Don that a change would definately not be for the better.

Frejac: You are fantastic. I had to fight back this insane giggle when I read the toon on page 18. Obviously you have been reading that old horror classic, THE LURKER AT THE POST OFFICE.

I agree with Pat. Enough on Anderson -- and Chris Martin. Any further comments on either would be beating a dead horse. But as for your antipathy to fantasy, I wish I knew why you find it depressing. ((I also find history depressing. pwd)) (And, no, I am not casting aspersions on your psychological makeup.) Perhaps, as you point out,

the books that you read by Anderson were gloomy because they all reflect the influence of Scandinavian and Icelandic Sagas. In fact, all of the great Nationalist epics of the Middle Ages end on notes of heroic futility. (Roland at Roncevalles, El Cid's body leading a charge against the Arabs, Siegfried murdered by a jealous friend, etc) But there are many works of modern fantasy, such as Tolkien, Dunsany etc. that are less somber and transport the reader to times of great beauty and wonder. Perhaps it is more escapist than SF, but I tend to think that the only difference between the two is the degree of reality to be found in each. For that matter, all fiction is fantasy. I guess it's another of those many matters of taste.



Now as to the theory that nothing good can come out of the Middle Ages: (Here the earnest young history major looks out at the class with a sincere, but stern, expression.) While the Middle Ages were by no means the high point of Western civilization, they certainly were not the abyss some of you seem to think either. In many ways the lot of the lower classes was better than that of their Greek and Roman predecessors. And although the nobility and Church lived off the labor of the peasants, they did serve in their own way to advance culture by preserving much of the classics of the Hellenistic world. ((Of course, were it not for the Church, many of those works would not have had to be preserved in the first place.)) I think the SCA'ers themselves realize that such is the case. What their pageantry and costumes represent in the way most of them, and many of us, fantacise it was: an age of chivalry and courtly love.

((Bill, I was a history major and taught history and I disliked the Middle Ages also. The values of that period were not those that I respect or admire. I like freedom above all and the Middle Ages were not free. Neither were the classical ages but they did admire the life of reason and the quest for knowledge. The Medieval period subjugated the mind to the Church. I have never really liked the culture of India for similar reasons.))

I enjoyed most of the reviews this issue, but A.D. Wallace, you've done it again! I had to get out my dictionary again just to read the first two paragraphs. And there's that word "argot" again. I don't want to sound like I'm dumping on you, but I do think you have to learn that a large vocabulary can sometimes make it harder to communicate your ideas to others. A book review should tell the reader something about the book and why you did or did not enjoy it. It can praise or criticise elements of the story but it should do so in a concise, readily understandable style so the reader can decide whether or not he is interested in reading the book. This does not mean you have to write everything on the level of a sixth grader; from what I've seen so far this is a very smartsy bunch of people. Anyway you may get a chance to tear my style apart if a get a review of my own in by deadline. After all that, I agreed with your review.

& & & & & & & &

Lynne Morse  
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Just an observation: some of the folks who write locs lately are beginning to sound vicious. Ouch!

Mary Tyrrell: You noticed that SCA takes a lot of hard work too? (chuckle!) Fandom's no feather bed -- there's a lot of work and effort in producing fanzines and writing letters. (Yorg, you know that already!!) But what a return.

Something strange has happened here. When I was in seventh grade, I was one of three people in a class of 450 who liked "Star Trek." We were teased horribly for it (po-o-i-inty ears!) and before the last vestiges of grade school completely melted away, my friends and I were beat upon occasionally. Now, in senior homeroom four days ago, two of the same girls who took part in the ribbing are sitting here going, "Oh gosh! I've just got to see the STAR TREK movie on opening night!" The horrible part -- they sounded... well, sincere's too gracious but it'll do. I'm still the outcast non conformist, though I still like ST. Nuff said, I suppose.

At ChamberCon several people who have a liking for music popped into my room and played some flutes and/or recorders. I wouldn't mind if this happened again at Confusion. Some folks told me at ChamberaCon that "yes, I'll repair my flute and let's all get together again." It'd be nice if there were more people, perhaps, and a wider selection of music than Renaissance/Medieval. Hint? ((Pat just loves Medieval and Renaissance music -- especially when played on the original instruments. I've become accustomed to it.))

\* \* \* \* \*

Lee Springfield      This is my first loc to TB in -- I can't even remember how long.  
P.O. Box 296          Usually my periodic lapses in fanac are due to school, but this last  
Dawsonville, GA      quarter's mega-fafiation was due more to extracurricular activities,  
30534                  mostly connected with football in some way or another (I am totally  
                         indifferent to football -- in contrast to my football rabid friends,  
who sulked for days after a Georgia loss, of which there were plenty this season.) To me football is a perfect excuse to party, go to Florida for the World's Largest Outdoor Cocktail Party (i.e. the GA-Fla Game), and in general, have fun, which means having to neglect fannish activity. (Well, something's has to go and it can't be studying!)

I agree wholeheartedly with what William West said in TB #21 and, more importantly, how he said it. He must be a born diplomat. We need more tolerance shown to people who do not share our particular likes/dislikes and less name calling, blanket condemnations, and needlessly cruel personal attacks. In order to have a purposeful, coherent discussion about any topic, we have to display more mature behaviour than has graced the pages of the last several TB's. (Actually the Anderson matter rather reminds me of the standard rock vs New Wave Rock vs disco controversy at school.)

Concerning Medievalism: Last quarter I had a course in Medieval history (I'm not a Medievalist, but took the course because I knew only the standard pseudo-facts and vague generalizations about that era.) Once somebody asked the instructor if he would have liked to have lived in the Middle Ages and his response was something like "You've got to be crazy -- trade penicillin, central heating, Bach and a five day work week for the Bubonic plague, famine and serfdom?" He went on to say that for the majority (the vast majority) of its inhabitants, the Middle Ages offered only a short, brutal, almost totally barren life wracked by hard labor. He specializes in the era because it's "fascinating". Incidentally, he hates SF, likes Tolkien, and is not into the local SCA chapter. The people I know in SCA seem to glorify the period to an almost ridiculous extent. I agree with someone's suggestion ((Pat's)) that they be subjected to a lottery in which 98% of them would be reduced to serfdom -- talk about a drop in membership, probably a 98% drop! This is not to say all SCAers go overboard -- Sharron Albert, in particular, seems to balance her SCA interest with participation in politics and environmentalism which we would all do well to emulate.

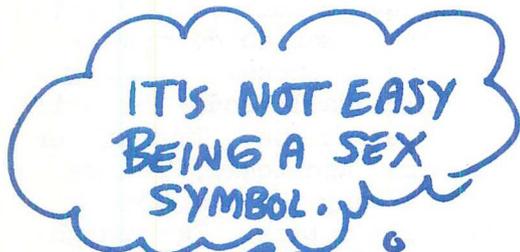
Sharron Albert: I agree somewhat with your definition of SF and fantasy. Many books that are technically SF, in that they have scientifically rational explanations behind them, "feel" more like fantasy: the Darkover novels, the Pern stories (even if the science in them seems a bit far fetched), GATE OF IVREL, etc. I think that I'm like most fans: I like both fantasy and SF; and I feel that wholesale condemnations of genres, personality types, races, or for that matter, practically anything, is childish and potentially dangerous: "You" may have to retract those words one day.

I liked Susan Shwartz's review of THE FIRES OF AZEROTH, which is probably the best book I have read all year. I do disagree with what she said about Morgaine and Vanye being fated to become lovers. I think that Morgaine is still too alien and obsessed with her mission to fall in love with Vanye in the romantic sense. And Vanye seems too awed by Morgaine still to feel comfortable in that type of relationship, which would not be conducive to a love affair, especially with Vanye's concern to follow tradition in this matter and his strong sense of honor. Anyway, the thing that struck me most about FIRES was the strength with which I identified with the characters, especially Vanye and to a slightly lesser degree with Roh. It seemed as if I felt and lived their disappointments, victories, fears, etc. almost as strongly as my own. This must be indicative of how well done Cherryh's characterizations are. I eagerly await new novels!

One other thing that impresses me about Cherryh is her sense of linguistics, due to her training as a Latin teacher, I'm sure. Very few other writers seem to have any sense whatsoever of linguistic change and other basic concepts. ((Try reading THE LANGUAGES OF PAO by Jack Vance.)) MZB does, especially in her Darkover novels, but how many others? For instance, in the Star Trek movie (otherwise known as "TREK INTO ENNUI" -- simply horrible!), during the dialogue between Spock and the Vulcan woman, I could have sworn that "they" (Roddenberry et al.) simply took strange syllables and substituted them one for one for the English words in the subtitles. There was the exact same intonational and junctural patterns as in the English. What a cosmic linguistic coincidence! Vulcan and English are identical except for a different vocabulary! At one point they said something that meant in English "The Kolinahr: is something etc" and it sounded like "Kolinahr - pause for colon - is something" but said in Vulcan. A small grumble, especially compared with the plot (or rather lack of it) and the characterization (ditto), but one that for some reason especially irritates me.

((I used to tutor French and Latin and the biggest problem I had was breaking the mentality that produced English Vulcan or il est travaillant for he is working. I've been told -- by Susan Shwartz among others -- that the fact that I studied four years of Latin and three of French and classical Greek, has had definite influence in my writing style.))

# # # # #



IT'S NOT EASY  
BEING A SEX  
SYMBOL.



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Thank you for TB 21. I have just renewed my membership and TIGHTBEAM is the main reason why. Incidentally, if it's not too late, I'd like to

join the general rush to support the presence of book reviews. I don't particularly love the things, but they do start some fascinating discussion, so the zine would be poorer without them.

Richard Jasinski sends us a true-life Polish joke. Ah, well, further evidence that They are no better than We are.

Steven Duff: In fact, I always publish a few locs that I disagree with in DR, as it gives me a chance to enlighten their writers, and I do indeed publish letters from interesting, though unilluminated, readers like Lynne. (I have not let my own fanatical fascination with the trilogy blind me to the fact that many highly interesting and intelligent people will simply find it not to their liking.) But it appears that you have misperceived the purpose of DR. It is not an organization zine like TIGHTBEAM, and

thus the admiral evenhandedness that Lynne practices is not required. DR is a personal-zine. It is mine, I pay for its production, and sell it in the free market. Its main

purpose is for me to express my views. I'm sorry that you don't care for it, but that's how it goes.

Sharron Albert: Has anyone ever written a trilogy in which the second volume stands alone and doesn't end with a cliffhanger? LORD OF THE RINGS and ILLUMINATUS! certainly dont qualify.

Paula Crunk: Eric Hoffer (not Berne) made some interesting points in THE TRUE BELIEVER, but I'm suspicious of attempts to explain movements away as NOTHING BUT pathology on the part of their followers. I remember discussions of the Vietnam war which said a lot about how the protestors were striking back at the Father Figure, but neglected to mention that maybe the war itself was stupid, bloodthirsty, and destructive to all concerned. I would say that the important thing is that the political groups Hoffer talks about are trying to impose their approach (their pathology, I would say, but I could be mistaken) by force. But there is another path. Some see that in most of American culture, people are supposed to fit into little pigeonholes, to compete with some, submit to others, and dominate still others, to live up (or down) to roles assigned them on the almost arbitrary basis of what sort of genitals they have. Rather than strafing a movement, with all the dangers that entails, some have taken the direct method of living differently and encouraging others to do likewise. Fandom at its best represents this approach.

Frejac knows Too Much. If he keeps blabbing Secrets Which Must Not Be Revealed, he will be overtaken by a Nameless and Eldritch Fate. ~~Like being attacked at in DND~~

As to Pat's response to Dennis Jarog, I beleive the nastiness in the Old Wave/New Wave debate was by no means confined to one side. Since I was sympathetic to the New Wave, I felt that the Old Wave's charges of decadence, perversion, and drug-induced madness were nastier than what the New Wave was saying, but that may have been my prejudice.

((Certainly you do tend to remember attacks against what you believe in more than the counterattacks. However, Chris reminded me of a New Wave critic of Old Wave rather than the reverse. Still as I recall, the whole Wave controversy began in NEW WORLDS which often made a point of being outrageous and inciting controversy. pwd))

Greg Hills has an excellent understanding of psychology.

& & & & & & & & &

A.D. Wallace  
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With due respect, I tire of such enthusiastic blurbs as Chris Martin's on computers. This revolution has been going on for nigh onto 30 years. Early on it was to do machine translation and play the perfect game of chess. Thus far a good Chinese typer has eluded it; nor has it produced the unbreakable code. We still lack the magnetic eyeball. In SF the computer turns out to be a curse. Thus if our hero wants sex, he pushes the sex button, and if he wants a gin and tonic, then he pushes the gin and tonic button, and so on ad nauseam. Why a computer can make a spaceboat make a U-turn in deepest space, and make a solar sailor tack. Two phaughs and a foosh! The computer is now the Universal Handy-Dandy All-Purpose Gadget of SF & F.

As to Arthur Hlavaty and DIAGONAL RELATIONSHIP, he produces an excellent zine, quite different from the average, run-of-the-mill type. There is less concern with SF & F (which I regret) but more emphasis on what might be termed "reality". His correspondents are generally among the intelligentsia, with which I find nothing in the least condemnable. It is unfortunate that some persons are so uncomfortable with their learning that they erect a facade by adopting the mucker pose.

Congratulations on the splendid #21. A special thanks to Vernon Clark, William West, Sydney J. Davis and Mary Tyrrell for their kindness in reading what I wrote and commenting on same.

William West: I do not dislike fantasy, or any particular of its subgenres. SF and fantasy are at the opposite termini of the spectrum. Of course there are novels that mix them. I am especially fond of picaresque tales which, in general, have a comic component. It is my misfortune that Fritz Leiber's Fahfrd and Grey Mouser stories have

have no attraction at all. Mayhap Vernon Clark and West can explain away my dislike.

Contrary to large numbers of readers, critics and reviewers, I found Ms McIntyre's DREAMSNAKE barely above mediocre. For those who like mercy and compassion laid on with a trowel the book should be a delight to read. But that is surely not enough to make a good novel. Clearly Snake (the protagonist) divides into a masculine and a feminine persona, and these two components simply do not fit together without the seam showing. In part, this derives from the episodic nature of the book, but also from the difficulty of having a single character as both "hero" and "heroine". From another angle entirely, there is no humorous relief, which gives the novel a somewhat flat surface. There is one snickerful incident -- while Snake is instructing a bed-mate in the gentle art of copulation there is an aversion to the temperature of the scrotum during such activity. This indeed is snickersome.

So far as I know, MALAFRENA is Ursula K. LeGuin's first and only novel outside F&SF. It is parahistorical, about the imagined grandduchy Orsinia, and the activities of Itale Sorde in freeing it from the hegemony of Austria. He failed. I hope that the editor will find space for a thorough review. ((I'd use one if I got one.)) Or perhaps two such. To avoid contaminating others I express no opinion.

Jack Vance's THE FACE, in which Kirth Gersen destroys the fourth of the Demon Princes, is here and has been read with pleasure, though not as much as I had hoped for. Vance's novels pleasure me greatly. In the Demon Princes sequence the actual antagonist (=villain) is an off-stage character most of the time, and this makes for a lack of immediate dramatic conflict, face-to-face hack and hew. In FACE Lens Larque seems more remote than the others have been. The prefatory bits and pieces that "adorn" each chapter are more like padding than in the other novels of the series. Four down and one to go.

After 60 pages of Scott Baker's NIGHTCHILD, I upgave in despair. Turgid beyond comfortable reading.

TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT of Friday, 2 November carried a mini-review of what I take to be Ballard's latest novel. It has NOT been published here insofar as I know. Its appearance may well blow up another storm. Garde yourself against the avant!

\* \* \* \* \*

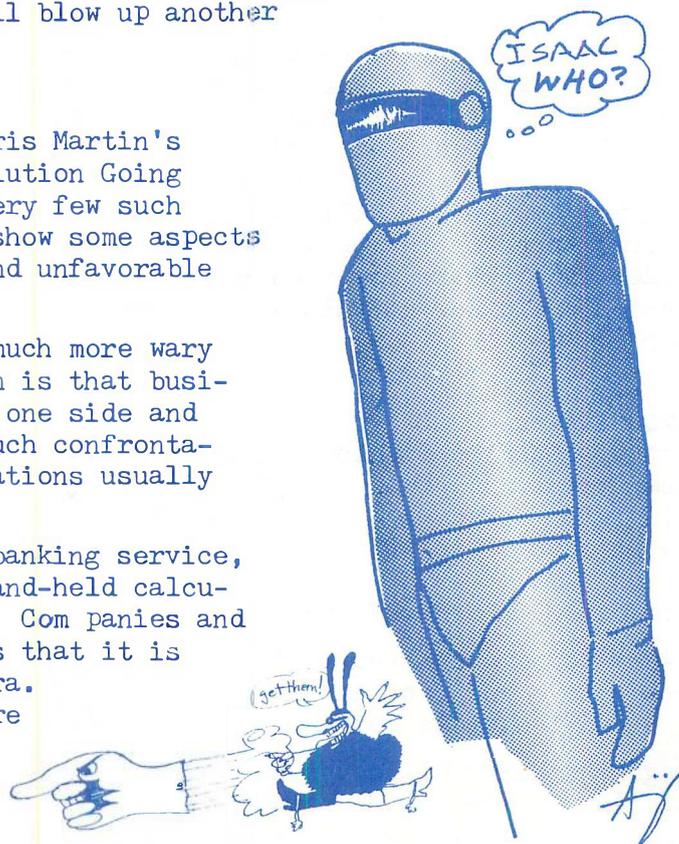
Tom Staicar  
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I particularly liked Chris Martin's article "There's a Revolution Going On." There have been very few such articles written which show some aspects of both the favorable and unfavorable ramifications of the computer revolution.

I'm not anti-technology but I tend to be much more wary of computers than most people. One reason is that business profits and computers are usually on one side and people and their jobs on the other. In such confrontations the centralized power of the corporations usually wins out.

Although computers have given us 24 hour banking service, stoplight systems that usually work and hand-held calculators, they have increased unemployment. Companies and government are so dependent upon computers that it is impossible to go back to a pre-computer era. However, I seldom hear protests when entire job groups are eliminated by computerization of a certain field.

As Chris Martin said, keeping tabs on all Americans will be a possibility



for both business and government once more people have computers connected by Bell System lines. There's a lot of chance for invasion of privacy and for censorship and decreased individual freedom once computers are even more widespread than today. On SIXTY MINUTES once they showed how a person's daily whereabouts could be uncovered by tracing their use of checks (which have computer numbers along the bottom used by the banks) and credit cards. Political ideas, associations with certain people and so on can be uncovered by computers when people come in contact with them and the information is tapped by a prying investigator. The IRS and phone company may use Visa and local welfare computer records to create a case against a certain person.

Many science-fiction fans are excited about the toy-like aspects of use of computers. This covers up an important fact: most computerization is out of our control, controlled only by powerful forces such as government and multinational corporations. You might think it is fun to think about doing away with books forever, and accessing the data from a book via your home computer, but it won't be much fun if it's the kind of dull green blurry cathode ray tube data transmission we get today. Imagine reading a book like a department store clerk reads your order records on a screen filled with little numbers.

Much of what we do in a job today is geared toward the needs of the computer. As the recent cover story "The Inhuman Office of the Future" said in SATURDAY REVIEW WORLD, big labor has very little to say against the job elimination and speed-up caused by big business increasing its reliance upon computers. I would like to see human considerations become more important in decisions than what the computer companies want in a given situation. Once the hardware comes in, it doesn't go out. The front office merely has to come up with some justifications for spending more money on more, improved computer hardware now that the old stuff is obsolete or causing more problems due to being "down" than it is solving by being relatively fast in response time. Individuals have very little to say when a company decides that its profits can be increased by eliminating more and more people (who get paychecks, hospitalization benefits and unemployment benefits.)

Walter Reuther once said something to the effect that, it would do little good for a major auto company to have a fully automated manufacturing plant as it would eliminate so many millions of jobs that those former workers would not be spending money to buy cars. That's sort of like the soft drink machine that malfunctions and doesn't drop a cup into the chamber; it's a more efficient machine because it drinks the beverage for you. I don't want the human race to be like the crew members in 2001. It's great to have machines to help us reach the planets and beyond, but what goal has been reached if computers are the only ones to get there? "We" didn't land on Mars, a machine lander did. There may soon be machine-readable books for computers to read and machine-created music for computers to "hear." What good does that kind of progress do for people?

& & & & & & & & & &

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New Zealand

Thanks to the Byzantine machinations of Greg Hills, I am now a card-carrying member of N3F. Don't let Greg give you the wrong impression of New Zealand Science fiction readers -- we be not all devoted to uninhibited fannish activity. I myself am a stable, cooperative member of society, content with my humble position as Pope John XX in the Greater Re-

unificatory Church of the Globe Artichoke.

I seem to have entered in the middle (TB May 1979) of an argument: alien psychologies, alternative views of the universe. Allow me to do my usual sleight-of-hand proving my elevation above both sides in the dispute by agreeing with neither.

Greg, the Hairy Hills, he has been spoiled by the baroque excesses of Jack Vance. ((I should warn you that Vance is my favorite SF writer.)) The less comprehensible an alien's motives, the better the author has done the work of describing said alien. This strikes me as a cop-out. Evading responsibilities, et cetera.

Also there is Frank Lee Linné saying "There's only one way of looking at reality..." Obviously we are not communicating. There is interference, or over-modulation, or non-linearities somewhere. If I were in the same room as Frank I would express disagreement less equivocally, with matches and pyrotechnics. The papal view is that anyone with fewer than six ways of looking -- mutually incommensurable ones -- is crippled or permanently asleep. Pity is extended (at the end of a long pole) to the unenlightened. Different world views are as useful as coloured filters for a camera; there's no way your brain can handle all the information available, all the data your senses are feeding it like memo-writing civil servants, and you want to filter out the most useful aspect.

Allow me to be more specific! When you talk to someone it is expedient to treat him as an object, distant from his surroundings, an entity of some permanence. On another level you may see him as a process -- a vector, a whirl of molecules through the cycles of cell chemistry (a complex dance sustained more by chance than through any visible long-term plan), or a manifestation of Schrodinger's differential equation. Oh yes,  $N^2$  is a world view of completeness and great beauty, but try it as a basis  $2m$  for day to day life.

Need I go on similarly about the places of synthetic and analytic world views? Need I insult your intelligences with Heraclitus, Hegel and suchlike name dropping?

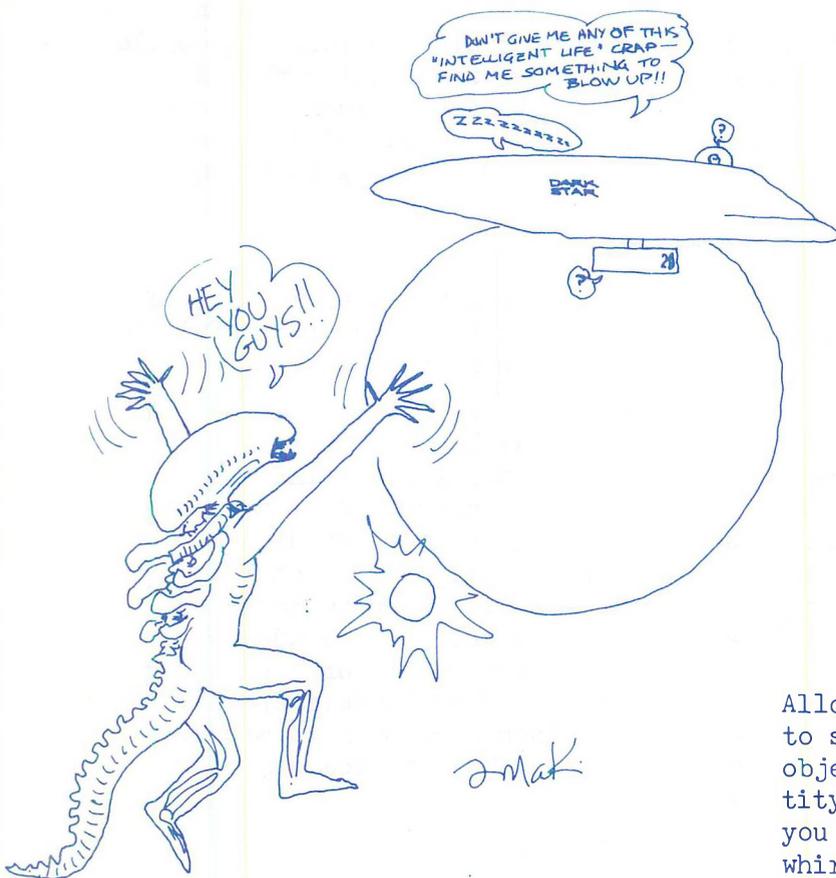
Cause-and-effect is a tool of the oppressors! Pluck it out from your mind, abandon limitation! I cite Alexei Panshin:

"Torve's view of what had transpired was this: the bell had a life line stretching from coincidental creation to the moment its component atoms separated at the name of an anonymous urge, and stretched along this line were a number of random rings. One of these had existed at a point slightly prior to one of a number of occasions that his life-line had taken him over to open the door. No involvement at all -- merely the close approach of two lines of occurrence."

Cause and effect is one view of reality (you may find it wedged too firmly in your mind not to be pried out without the empty socket gaping). Torve's alternate philosophy, the vaguely Taoist imperatives of a four dimensional space-time, make a believably but undoubtedly nonhuman extraterrestrial. You might also consider the retroactive logic of the Greater Reunificatory Church where cause generally follows effect ("In the names of Super Budgerigar and the Worm Ouroboros; so be it!")

Anyway, before you people impose human world views on all aliens, make the acquaintance of a frog. Or a green warty yellow-spotted toad. Gain its confidence; talk to it. The frog eye sieves for small, moving objects, sharp-edged black contrasting with the background -- this division of reality into Bug and unBug is a frog's philosophy. Pour no scorn on it. Frogs have survived a good many winters, and I shall try thinking batrachian thoughts for a while to see if this exercise does me any good.

(Later) You are no better, people. Your eyes hunt out distinctions -- boundaries between light and darkness, between different colours. Human (not only Western) thought is



based on distinguishing and categorizing this and that (Greg Hills' trick -- "straight-out" fantasy and "science-fantasy"). Understand me, I mean no slur to this pigeonhole model of reality -- physics training makes it hard to consider any fuzzier than a cloven block of basalt. But whether a writer can surmount his limitations and convincingly characterize aliens without embracing Zen Buddhism (Subversive! Non-conformist! Contributing-to-the-downfall-of-Western-culture!) and retiring to a monastery, is a matter untested.

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Chris Martin is an important part of the community of ideas. If you find his ideas abrasive just remember that they are useful at least in helping you to polish your own gems of wisdom.

Re missing copies of TNFF: I've mailed a couple dozen at my own expense (uh, make that 18 copies according to my notes). I still owe Laurraine Tutihasi and Fred Jakobcic copies and I guess from TB, Chris Martin. ((Also Ingrid Maack.)) I still have extra copies on hand but postage is expensive. None were returned as undeliverable or misaddressed which makes me wonder why so many didn't arrive as intended. The local P.O. has no idea either though all missing copies seem to be from the middle batch (the one they put postage on). There is no other discernable pattern to the missing copies. After they were enveloped and addressed and checked off the mailing list, they were not necessarily grouped according to any order. ((Well, it will cost you 25¢ for each copy returned as "undeliverable." I have found that fewer copies get lost now that I bundle them according to zip code than did when they went out alphabetically. Now the P.O. in the zip area has to lose them, rather than the Paterson bulk mailing centre.))

As per Irvin's comments, copies are available if you write me.

CJ Cherryh's use of alien names and vocabulary (much like Jack Vance) makes even harder reading in a review than it did in the books. And I wish again that Cherryh and other writers would minimize such devices in their stories. After all they are writing in English for an English reading audience -- and there's no need to come up with fancy names for a sword or a saddle or a lamp or a chair or a relationship (such as companion).

I have to agree with Susan Shwartz though, Cherryh does manage better than any other writer I can think of to write about real emotions including the ambivalence they often bring about. And she does this without going overboard into melodrama (or soap opera).

The Memphis film reviewer -- Thomas Fox -- managed to pan STAR TREK THE MOVIE and leave himself an out while doing so. He talked with movie goers after the first showing and got their impressions (though upon closer scrutiny he didn't talk to even a handful). The one person he quoted, who felt the movie was not up to its billing, still planned to catch it two more times.

Since then Fox also panned THE JERK and 1941 while praising earlier efforts of Carl Reiner and Steven Spielberg. Hmmm, he also praised early TREK. I think I'd like to see his early reviews of JAWS, CLOSE ENCOUNTERS and OH, GOD! I think he's playing reviewer rather than really giving an honest review. ((The reviewer for the local CBS station here gave STAR TREK, THE MOVIE a "3" out of a possible 10. BLACK HOLE which Anji Valenza will review next issue, got a "7". The reviewer liked STAR WARS which got an "8".))

Now to We Also Heard From: some people will be in the next issue. I heard from Linda Frankel who disagreed with Sally Syrjala's review of DEVIL WORLD; Cathy Howard who will be at Noreastcon; Anita Cole, ditto; Paula Crunk with comments on MOTHERLINES, Adrienne Losin who likes the mix in TB; Roger Waddington who reminisced a bit; and Adrienne Fein who also likes TB the way it is. Thanks to all the people who sent Christmas cards also.))



National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

Jet Propulsion Laboratory  
California Institute of Technology  
Pasadena, California

Voyager 1-130  
P-21306  
March 14, 1979

This dramatic view of Jupiter's satellite Io shows two simultaneously occurring volcanic eruptions. One eruption can be seen on the limb (at lower right) in which ash clouds are rising more than 260 kilometers (150 miles) above the satellite's surface. The second eruption can be seen on the terminator (shadow between day and night) where the volcanic cloud is catching the rays of the rising sun. The dark hemisphere of Io is made visible by light reflected from Jupiter. Seen in Io's night sky, Jupiter looms almost 40 times larger and 200 times brighter than our own full Moon. This photo was taken by Voyager 1 on March 8, 1979, looking back 4.5 million kilometers (2.6 million miles) at Io, three days after its historic encounter. This is the same image in which JPL discovered the first extraterrestrial volcanic eruption (the bright curved volcanic cloud on the limb).

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#### The Voyager Project

Two unmanned spacecraft, Voyagers 1 and 2, are now on their way to study our giant outer planets, Jupiter and Saturn, and 11 of their major satellites, several of which are larger than our own Moon.

The Voyager Project was assigned to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory as part of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration program of planetary exploration. JPL communicates with the spacecraft through a worldwide network of deep space tracking stations located in California, Australia, and Spain.

Voyager 2 was launched from Florida on August 20, 1977; Voyager 1, which flies a faster trajectory to reach the planets first, was launched on September 5, 1977.

At Jupiter, Voyager 1 made its closest approach on March 5, 1979. Voyager 2, whose more cautious trajectory will avoid much of Jupiter's intense radiation, will make its closest approach on July 9, 1979. Satellites being studied are Amalthea, Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto. Jupiter's Great Red Spot will be photographed and studied intensively by both spacecraft.

