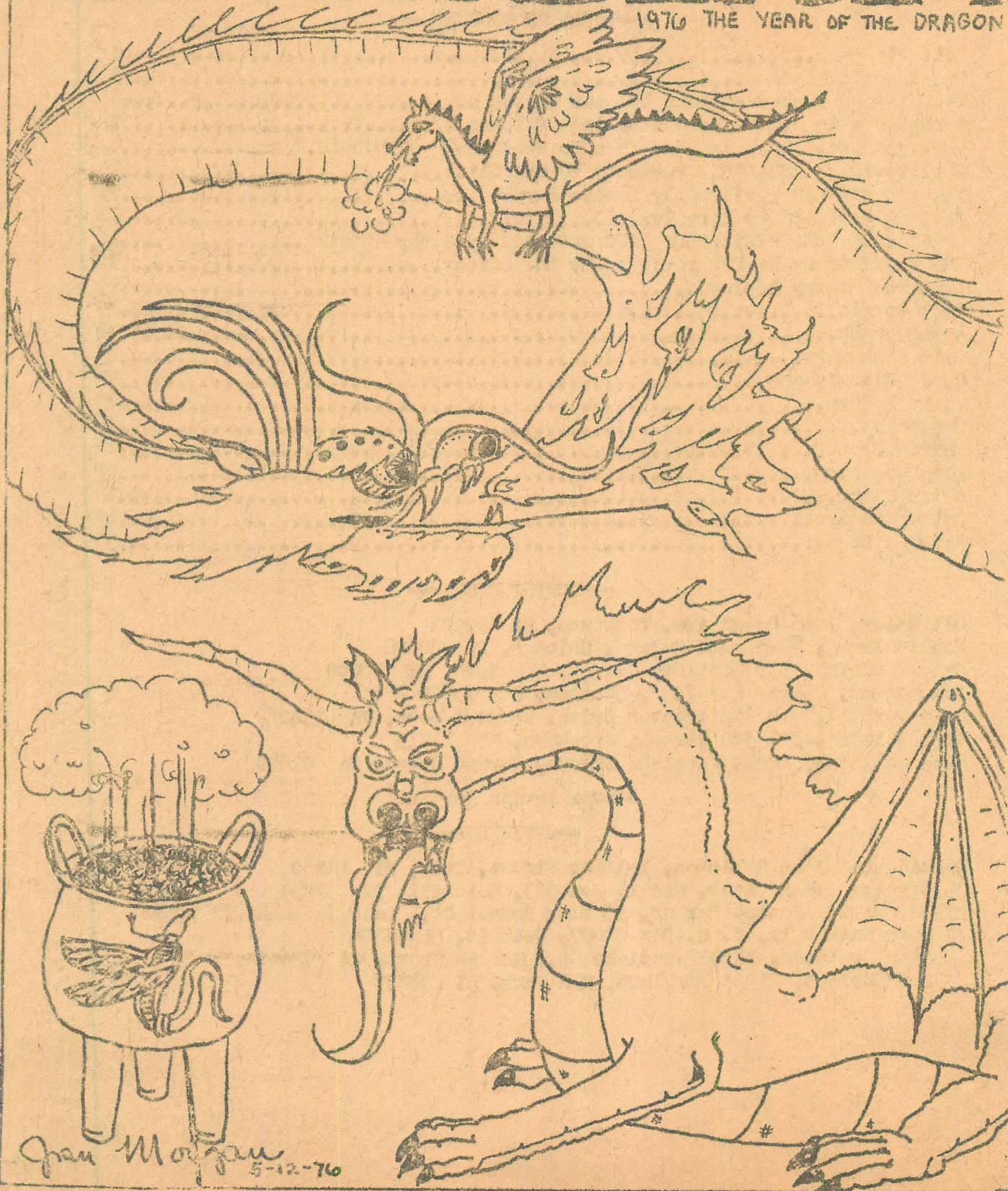


TIGHTBEAM

1976 THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON



Jan Morgan 5-12-76

-TIGHTBEAM-

TIGHTBEAM - July: is the fanzine and letterzine of the National Fantasy Fan Federation. TIGHTBEAM is published for the NFF in January, March, May, July, September, November and is distributed to members of the NFF and for trade of other fanzines. Persons mentioned in passing are invited to comment, regardless of membership status. Contributions (articles, letters, artwork) should be sent to the editor: Lynne Holdom, P. O. Box 5, Pompton Lakes, N. J. 07742, not later than the 5th of the month of publication. (Please write TB on the envelope)

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-cover by Jan Morgan-

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EDITOR'S PAGE

When I first joined the NSF in June of last year, Beth Slick was editor of TIGHTBEAM and this zine seemed mainly concerned over the STAR TREK controversy---something I have no real opinion on either pro or con. Since then TIGHTBEAM has gone through a lot of low periods. The last real issue was published last September---though John Robinson has published a couple of brief interim issues. Nowhere did John publish the letters, letters, letters that give a good insight into what fan are thinking. Thus there has been less to react to lately---either to praise or to condemn. Also Beth Slick often wrote about her fabulous job in glamorous Hollywood---by contrast my bookstore job has got to seem tame. I do handle SF true but I also handle Gothica, Occult books of all sorts and mysteries. Perhaps I should clarify a bit and say that that is the section I handle. The bookstore handles all sorts of books.

I did have an inkling though, that editing TB would not be all roses. So visualizing a dearth of letters, I asked friends, acquaintances, even enemies for book reviews, articles, artwork---whatever I could cajole or finagle. Nothing is too sneaky and underhanded for a new fanzine editor without material facing empty stencil after empty stencil. I appointed Dennis Jarog assistant editor (my first dirty trick,) so that if I were stuck writing everything for TB, he would write half. He's always wanted to publish a fanzine but lacked the time, nimeo---certainly not chutzpah. I sent out cards which one way or another cried HELP and started climbing the walls as July approached and no letters or material poured. One reason for this is that John Robinson was late in publishing the May issue. I got it at the end of June and I'm fairly close to Albany so other areas may not have received it even as I write this. I saw an issue of articles and reviews but no letters. In a letterzine, that's a disaster.

There should be more art next issue; I had trouble there. One person who promised art didn't send it in. Anji Valenza sent some right at the deadline and I was only able to fit one piece in. Anji is a new member and you will definitely be seeing more of his work as he is (probably) doing the cover on the September issue. Gil Gaier is doing the November cover---after that I don't know. My real need is for small interior art---art that makes those columns of print less forbidding---translation HELP. Art is on my mind more as I couldn't draw my way into a paper bag let alone out of it.

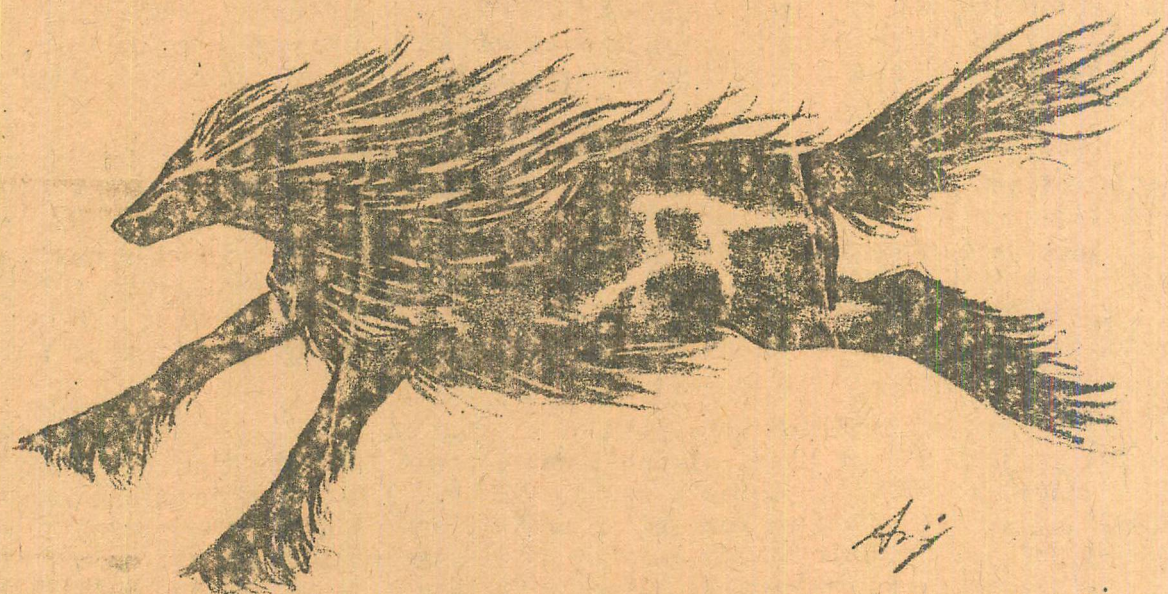
Reviews and articles were less of a problem. Maybe I didn't worry as much as I can write if not draw. I can't say I would like the thought of filling in five empty pages but I probably could. However I had some problems here too. John Robinson promised to forward an article and didn't. The person I asked to review THE HERITAGE OF HASTUR didn't; he did try could couldn't seem to get a handle on the book. Naturally he tells me this just before the deadline so I can't get anyone else to do the review. I suppose I could do it but, well, I reviewed that book in another fanzine and.....but then the thought comes to me, I wrote that review last August; haven't I had any new thoughts in the meantime? So, yup, you are going to be subjected to yet another Darkover trip folks.

Here I may as well state a few points of policy. I do want reviews and articles but only a limited amount as TIGHTBEAM is supposed to be primarily a letterzine. I already have three tentative book reviews for next issue and can only use five at most and would like a movie review also as so many SF films are coming out. But write first as I'd hate to have you spend all that time doing a review only to tell you that I have a review of that already. Of course Joanne can use reviews of books, fanzines, films etc. too which everyone should keep in mind.

Also the articles, reviews and letters express the opinion of the person whose name is signed to that letter, review or article. No one else's. I will occasionally print an article or review which expresses opinions diametrically opposed to mine as I know my opinion is not sacred or even necessarily wiser than someone else's. I believe that there is room for all of us in fandom---even in the N3F. Letters naturally express the opinion of the letter writer but I may edit if you are too long winded. Editing is not the same as censorship; a good editor (and I would like to be a good one,) tightens up letters so that they make their point more clearly. This is necessary as I'm not quite as short of letters as I thought I would be. Thanks for writing.

Here I might as well say that I am not looking for short story lists---John disremembered there. Gil Gaier, 1016 Beech Ave, Torrance, CA 90501 is so send them to him. I want lists of your 20 favorite SF/fantasy novels---only one per author. I will discuss the results when I get a fair sampling; either September or November. Also send all mail to P. O. Box 5, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442 as the local ~~hunks~~ kids here in Wayne swiped my mailbox. It's completely gone and I won't be putting up another one for awhile.

Sharon Wilkerson is no longer running the Welcommittee so I would like all Welcommittee members who wish to continue in that office and any person that wishes to join the Welcommittee to write here. This way the membership will at least be known---a good first step.



Anyone who wishes to take pot luck as to getting SF books, can send me 30¢ in postage and get four SF novels back. Specify what sort of SF you like and I'll try to please you. I'm having severe storage problems.

Anyone interested in the book exchange can also write here, tell what sort of SF he's interested in and I'll try to work something out. I've had a couple of queries already and Eric Jambersky isn't exactly thrilled with running the book exchange.

Anyone who wishes to run for office or for the Directorate should pay his dues and declare his candidacy in next month's TNFF. Be sure to include your pl form when you declare candidacy.

Also, believe it or not. I would like to know how I can make TIGHTBEAM better. (I also hope to keep it non political) Write and tell me your thoughts on the matter.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JOHN ROBINSON

1-101st STREET
TROY, N. Y. 12180

JUNE 28, 1976

Mike Baker has agreed to receive auction items for the N3F Auction at the WorldCon. Send your old fanzines, etc. to him.

N3F Room
c/c Mike Baker
Box 5808
Kansas City, MO 64111

Please send your contributions before August (if possible) as it may take a few weeks to arrive. If you think there's someone crazy enough to bid on whatever you've got, be sure to send it. We have enough members in Florida so that I'm hoping it will be easier to make arrangements conveniently next year without making more work for a committee member.

Larry Downe will be the auctioneer. He needs a large audience so be sure to be at the auction if you make the WorldCon. We need N3F room helpers. Contact Joanne Burger if you can help out. Joanne's address is: Joanne Burger, 55 Bluebonnet Ct., Lake Jackson, TX 77566.

While I have received cards and letters showing interest in the Writers' Exchange, no one has volunteered to run it as yet. We can't have a writers' exchange if there isn't someone to make it work. Write me if you are interested.

I'm looking for suitable material to use on Freebie Tables. This material should be useful to neofans and be less than five pages in length. Chiefs of Bureaus that offer services to non Neffers should send summaries of up to one page describing the services they offer. Also needed are fanzine reviews and listings, con listings, book reviews, brief descriptions of projects such as the one Gil Gaier has going to rate SF books and whathaveyou. As long as it's brief, I'm interested. These flyers etc. could be collated and put out on a freebie table as info for neofans, or they might be run off in quantities of 200 or more through Albany State SF Society's bulk mailing. I think that it is generally agreed that the N3F is doing a reasonably good job of initiating neofans within its ranks; now we should be doing something outside of the group. By this means we might even get cons without neofan rooms to create space on Freebie Tables for Neofan Information Centers or whatever they may wish to call this service.

Those of you running for office should announce your intentions before the Worldcon. It is necessary to pay your dues for 1977 when declaring candidacy. All dues are payable to Janie Lamb.

* * * * *

Those interested in Star Trek fandom and have any questions about it, should send a SASE to-- STAR TREK WELCOMITTEE, Shirley S. Haisewsky, 481 Main Street, Hatfield, MA 01038

ISAAC ASIMOV SF MAGAZINE will start out as a quarterly and move to bi-monthly publication if enough people purchase it according to news from LOCUS. From others it seems that an editorial and introduction to each story or author will be Asimov's main job. Like ELLERY QUEEN MYSTERY MAGAZINE and other zines with a top author featured in its name; this publication is meant to fill an area not now covered.

THE MISSING LINK---AND NEWS

News like fiction is an expression of people. If you see the name of someone you know, you're apt to look closer---but are you willing, when you hear of someone doing something (or having it done to them) to take typewriter or pen in hand and send the news in to TNFF or TIGHTBEAM? If you are, you deserve some sort of medal---or at least a Neffer News Bureau membership token. And if you not only send in a story but start looking for items around you, and maybe ask questions in letters to get info on what that person you're writing to is doing, you'll be able to produce repeated items.

A bookdealer or reviewer is bound to think about things to say about a new paperback, zine or hardcover---or movie, TV program, etc. Same goes with someone interested in a project of any sort---or in doing something with the interests of themselves or others in mind. If you see someone reading a SF book and get acquainted and he or she has two copies of the NECROMANTICON, what would you do? After you talk him out of a copy, of course.....first things come first. One thing you can do is get details of the thing, or his collection, and write it up for a fanzine. But just telling about the one book you got, or about that person, would be a sort of news---especially if it's someone who has some other relationship with our field such as being an actor in some SF movie, etc. News is relationships.

When I got to cons I quite often meet correspondents for the first time---find someone named Lee is a lady, not a man (and sometimes a letter or any info given leaves out such small details). You may find someone you met has done art for a fanzine in a city half-way across the state (and I had that experience while taking a course on offset printing once). If you don't meet a fan, or anything like one, in your home town; you can do it by mail and the ways are as many as imagination can show.

I became a correspondent of one pro artist by writing him after seeing an ad in a magazine---and a prozine at that---and not a SF zine either. That is how I became a correspondent of Hannes Bok, a man who has sometimes been called a hermit and somewhat aloof. (He had some of his art stolen by "vriends" and relatives so I understand how he felt.) Hannes is dead now but I wouldn't have known him unless I wrote. I could also have written certain authors by writing to the publishing company. Some might answer; some might not but finding what interests them is the key to getting a reply.

So it is possible to get in touch with pros---for news but a pro needs time to do his work---writing or editing or art---but some will be willing to reply. At the same time, none can be expected to give you their time so to demand time is foolish and boorish.

It's even easier than hanging up when you send a letter to some pro---so if you don't think of them and shape any questions you ask with that in mind, the result is folly.

Not all of you will bother to write anyone or talk to anyone at a con. And even if you do, you may not tell anyone. But if you do become active in this way and send news in, you may inspire others to do the same. The result should be more news for you, for the NFF zines need news. From you and your friends. If you want to start a "branch" of the news bureau, go ahead. It's for members wanting items for their zine---if we have it, I can send it; at least to some of the first to ask. And you can ask me for details and I'll read what you say about your particular interests, projects etc. For besides being curious, I'm hung up on passing on news to others.

So I can get more news in return? Sure, but also because I'm curious.

Stan Woolston--

TECHNOLOGY IN SF: A LAMENT

by Anji Valenza

Lately I've been becoming more and more selective about what sf I'll read. I don't know if it's the "New Wave," the "New New Wave," The Creeping Fantasy or just bad hooch; but for some reason, what I like to read is becoming very, very scarce indeed. Where are the technological stories of yesteryear?

I wish I knew. I have several ideas, which, like all of my ideas, are open to question. And answer.

What I mean by "technological" perhaps needs explanation. I refer to stories dealing with the creation of technology and its subsequent effects on people and situations. This technology may be from either the "hard" or "soft" sciences and the writer's knowledge of the science in which he/she is working should be as thorough as possible. For the record, I am not including things such as political "science," secretarial "science," or many of the "humanistic" psychologies, as I feel these are not sciences at all.

What I do not mean are stories such as are now very common in SF fandom -- where one uses the sf trappings of a spaceship, The Void, a couple of aliens running around, but tells a story (usually some kind of love story) that is not affected by these trappings in any real way. They are the Great American Novel in a futuristic setting; they seem to me to be stories that would work out the same way if the time were now. I find it impossible to believe that given a time where such spaceships and space travel etc. are possible, human values and customs would remain as they are today.

This is not the only thing I am "rebelling" against; it seems that most of what is written now is either teetering on the brink of fantasy, or on the brink of sword and sorcery, or, for some reason, is leaving me totally bewildered and singularly unimpressed. I cannot pinpoint why I get these feelings but I think I may have hit upon what it is that is causing the demise of my favorite literature.

Science fiction of the kind of which I am an avid fan was mostly (I should say most profusely) produced in the 50's, and earlier. There was a different social climate then, not, I will admit, one that I particularly like as I look back on it; but there was something different. There was a change in the 60's; the emphasis shifted from the group to the Individual. There was a rise in whateveritis that people refer to as "humanism." Something that has been, it seems to me, opposed to science from time immemorial. It is something I see in my own field of psychology; in the 50's, behaviorism was "all the rage" but ever since the 60's (the latter 60s to be more specific) behaviorism has fallen into ever increasing disfavor, apparently because it is seen as dehumanising, putting man on the level of other animals. I myself have trouble seeing this point of view; and talking about psychology with a Freudian has been known to leave me disgusted with the whole human race. Freudians hate behaviorists (at least the one's I know.) and their methods, it seems, on general principles.

In very much the same way, technology is being shafted, and for the same reasons. People feel that it is dehumanizing. Anything that is dehumanizing is to be lashed out against. And it seems people will lash out against technology be it in "real life" (by tearing up IBM cards etc), in paperback or in hardbound. The sentiment I have encountered with sf is that a story which usues that great evil Technology must be dehumanizing; people have told me that they couldn't see how a technological work could be written with "human interest."

Any story, to be effective, must have 'human interest.' There must be something that people can relate to within a story before any human will be interested in it. But what interests humans is rarely the same thing from year to year. Right now the interest of the market is in 'human interest' (why does it seem that I'm talking in circles? I'm really not) and it is the market which ultimately determines what will be written. The market = the readership.

What seems to be very popular with the readership, the TV and movie market, is no longer what can be called science fiction, but what may more appropriately be called anti-science fiction. Witness movies like "Rollerball," or Logan's Run, and TV shows like Space 1999, which, judging by the size and number of promo ads taken out in Variety for the show may be one of the most popular things ever to hit the media. I would hardly call the views of science in the first two favorable; as for the latter, I can do no better than to agree with Isaac Asimov in his Sept 28, 1975 article in The New York Times. Most of the "science" presented therein is erroneous; a good deal of it is unforgivably erroneous. This is the kind of thing that people like me take offence at; such errors and inaccuracies.

I often find it amazing that science fiction is becoming so popular when science is becoming so unpopular. Maybe because there is little sf being written around science and more being written about people. Perhaps because its being written in the style of fantasy (I'm almost tempted to argue that a good deal of it is fantasy and not sf at all.

What may be going on is that the readers, the viewers, the market for sf have been living in a time where the unusual, the revolutionary, the weird and so on are all valued. Sf possesses these qualities, with its alien settings and ideas, faraway places and what has been called "sense of wonder." But the current market, or the majority thereof, have lost their feeling for science. Science has become very diverse, very specialized. I have heard a number of college science department heads bemoaning the dearth of registrants for advanced and basic courses. They do not understand very much of what is going on; and they can either study it, or ignore it (which they realize they can't) or strike out against it. The last is by far the easiest, and for whatever reason, they seem to chose the easiest. The most available sf on the market today seems to cater to both these factors; there are the alien setting, the futuristic backgrounds, and a plot full of anti-science or, ill-researched science or hardly any science at all. People who understand technology (or who are willing to try to), are forced over to either reading older works or writing their own.

There is undoubtedly someone out there who will interpret what I am saying as putting down the current stock. Maybe I am, I am trying not to, but when writing this kind of article it's not all that easy to be as objective as one would like. I am putting forth what I like and don't like. Maybe there are some good technical stories around; I haven't as yet found them and would like very much to do so. But for now, it seems, I will have to sit and write, and edit, and keep looking

BUCK RODGERS, WHERE ARE YOU WHEN WE NEED YOU?

Science Fiction since its early days in the pulps of the thirties has always been an action-adventure genre with a readily identifiable hero. Flash Gordon has been fighting off Ming and the hordes of Mongo for forty years now. These early heroes have been men who stood for Mom, the flag and apple pie. Then over the years we have been treated to the glories of Kimball Kinneson in the Lensman series whose superhuman feats staved off evil directed by Boskone down to Shevek in *THE DISPOSSESSED* who, though being a very different sort of hero in external appearances, is in reality a man with the same sort of drive and determination in search of his goal that Kinneson is.

What then happened this year? Has the hero been banished by revisionists? Is there a nefarious plot underway to undermine the last forty years and replace it with art? Are we supposed to escape the ghetto and become the candidate for more than snickers from the literati?

I say we should put an end to this rape of all that's true and proper in SF and that it should begin now!

The five novels nominated for the Hugo this year are sorry examples of the creeping evil that has afflicted SF. Consider *THE COMPUTER CONNECTION* by Alfred Bester. Here we are presented with the concept of a group of multiple heroes who are heroes only to each other and even then no one of them takes the other seriously. In one segment Sequoya (the newest member of the group,) is talking with Guig (another moleman) to the effect that he wants all humanity to be like him and if he has to kill every one of them to do it; he will. All the members of the group are supremely selfish to the point of absurdity and more egoboo they don't need.

This desire for personal gratification at the expense of others is a predominant though probably not consciously derived feature of our heroes, but one of the characters puts the finger on the central problem from my point of view---the lack of passion. None of the molemen has any conscious desire for anything save the survival of their miserable hides. Their bodily functions are sub-conscious of course---the stomach growls and then you eat; but for mentally determined action there is no concern. Our heroes drift along with the tide of humanity and whichever way the human wind blows, that's the way they go. Now one may reasonably argue that, by the nature of being impervious to ordinary death, they would be very cynical and thus desireless or passionless but this reasoning does conflict with their sentiments expressed at numerous points in the story as well as alluded to above.

Thus we are left with a story which has no heroes worth the name---because of this lack of passion. I don't think that this novel is worth the time needed to read it and I ask did anyone really like the story? Is there any enjoyment in reading about heroes who go about the business of heroes when they feel like it? This may occur on the full moons of millennial years. I think not.

Another one of the novels nominated for the Hugo this year is *THE FOREVER WAR* by Joe Haldeman. In this novel we do have a hero but an odd sort of hero. In one way he is like the characters of the previous novel in that he is prone to drift along allowing the society to dictate his actions.

Mandella is in many ways a symbol---a symbol of the postactivist---it's a

rotten world and, damn it, we tried to change it but you wouldn't let us so now it's every man for himself. But, mind you, they're going to screw you to the wall for what you tried to do to them. Instead of, as in the classics, the hero having a clearly defined goal usually involving the protection of society in some manner; we have a hero with no goal at all since he doesn't care if he survives. Towards the beginning of the novel, he does have some sense of self and kindred preservation but this is carefully lost in a series of carefully structured leaves after particular missions.

What Mandella is in essence is the anti hero with a curious twist. With a classic anti-hero you have an expressed belief that the world is conspiring against him even though he knows that there is nothing that he can do about it. He is helpless. In *THE FOREVER WAR* the hero admits that everyone is out to get him but he just goes one step further than usual when he indicates he just doesn't care.

I view Mandella and the novel as enjoyable but they are not the kind of heroes anyone could look up to--if you were Mandella's mother, would you put a gold star in your window?

The third book in this seedy series of Hugo nominees is *DOORWAYS IN THE SAND* by Roger Zelazny. Here we have a hero of sorts that is strikingly familiar to all of us--its base lies in most of the bad situation comedies of the past twenty years. It reminds one affectionately of "I Love Lucy."

In a typical episode she would concoct a nefarious plan to accomplish her objective--be it a trip or even an extra twenty from Ricky. Then her master plan would take on a life of its own getting her into various absurd situations during which she would have to make a complete fool of herself in order to get out.

Cassidy appears in a somewhat similar situation in the book. At various times, he is attacked by underground hoodlums, taken by extraterrestrial cops, attacked by various other B-movie heavies, pressured by the government, his university--help! Enough already.

What we have here is a sitcom hero pure and simple, ready and waiting for the next episode--come to think of it maybe it should be put on the tube right between *STAR TREK* and *LOST IN SPACE*. He ooohs and ahs in the proper spots, has all the correct reactions to ladies and is perfect for the family hour.

But a hero---oh come on now---if you take him for a hero, my friend, you have been sold a bill of goods from the word go. And as a nominee, who's kidding whom? Ah well the will of the majority. Where the hell are those philosopher kings when you need them?

The fourth of this year's Hugo nominees is the second by the previously successful team of Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle. *INFERNO* is in many ways a curious book but here we shall look at the figure of Allan Carpentier--a SF writer.

Of course this in itself poses problems---do you know any heroic SF writers? But beyond that obvious problem let us look at the role he plays in the book. From the beginning we are presented with an image of him as being extremely insecure, pandering to the masses to soothe his badly fractured ego. Whoever heard of a hero with an ego problem? Especially a SF hero? Even more especially a SF hero who happens to be a writer? After his totally unregretted passing, (nothing like a one car funeral to boost the ego) he goes

to Hell. As an aside I suspect that most of fandom will end up there. He goes to a Hell much like Dante's Inferno and attempts to end his existence there by denying that the place exists. When this course of action fails, he enlists the aid of a dubious but entirely appropriate guide. He then proceeds on a series of adventures that sound more like the fictionalized version of a two week middle class vacation with the two kids, the dog and the mother-in-law.

He eventually achieves his goal and becomes in the process a sort of SF Archangel whose job it is to guide lost souls to the greater glory of Chu. Here then we have a very strange sort of hero---a very reluctant uncertain ego-misbegotten sort who gets the job done almost in spite of himself. Not the sort of man you would look up to---even I wouldn't look up to him. Check off another in our seemingly vain search for a hero.

The final nominee for this year's Hugo is THE STOCHASTIC MAN by Robert Silverberg and here too we have a hero of sorts---that is the only way to refer to him---in spite of himself, he manages to lose. In spite of the fact that the whole course of action is laid out for him; (his very nature in the novel is that of one who is gifted with psi powers which enable him to chart the future correctly,) in spite of all this he loses the battle and the war.

Why you may ask? Did he have bad breath or body odor? Though he may have had these things, they did not cause his problems. He is a hero but a hero who is self-pitying, whose concern is strictly for his own well being. In the beginning of the novel his job is to assist a power mad politician in his reach for power. He does this too well---so well that he loses his job. The power mad politico suffers because of this firing which may be a good thing for the novel. But the hero lacks confidence, first of all in himself, second in the politician he is aiding and finally in society as a whole.

Is this the sort of man you would have defending the town from the attacks of the invader? Hell, he couldn't be an effective champion of his own underwear much less the king. Oh well, chalk up another loser. In fact on the last page Nichols tells us that God does not rule by a throw of the dice. If this is true, how did we end up with such a loser here? Where the hell are those philosopher kings when you need them?

During this brief survey of the Hugo novel nominees, I have tried to find a hero. I have regretfully been unable to find anything worth the name. We have heroes who don't care about the society they live in or about themselves and heroes who are so laughably funny in novels that were not intended to be funny---or such is my impression

Where have all the heroes gone?---gone to graveyards everyone---as in the song? No, I think not; they have just gone into hiding. Why have they gone ~~into hiding~~, you might ask? Is it a fear of the literati? Have the academics and their pompous dissection of SF caused unnecessary self-flagellation? Maybe so. Ever since the late sixties, when the mundanes began to discover the world of SF, there has been something approaching paranoia regarding this field.

And why? Why is it necessary to make SF into Art? Why is it necessary to flee the ghetto into the literary suburbs? As far as I am concerned the ghetto is comfortable enough. I am not a purist and would welcome anyone to fandom but I will not put on my Sunday Go to Meeting clothes just to welcome them. If they like it here fine; if they don't, they know where the door is.

If they don't like the kind of writing that has been done then they can read Jackie Susann or Peter Benchly. No one asked them here. So if fandom and SF

has a case of halitosis or heroitis, there is no reason to abandon the concepts that have made SF what it is today. And where would the field be without the hero?---not very far. From its beginning the hero-superman has been a mainstay of the field. Not necessarily just a hero who only used the seat of his pants (and there have been a lot of these,) but also those who have used their mental abilities to guide or change or preserve their world or society at a crucial moment. Now I am not asking for a return to bad writing with cardboard characterizations but what I am asking for is a story with something resembling a plot which can and often does center on a hero.

Let the literati go back to wherever they came from and let SF return to its normal, natural state. Who cares what the mundanes think of this or of anything else? Who cares what the mundanes think of us? Certainly not I. If the mundanes can produce LOST IN SPACE or SPACE: 1929, what right have they to turn up their noses at us? None. We could sneer back at them but, just as effectively, we can haul up the drawbridge on the moat surrounding the ghetto and let the mundanes stare.

No, the hero has not been banished by revisionists; he has just gone into hiding in the face of the art nominated for the Hugo this year. There is an insidious plot to change the foundations of the SF story in order to make it more palatable to those outside the ghetto. Let them snicker---we are happy here and as long as we are, who the hell cares what they think?

Oh, Buck Rodgers, forgive us for we have sinned.....

#

---Dennis Jarog

((In the next issue, Dennis will take on the S&S hero, hopefully.))

#

All you Neffers who attend MidAmeriCon are urged to drop by the NFFF room while you are there. It will be an oasis of quiet in the Con, a place to talk, rest, play games, etc. And, of course meet other Neffers and other con goers. The room is open to everyone at the Con, not restricted to Neffers. I look forward to seeing you all there.

----Joanne Burger

#

GALILEO, the new Boston-based SF zine, is looking for volunteers to help in production. Ten hours a week for a year is needed. This is basically for New Englanders.

This news came to Cathy McGuire from Instant Message and Dave Shank.

"As of late September sometime, I will be OE of the apa RAPS." Cathy McGuire, who is looking for more news-contacts for New York and adjoining areas. And one is in this item:

"If you want international news, Jan Howard Finder pubbs a newszine from Italy that is very complete. It's called SPANG BLAH and his address is: PSC Box 614, APO N. Y. 09293. It's available for 50¢ or the usual."

---Cathy McGuire

Anyone who speaks or reads French should try REQUIEM, the fanzine of French Canada which contains, reviews, fiction, articles and letters. It covers books published in both French and English. Write Norbert Spehner, 455 Saint-Jean, LONGUEUIL, P. Q. Canada J4H 2Z3 \$1.00 each or 6/\$5.00. He might send a copy if you ask nicely though.

BOOK REVIEWS

DHALGREN by Samuel Delany

reviewed by Gil Gaier

DHALGREN'S plot is simple, the concepts are not: Kid comes into the city of Bellona some time after a catastrophe had rent it; the bulk of the inhabitants are dead or have fled. Those remaining are enjoying squandering their lives and feeding on one another. The city has become a crucible and the people are in permanent group therapy. Here Kid finds a home, love, leadership, fame plenty of respect, and all the sex he can handle; he even becomes an author. Then, after 879 pages, Kid leaves town and the book is ended, but the story is not; there are enough mysteries, questions, and discoveries remaining to seriously involve you in the question of whether the second reading will clarify matters. Delany made his Kid of mythic stuff; he used him as if too much straightforwardness would destroy his creation. Thus you never get a real grip on Kid. Was his last adventure a fantasy dream or reality? It's difficult for even Kid to decide since reality keeps changing for him: time distances, and the order of events.

Certainly the action/adventure was not the story's major attraction; the fine quick character strokes, often clear and well-pointed, weren't either. The story's main attraction lies in the time/place descriptions, the colorful scenes, the words which force you to sink into events and feel the raw tempo of a new life.

Delany's great creation is the fascinating city of Bellona: it's a ghetto world; it's a plague city after the plague; it's a catalyst; it's the great spot on the face of Jupiter. YET, I believe Bellona is Delany's concept of Heaven! Some evidence: all dress as they please since there are no temperature changes, no rain, no wind, no glaring sun; there are no police, no law---no real "great" need for any either; food, water, liquor, shelter is available for the taking; there is no work to be done other than what you want to do; there is almost total sexual permissiveness (and sex is available in most ways any time it's needed), no venereal disease (lord help them if there had been a case or two), and no restrictive puritan ethic; no animals (except one) to interfere with the human emphasis; gone is humanity's need for property and possessions (individuals seem to possess very little---considering there is a whole city to be looted); there are all kinds of people from which to choose to associate; enough unusual happenings occur to keep one from getting bored; people seem to smell good (even to the breath) and taste good in spite of layers of dirt, sweat, gizzum, and whatall. (Aside from porno books, this is the most ANTI-FASTIDIOUS and "GROSS" novel I've ever read. In fact every hundred pages or so I got this craving to take a shower, wash out my mouth and get laid.)

Delany's ultimate preoccupation is with sex. Admittedly the inhabitants of his Bellona like to party, eat, drink, lounge around, work a bit, and enjoy each others' company. But Delany's major attacks are on the boundaries of the readers' sexual permissiveness. Through his characters and their exploits he challenges the limits you've set; he tests them with scenes of candor, and grim, funky kinkyness, and sexual episodes dealing with couples, threesomes, and groups/heterosexuality, bisexuality, and homosexuality. Reading DHALGREN is like groping a bared live wire---you get the full AC/DC charge. It's cumulative effect will depend on how involved you can become and how flexible your sexual attitudes are. (Ultimately I got to the point where I could hear a small voice deep inside me saying: if he's going to eat it, the least he could do is wash it off first.) You come away from certain scenes feeling

you've just watched an X rated movie. Most of our sexual fantasies are gnawed on. Down to the bone. DHALGREN's not going to bend any straight arrows, but they'll know they've been twanged in somebody's bow.

Delany thinks, reacts, and writes lyrically; he uses poetic techniques again and again to sound continuous melodic undertones. Time after time you find them: assonance, consonance, alliteration, rhyme, direct repetition, and cadences which mirror the words' meaning. Here is one of Delany's sentences rearranged to point up his mastery of sound repetition. It's awe-inspiring.

of grace	"Remembering	not	a	moment
laced		but	a	moment
	with	it,	I am thrown	
where only	back		on a	present
the intensity			of the	senses
can justify this	warmth,			
the	look			
of shadow				
on her shoulder,		light	on her	hip
a reflection on the	blackened			
	glass	light		up
from below." (652)				

Another of his achievements is his stunning similes and metaphores. They are pandemic and warmly appropriate at each appearance. Here are a few random samples:

"...a window sill set with glass teeth like an extinguished jack-o-lantern...." (23)

"He wondered if she heard the question mark on his sentence, small as a period." (32)

"...while a white sun made a silver pin cushion in the tree tops..." (216)

Delany's use of the "unnecessary detail" has devastating effect. Often a point need not be made, but being made illuminates the scene and makes it intimate and visual: "He took it, saluted Kid with a fork with twisted tines, then dropped his shoulders and shoveled."

DHALGREN is filled with the author's self-indulgence, flamboyant images, incomplete thoughts and characters; his city which conspires to make myths true (p. 278); his enigmatic mysteries; his games with words, names, and situations. Delany tests our metal (usually silver); he hides himself in his own shadow; he says less than he has to say.

But if you have patience, can stand ambiguity, and are permissive concerning others' sexual activities, you'll revel in Kid's guided tour through Delany's heaven...er...Bellona.

DHALGREN by Samuel R. Delany published by Bantam Jan 75 \$1.95

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THE FOREVER WAR by Joe Haldeman

reviewed by Dennis Jarog

THE FOREVER WAR latest in a series of pro and anti-war SF novels is by far the best, has already won the Nebula and seems a reasonable bet to take the Hugo.

It is the story of William Mandella who fights in and seemingly, by luck alone, survives an eons long war to witness the changes over the years. Thus

the story incorporates some of the features of several different types of SF stories. It is first and foremost a war story detailing Mandella's efforts in the Taurean War. Secondly it is a time travel story because of the use of time dilation in the novel. Thirdly it is a hard science story because of the detailed use of collapsars and the infusion of other hard science such as cloning. I think the story succeeds in all three areas.

THE FOREVER WAR is an anti-war story mirroring the stupidity of the military machine from its beginning wherein it automatically takes the worst possibility and makes it reality. The beginning of the war was a mistake in that it did not have any cause for being fought but in another respect it did have a raison d'être in that the economy is at its strongest when a limited war is being fought. There are those who say that Nam was started for just that reason. The book also shows that one thing never changes---the general incompetence that military machines have shown from prehistoric times into the present and beyond. It also to an extent replies to a pro war feeling in previous SF---most obviously exemplified by STARSHIP TROOPERS.

Second the novel is an effective time travel story as it reveals the changes on Earth from the perspective of Mandella who ages one year for every hundred on Earth as he embarks and returns from campaign. It is hard to say whether Maldeman paints an optimistic or a pessimistic view of the future but, in any case, he seems to suggest through most of the book that the selfish stupidity so obviously present in today's society, will still be there. When change does come, it will be so sharp that we can't (as Mandella can't) predict it.

Finally as a hard science novel it succeeds. The entire war is built around the collapsars which are in essence, relativistic shortcuts through space. And Mandella's existence in the story comes as the result of another relativistic phenomenon---time dilation. As one approaches the speed of light, one's own time slows down in comparison to an external object such as Earth.

THE FOREVER WAR comes through most powerfully in its theme---that of human stupidity and how that stupidity is accentuated by technological development---the entire novel is a portrait of mistakes, miscalculations and over-reaction.

In the area of characterization, the novel comes off a little weak. There is only one major figure in the book---he is the only thread that ties the book together and he is painted as so many other faceless parts of the military machine. This may be intentional to reveal the lack of consideration of the individual. Another character of secondary importance is Marygay, Mandella's girl. Unfortunately we do not see her as more than his bed partner and fellow soldier. The rest of the people we see in the book are fleeting glimpses of cardboard people---people who make the decisions but leave little impact on our semi-hero which also mirror the contemporary world in its way.

"You are the last group of soldiers to return. When you leave, I will also. And destroy Stargate. It has existed as a monument to human stupidity. And Shame....."

The war is now ended but the monument of Stargate is replaced by another which tells us, if nothing else does, that nothing has really changed. Stupidity is just as strong and effective as it was when Mandella was drafted some thousand years earlier.

THE FOREVER WAR is a good book, readable with a fast pace. It is a war story but unlike many, it is much more than that. It is recommended.

INFERNO by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle

reviewed by Mary Tyrrell

I bought this book on a Tuesday planning to read it over the weekend, but that night I idly glanced at the first chapter. Eleven chapters later I tore myself away since (unfortunately) I do have to get up and go to work in the mornings. I read the rest of the book as fast as I could, chortling all the way. Lots of books are good and move at a fast pace, but it's been a long time since I've been this thoroughly captured by a book.

The plot concerns one Allan Carpentier (no Carpenter) and his journey through Hell. Literally. Allen was a SF author (in fact, he died at a con) and at first he's convinced he's been frozen and thawed and dumped into Infernoland, a sort of future Disneyland for sadists and masochists. Other times he wonders if he's not involved in a grand scale psychodrama in a 30th century mental institution. Benito, his self appointed guide (Dante had Vergil; Allan has Benito), keeps insisting they are in Hell and that there is a way out. As his hypotheses get knocked this way and that, Allen is forced to agree that they are, indeed, in Hell. He can only hope that Benito is right about the rest.

Niven and Pournelle follow Dante's geography and his practice of assigning famous historical personages to the various circles. Among others we meet or see William Bonney, Henry VIII, Vlad the Impaler, Boss Tweed, and Jesse James, not to mention assorted demons and the monster Geryon. Some of the sins and sinners have been updated. In the circle of Hoarders and Wasters, fanatical ecologists and constructionists wage a fierce battle over a bridge, the ecologists tearing it down as soon as the constructionists build it. Advertizing men are in the pit of the Imoderate flatters. False gurus walk with the rest of the religious hypocrites. The book is hilarious, even in some of its grimmest moments, yet for all their jollity, Niven and Pournelle have tackled a serious subject. The question that keeps niggling at Carpentier, that has probably bothered a great number of people, that I take to be the authors' central concern is "What purpose does Hell serve?" Carpentier's theory is a comforting one. You don't need to be theologically inclined to enjoy the novel though, and I recommend it highly.

INFERNO by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle. Pocket Books, May 76. \$1.75

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WHERE LATE THE SWEET BIRDS SANG by Kate Wilhelm

reviewed by Cathy McGuire

I decided to read this book for the most logical of reasons---I liked the cover. But within a few pages, the cover and the rest of my surroundings were forgotten as I was trapped in the last days of our society.

Kate Wilhelm does an incredible job of creating an impossible-to-put-down novel. The plot follows the Sumner family through several generations of humans and clones all hidden in the one valley where life on Earth remains. David Sumner is the first "main character" in the story, and one of those who set up the cloning hospital when it becomes evident that humans have become sterile. He is against it at first, but realizes that it is the only way. With time though, his objections become stronger as he sees the clone children as a new and separate race that considers the elders superfluous. They finally drive him out when he protests their new society. The clones have decided that they prefer being clones and refuse to go back to sexual reproduction. They won't

give up the "parts-of-a-whole" symbiosis that they have with their sisters and brothers to go back to lonely human individualism, which they now consider inferior. Because of some problem with the cloning process, they must sexually reproduce at times to survive, but they do that with a "breeder farm", a nightmare place to which they relegate their fertile females. But their self-sufficient world is suffering from a lack of supplies and worse, a lack of imagination. The loneliness that is responsible for the artistic and scientific reaching out is not necessary to and is absent in the younger generations of children. Another handicap to exploration and salvaging work is the fact that the sisters/brothers can't be separated for more than a few hours and a short distance without suffering greatly. Third generation Mark, the only "human" (sexually reproduced) who was raised in secret to be an individual, has a solution but the clones would kill him to keep him from putting it into action.

Aside from the well constructed plot and the very real characters, there is another good reason for reading this book. In the first few chapters, the collapse of civilization is described in a way that has more than a "ring" of truth about it. As I read, I kept asking myself why this scenario couldn't happen---what were we doing to prevent it? And I couldn't find an answer. See if you can convince yourself that while reading that "it couldn't happen like this; not this soon." You may find it difficult.

WHERE LATE THE SWEET BIRDS SANG by Kate Wilhelm. Harper & Row 1976 \$7.95

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THE HERITAGE OF HASTUR by Marion Zimmer Bradley

reviewed by Lynne Holdon

All of Marion Zimmer Bradley's Darkover novels are fascinating and well worth reading. Slowly book by book, she builds up a portrait of a most complex society struggling for existence on a harsh planet. So far she has concentrated upon the rulers of Darkover---the Comyn---and upon Earthmen who happen to interact with them. Practically all of her viewpoint characters are telepaths but otherwise they have the same drives and emotions as normal human beings with the added fact of telepathy or laran forcing them to make choices that most of us can avoid if we choose.

Late adolescence is the period when the need to choose becomes most pressing so it is not surprising that most of Bradley's books deal with characters in this period of life; the ability to recognize choices and limits and to accept the results of those choices mark the difference between a child and an adult. As it is much easier to choose wisely the better one knows one's own wants and needs; self-knowledge, the courage to look inward and face oneself, is the second major theme in Bradley's novels and THE HERITAGE OF HASTUR is no exception. But so fascinating is the tale set on a world in rebellion against Terra and its own heritage, that one forgets the lessons in a wonderful story.

The Hastur of the title is fifteen year old Regis, heir to the oldest and proudest family on Darkover. He has just finished his education at a crisoforo monastery and wishes to travel in space as he has not inherited laran. (Among Terrans Regis can escape the disgrace). As a counterpoint to Regis, there is Lew Alton, six years older, and only grudgingly accepted by the Comyn because his mother was a Terran. He has full laran but lacks legitimacy which he desperately craves. Because of this, he has let his father and accepted custom rule his life, never once asking if this is what he wants and what is right for him. He loves Regis but cannot really understand him as Regis has everything that Lew wants just as Lew has what Regis most wants.

The force that causes both to decide just who they are and what they want

is Dyan Ardais, heir to the Ardais Domain, who is serving as cadetmaster under Kennard Alton, Lew's father. Lew who knows something of Dyan's character (he is a sadistic homosexual) feels that only a fool would put such a man in charge of cadets ut political realities overrule him and that is that. As a Comyn lord and masterswordsmen in a land where the duel---not the lawcourt---settles grievances, Dyan doesn't have to worry much about popular opinion. Because of this he has never come to terms with himself; never found himself worth knowing or liking. This is his tragedy and the tragedy of those who care for him. However his abuses of power in the guards and the Comyn Council's lack of concern about it cause both Lew and Regis to lose faith in their elders, to question their moral standards: Regis wants to right the wrong while Lew questions whether the Terran side of his heritage is the disgrace he has always thought it. He is even more upset when he learns that all Darkovans are descended from Terran colonists---a fact that both his father and the Comyn know but have decided to keep to themselves. Because of this Lew teaches his cousins of the outlawed domain of Aldaran, the use of laran and so raises Sharra---a force that almost destroys Darkover.

Regis's first experience that all is not as it should be appalls him especially as Dyan's victim is Danilo Syrtis, Regis's only friend in the cadets. Regis will get Danilo fair treatment; he will undo Dyan's evil. Because of this he braves cold and snow; suffers the ravages of threshold sickness---an overloading of the brain cells due to awakening laran and sexual desire. For Regis does indeed have laran but it is linked in his mind with his earlier desire for Lew Alton and is awakened because of his desire for Danilo---a desire that the Cristoforo monks have taught him to be ashamed of though most Darkovans would accept it. Self-loathing and self-fear could turn him into another Dyan yet Danilo is a Cristoforo and does regard homosexuality as a sin. As Danilo endured disgrace rather than give in to Dyan, would Danilo hate Regis for this same desire or, even worse, equate him with Dyan? Still Regis must recognize these feelings and reconcile them in order to truly take his place among men.

Anyone who complains that SF is too much action/adventure and not enough character development should read this book. The actions stem from the character of the protagonists, not author control. Nor is the ending a cop-out; the traditional happy ending. I can't recommend this novel too highly and only wish it had been on the list of Hugo nominees.

THE HERITAGE OF HASTUR by Marion Zimmer Bradley DAW August 75 \$1.50

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A note from Joanne Burger---

Some news you might be interested in. I got a news release from the SUNCON people about the news reports that their hotel is in financial trouble. Their hotel does not think it is in trouble---they are currently in a dispute with a labor union but do not owe any taxes, no matter what the newspaper said.

I haven't heard from the hotel for MidAmericon yet, and Johnny Lee called the hotel yesterday and they hadn't received the reservations from the con committee yet. I am beginning to worry about it myself. I have made plane reservations now and I want to be sure I will have a place to stay when I am there. Also I normally send them a check well in advance so that I don't have to worry about the hotel bill while I am there---it lowers the amount of money I have to fool with.

I just got my Hugo ballot, and on it the banquet & Hugo presentations will be "black tie optional"---in other words, dress up if you can. No one will be turned away because they are not well dressed however.

P. O. BOX 5, POMPTON LAKES, N. J., 07442

TERRY LEPLEY

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JULY 1, 1976

As a new member of N3F, I thought it might be helpful to the organization to send in some information about myself so as to be more than another name on a mailing list. I am especially eager since my name turned up "Lopseley" in the new member list of the NFFF received July 1. ((every-one please note, it's LEPLEY.))

My experience with organized fandom extends to two years in the Chattanooga Group, most of it as Director (which translates as member stuck with all the work), and two SF cons; Chattacon 76, and Kubla Khwandry in Nashville June 4-6. A healthy interest in Science Fiction began with birth in 1948, when travellers from a parallel universe inhabited my mind for several nanno-seconds to obtain first-hand information on biologically oriented cognates, rare phenomena indeed in their non organic dimension. Like most fans I have talked to recently, I exhibited the Closet-Fan syndrome hiding my copy of GREEN HILLS OF EARTH, or THE STARS LIKE DUST in a dog-eared issue of HOT ROD magazine to escape the derisive scorn of both peers and teachers. My present estimation and accompanying pride in SF is that it proclaims some of the most original writing of our day.

If my vintage Royal Portable will cooperate, I will describe a bit about the Chattanooga Group. Formed in 1974 by Irvin Koch, who has since departed for Kentucky to return only sporadically to impart the latest plans for Chattacon 77 (Jan. 7-9 Admiral Benbow Inn, Chattanooga), the group boasts a paid membership of 18 at this moment. Our usual procedure is a group discussion centering on a book or general topic, with an occasional film. The June 26 gathering was the first ALMOST-CON, a mini-con featuring trade table displays of books and artwork or collectables with a film program courtesy of Eric Jamborsky of Harriman, Tn and Meade Frierson of Birmingham (I am also in the SFC). Public relations and socialization were the main goals of the affair, and I feel it was a great success. We hope to repeat the formula with additions at the University of Tn at the Chattanooga campus in October, with perhaps a speaker program or panel type session. Ideas are welcome.

I have written separately to a couple of bureaus, but I really can't tell enough about them to judge which would interest me most, so I am open to any communications anyone might have on this. Also I would be glad to discuss an N3F room for Chattacon with someone and would probably run it myself if I can get some idea of what it is all about.

WILL NORRIS

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JULY 3, 1976

I'm glad to hear that the editorship of TIGHTBEAM is no longer vacant. Best of luck in your efforts. ((Thanks)) John Robinson called me at work the other day and told me your deadline for the next issue was July 12. He

said that you were experiencing a lack of letters so I decided I would write. ((Thanks again, Will. Now if John will only send the article he promised.)) After a period of relative inactivity forced on me by the activity of the full time job I took on, I am ready once more to plunge into the fray.

And so as might be obvious, I have a new typewriter. I found an IBM Selectric for 350 dollars and am purring with happiness over it. Now maybe I can increase my output---typing will not be the chore it once was. ((Your remarks are being interpreted by a SCM portable---so watch it.))

I am a candidate for the N3F Directorate for the upcoming year. My platform is simple---I want to continue my work in clarifying what the N3F is, where it is going, what it should be doing. If it has any reason for existing then it should be in what it offers its membership and in what it offers to SF and fandom. If we are just to be a social group, that's one thing. If we are just to be a means of introducing neo-fans to SF fandom, that's another. But if we are to be anything more, then it is long past time to decide just what it is we are supposed to be---it is time we set about being it.

We may decide that we do not want to be anything other than a fannish social organization. We may, on the other hand, come to decide that the N3F and fandom should for the most part be synonymous. If the latter is the case, then it is up to us to bring this about, assuming it is possible.

The idea has been advanced that the N3F should be more active in the FAAN awards. Certainly we should be more active, at least more visual, as the N3F. It shouldn't be that difficult. A major portion of the effort is in viewpoint since a good portion of the well known fans are also N3F members. I do not believe it would take very much more for N3F members who are already engaged in projects, or who are members of groups who are active in a fanish way, or who are members of any of the related SF orientated organizations and groups to send in a paragraph to TNFF every now and then or to write to TIGHTTEAM about what is going on, opinions of their respective groups and organizations, how the N3F might be able to help them or how they might be able to help someone else in the N3F. Let's face it. The official organs of the N3F are not used half as well as they might be and there is no reason why the O-Os cannot become the official newsletters of fandom with the N3F becoming a common ground for everyone of whatever fannish or genre persuasion.

Yes, as I put on the bottom of the recruitment forms I make up, I'm "bullish" on the N3F. I've noticed there seems to be a great infusion of "new" blood. That's great. But as John, our Trojan President points out, we have to keep them and provide something to get them active.

In the June TNFF, John mentions the possibilities of producing a special annual zine for distribution at least at the Worldcon. With the relatively wide distribution of publishing means---mimeos, offsets, electro-stencils, typewriters etc.,---as well as the very healthy spread of talent in the form of fan-editors, fan-artists, and fan-writers; it should not be an impossible task. Among the N3F membership, we should be able to put together an exceptional publication and between the resources of the N3F membership, we have access to all the rest of the talents in fandom..... and in prodrom as well.

((Lynne here---Will, what you are suggesting would take scads of work and I'm not sure Joanne and I want to volunteer. It might, however, be possible to put together a best of TNFF and TIGHTTEAM for distribution at smaller regional Cons such as the ones Terry mentions above. This would serve to show non N3F members what we are and what we do. Best of all the stencils would

already be in existence. I'd just send duplicates to Joanne and she to me and we could run off copies when we ran off TNFF or TIGHTBEAM. There are articles in TIGHTBEAM that are not dated and the same is true of TNFF. We could surely find ten pages of material between us and each could reuse a cover. This could be done starting in January but your plan would take massive planning.))

As one answer to Taral, this is what N3F can do—as the Constitution says, put together projects that would be too expensive if one person or a small group were to attempt it.

Incidentally as Taral wrote, we were engaged in a friendly exchange over the N3F. My purpose in passing the remarks about the N3F on to John Robinson and raising them to the N3F membership was to help contribute towards the sense of self-examination the organization is beginning to undergo. We cannot realize anything without the opinions of people both inside and outside the N3F. Taral has raised some good objections and a few I feel are not so good but need to be raised anyway. I hope we will not be deprived of the generally good observations of those outside the N3F due to blindness on our part. If we do not agree with Taral or anyone else, then it is up to us to show differently—and that can best be done by actions.

Rattled on long enough. I look forward to the next and future issues of TIGHTBEAM as well as to the coming months in the development of the N3F. I would, of course, appreciate your vote for me in the next Directorate. But in any case, everyone should check to be sure their membership has been renewed—and then vote and let the Directorate members (this year and next) know how you feel about what the N3F is doing, what it should be doing, and what it shouldn't be doing—and why. If you just sit back, collecting your TNFF and TIGHTBEAM and make no indications of your feelings on anything and do not volunteer to participate, I cannot see that you have any cause to complain that you are not getting what you "paid" for.

Neither Lynne nor Joanne should have to do all the work on the O-O's. Write, contribute, be active.....then you will have fun and get the fullest you can out of your membership and help to see that others get the fullest out of their membership as well.

Shalom

((Will also wants anyone interested in the Libertarian Party (do Carter, Ford, and Reagan turn you off?) to send him a SASE for more info. Or you can write to LIBERTARIAN PARTY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS, 1516 "P" St., NW WASHINGTON D.C. 20005))

DAVID SHANK

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JULY 2, 1976

What is the future of the convention? I think that the mammoth shows like MIDAMERICON will be a thing of the past because SF and its allied genre cannot come under one roof anymore.

Kirby McCauley of New York had a very successful convention—the one that some of us attended—the First World Fantasy Convention in Providence, Rhode Island last Hallowe'en weekend.

He limited the attendance to 500 people and limited the program to main-line fantasy items—The Lovecraft Circle was the logical first choice. Tours

were conducted throughout H. P. L.'s Providence, and there was a small luncheon on the last day of the affair. It was one of the most successful of the "theme" conventions.

Making the Worldcons into incorporated trade-shows/extravaganzas with 50 guests of honor/200 hours of continuous programming failed. Witness the "too good to be true" SF EMPO 76. ((Better known as DISAPPEARACON))

The 35th World Science Fiction Convention (SUNCON) is in trouble again. The Hotel Fountainbleau owes \$1.3 million in back taxes and this has to be paid within four months (November) or it will be auctioned by the Miami-Dade Metro City commission. ((Erp)) Tax auction sours things: my favorite bookstore of the late 1960's was seized. One line of thought was that it was raided for drug-trafficking. ((I knew a bookstore in NYC where you could get high just breathing; they went into the lucrative porn market a while back--no more SF)) Key--a local newsdealer is rumored to be a bookie. (The store is a front) So what will happen, Don Lundry?

I think a better site for a southern convention (even though the facilities were the basis for the original 7-77 plan) would be Atlanta, Georgia. My real choice was Montréal for the convention. It's sad that it couldn't come about. The 7-77 group were supposed to be unbeatable--it's a pity that SUNCON may not be a reality. One very good solution (besides a fandom wide BAIL OUT THE SUNCON HOTEL FUND---BOISCH) would be for the overflow Eden Roc to be the hotel--the Doral could be the overflow.

I would like to know my present membership status. I think I'm paid up through 1977 ((Right)) Should it be otherwise I'll plunk down three years of dues to the N3F. I sent 5 years of dues to the Massachusetts Chess Assc. and I should send my dues to the MEFA and an extension to my LOCUS subscription. ((You do believe in planning ahead))

Regarding McDonald's remarks on the N3F: Perhaps the Manuscript Bureau should be a form of "market list" (along the lines of the LOCUS list) that lists various fanzines needing material and thus show fans where to place their material. For an example---a faned for Queryx wants a certain type of material stories or articles related to Speedy Alka Seltzer fandom. He writes to Donn this simple request: "Accepting material for Queryx. Would like stories or articles relating to Speedy Alka Seltzer and/or Burna-Shave fandom. Will acknowledge material by postcard within ten days and will send contributors copies....."

As for the Kaymar Awards or the Birthday card bureau---many of us like some recognition of what we have done for our prospective organizations. Who are you to deny these people the legoboo and the knowledge that they have done something for the best interests of the N3F?

Birthday cards may be an extravagance---but it's a kind thought.

As for the five year cycle---come Autumn, it'll be five years that I've been a Neffer. One can only do so much and then burn themselves out. Well, good night for now.

((David obviously you plan on staying in the N3F for longer than five years. Some folks were Neffers in 1960. Therefore fandom does become a way of life---not a mere hobby or time passer for these folk. Are they just less cyclical in nature? Less demanding of new experiences?))

ERIC JAMBORSKY

BOX 358,
HARRIMAN, TN 37748

JULY, 3, 1976

The paperback trade page will be a part of the N3F Collector unless someone else wants to run it. However in order to send out the Collector to those interested in trading paperbacks, I'll have to charge them a dollar for four issues. Also the Collector is quarterly. Why not run it in TNFF or TIGHTBEAM? I can continue to put it in the Collector but wouldn't be able to take time to compile it otherwise. John Robinson volunteered me for this. (I'll get you, John). I don't mind doing it through the Collector. Depends on what others want to do with it, I'm open to suggestions. In summation: Unless someone else wants to take over the book exchange, I'll be happy to run it in the Collector. 4 issues \$1.00.

((Anyone who wishes to exchange books, can write here. Tell what sort of SF you prefer. It would make little sense for someone interested in New Wave to exchange with a S&B enthusiast. Eric and I will work out something. If you are willing to take pot luck, send 30¢ for postage and get 4 books back. Not the same ones listed last issue—I have a whole different bunch now. Again get preference to the sort of SF you like.))

This is to announce that I will be running for the DIRECTORATE this year. The N3F needs to be more active in general fandom and that will be my platform.

What does the N3F do for fandom? It serves as a Welcomittee for neo-fen, but that should not be its primary purpose.

I am running the Collector's Bureau to aid the collecting fen. Review copies of the latest issue are being sent to various zines both pro and fan. I will send copies to the N3F room at MidAmericon. (I was going to attend but will be unable to). The bureau has places for new and experienced collectors.

But one Bureau can't do the job.

I will be putting on a con here in Harriman April 1-3, 1977. (Palm Sunday weekend) It's \$5.00 in advance, \$5.50 at the door. Rooms 13.00 single, 19.00 double. It will be at a Holiday Inn so make your room reservations through your local Holiday Inn and make sure you say it's for the Con. It will be called HARCON I (How's that for originality?) If enough Neffers can come, or are interested; I can arrange a spot in the program for N3F related activities. I will make a table available for application forms, brochures, special publications, etc.

I will do what I can to promote N3F through my Con but the officers and members of the N3F will have to cooperate. (Janie Lamb and Irvin Koch are in range. So are Neffers in Nashville and Chattanooga) Harriman is on I-40 about 50 miles west of Knoxville and 120 miles east of Nashville. It's about 80 miles north east of Chattanooga up highway 27. Good Location. Another good con to make a good N3F showing is Irvin Koch's Chattacon in January or Ken Moore's Kubla Khans.

How else can the N3F aid general fandom? Think on it. I'm working on some ideas but none are developed enough to discuss yet.

As for Wayne MacDonald's letters:

The Kaymar awards and birthday card projects are not listed as "vital

functions". They are listed simply as "bureaus and projects", period. And the listings are alphabetical---not stressing the importance of one bureau over another. Sorry, Wayne, you missed on that one. These are strictly internal functions, agreed; and they are strictly voluntary projects, sort of fringe benefits for being in the N3F.

As for the rest, I agree with some points but don't want to go into it. I can see the possibility of some hard feelings developing here. But the point is, let's not tell people what the N3F does, lets show them. If you are trying to convince someone, use action not words. (I tend to be somewhat cynical about promises as the election year progresses.) ((Me too; I'm stenciling this during the Democratic Convention.))

In past years the N3F has published art portfolios, books, and other items which were made generally available in fandom. Has anything like that been done in the last few years? Admittedly the field is pretty crowded but something of that nature can be done.

Any ideas for projects members may have, should be submitted to the president and the Directorate (that's what they're there for). Remember, the officers and bureau heads can't do all the work; the membership must do its share. Let's make this, the 35th anniversary of the N3F, a signal year in its history.

C. J. FITZSIMONS

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CINCINNATI, OHIO 45227

July 8, 1976

If I were to write about N3F editors, a title could well be PRISONERS OF PROLIXITY. However harsh I sound, please take my criticism with the good wishes by which I render it.

I am a member of other organizations using newsletters to communicate to their general memberships. They have it heads above you, hands down!

I've little time to spare for those things I enjoy most. I use my time as best I can. If one activity seems to promise greater rewards than another of equal (or greater) interest to me---I take the more likely to use my time. It takes too long to get into TIGHTBEAM and TNFF.

Some of you may recall some drawings I sent into TB. If they'd never been used, I would've still sent them. I draw compulsively anyhow.

There are probably other members who do things which would benefit the quality of the N3F, a lot more. If they aren't interested, it's because they aren't interested in what they see---for most the only thing of the N3F seen is TB and TNFF.

I took the time out to write this while I could be doing something else. I like the concept of N3F; like the concepts of SF. However if I'm too snooty, you can dismiss me. I've become used to it.

I don't know much about duplicating machines. I do know what gets me to read one newsletter and to can others. I like:

1. A permanent, clear, SIMPLE letter masthead. TB has come closest to the idea so far.

2. The art cover of the last TB by Mr. Robinson was good. Most have been rotten. They give the impression of the "sticky-fingered" set. (Their mothers follow with damp washclothes)
3. ORDER! as much work as Mr. Robinson does, a lot of it on paper is not needed. It has been a contest as to which editor can place the most wordage. Both have lost trees in a forest. Please EDIT.
4. Consistency: Let readers know by repetition where to find what they are interested in reading.
5. Rarely are personal arguments conducted in print of "house organs", club sheets. I am not interested in such garbage anyway. The best an editor can do is prevent boring junk like it from reaching my wastebasket.
6. If you want participation by greater numbers, you must appeal to greater numbers. I've got several ideas if you're interested. However nobody will read them if they are bored by TB and TNFF enough to ignore them.

Club newsletters aren't exciting (usually) nor havens of creative genius nor forums of great expression. They're for communication---the easier the better. Buy a newspaper and try to imitate the ideas they use. Just the basics---you can still tell the truth in TB for the present.

((I do intend to have a regular order and stick to it. This will be articles, reviews, letters. And yes some folk do ramble on needlessly. So you are warned. If your letter runs over a page typewritten---it will be edited and tightened, but not censored.))

T. L. BOHMAN

BOX 14
LEAF TUNEFORD, VT 05043

JULY 9, 1976

Congratulations on your promotion. Or whatever it was. If TIGHTBEAM shows half the enthusiasm your Welcomittee letter did, it should be exciting reading. ((That's the sort of thing an editor loves to hear.))

Joanne seems to be doing a very nice job with TNFF, at least judging from the two issues I've seen. Michael Smith's book reviews and Cathy McGuire's foz reviews have been especially readable. And Jon Inouye's piece is one of the best I've seen from him.

For TNFF Joanne wants material ready to electrostencil. Is this a requirement for TB? ((No)) She asks for art for both TNFF and TB. Same format? Same restrictions? What is electrostenciling anyway? I've had no experience with anything more complicated than carbon paper and would be interested in seeing an explanation. I'll bet some neo asks the same stupid questions every month.

((Until last March I didn't have the slightest idea how electrostenciling worked. I still don't know the scientific explanation but basically you put a copy of what you want done on the machine, put a stencil beside it and it copies the drawing or whatever onto the stencil by electronic impulse. It works best with dark black (use a new ribbon) against white. Leave an inch margin on all sides also. For 3 1/2 by 11 paper. Okay)) ((Any art smaller than cover size can be drawn out to the edges but don't use large blacked-in areas.))

Apparently you and I share a fondness for John Norman. At a friend's enthusiastic recommendation, I read TARNISHMAN OF GOR a couple of years ago. While TARNISHMAN was not as overtly sexist as TIME SLAVE, I found nothing in it worth recommending. The fine writing someone told me to expect certainly wasn't there. Norman writes better than ERB but who doesn't? The plot was pure imitation ERB: the hero gets into and out of one impossible situation after another; one of them happens to be the final impossible situation and the novel ends. Until, presumably, the next novel in the series. Well Gor Number One gave me no reason to continue. I'm told that, in TARNISHMAN, Norman said everything he had to say (it wasn't much), so he's just rewriting it with, uh, different characters and more gory situations ever since. But that, of course, is hearsay.

Actually, whatever John Norman does in the privacy of his home is fine with me. I approve heartily of pornography and hope Norman keeps it up. Think of all the people here reading his novels who might otherwise be roaming the streets.

Cheers

#####

TOM WALSH

2014 EAST ST. GEORGE AVE.
LINDEN, N. J. 07036

I thought John Norman was the BEST writer going. I read the first of his GOR novels last year and, seriously, tears were streaming down my face I was laughing so hard. Tari Cabot I pictured as Sebastian Cabot in a three piece suit. Then when he found the letter in the woods in New England, I could imagine "occupant" written on it. Then there was the planet run by the giant cockroaches. Phenominal. Then there was Norman's treatment of women. I'd thought for sure that the author would get a nobel prize for social satire for that one. Then I found out that John Norman wasn't a pen name for a feminist satirical writer. What a pity. Sigh. My he does have a problem, doesn't he? But if he was a she, and she wasn't serious, John Norman would be great. Unfortunately he just has a serious emotional problem....or else he's in it for the money. A pity.

#####

SHARON PONZER

LECOMA STAR ROUTE,
ROLLA, MO. 65401

July 7, 1976

I think you may be making a mistake by writing off John Norman so quickly. I'll be the first to say John Norman definately has a fixation.

I enjoy reading his work. I may be exposing myself to unwholesome views on the subject but I don't think so.

I once asked my SF teacher, a brilliant liberated female, Ms Liz Cogell, about Norman. With a laugh, she called it 1930's pornography. I shall have to take stock of Norman and really come to a decision.

On the face of it, it doesn't seem to be more than any S&S story. Perhaps he makes his point a bit more explicitly. Is his definateness what the main body of SF readers disapprove of? Could it be the, I freely admit, lurid covers? No! I should think the average reader takes a look at the cover, but doesn't judge the quality of the writer by the quantity of the clothing

the girl isn't wearing. And since she said "1930's", I came to the opinion that opinions expressed were a little old-fashioned.

Another question I'd like to ask is why don't you try a novel early in the series? I admit that the first 4-5 are better than the last 5-6. The quality visibly decreases. If you care to try, I'll loan you my copy. ((I did read CAPTIVE OF GOR but liked it even less than TIME SLAVE. I'm not sure when it comes in the series.))

May I ask why you chose TIME SLAVE? I believe the only reason it was written was to point out to (if you pardon the expression,) faithful Norman readers, the workability of the ideas given in IMAGINATIVE SEX. You may have heard something about. You couldn't really call it a "how to" book but a "what to think about while you do it" book. '53 Scenarios for Sensual Fantasies and a Revolutionary New Guide to Male-Female Relations." Really! I was slightly bewildered by this being an unsophisticated type person, the idea of satiating sexuality seems impossible. All I have to do is look at my parents' 25 years of happy marriage. Also on the cover is the phrase "sexual fulfillment"; now I can partially see that a couple on a small town Missouri farm may not have all the techniques that a big town play-person might, but would they need to? That becomes a matter of their conscience and I don't think anyone should infringe upon that. ((You seem to be giving very good reasons for not reading IMAGINATIVE SEX))

Inside the book is divided into 2 parts. You might call it "fact being stranger than fiction". He speaks of what was and what is. In part two he speaks of what he thinks might be. At no time does he say that this is the way of the future. He does not say that everyone could, or even should, use his ideas.

The "scenario" in particular that Norman used in TIME SLAVE is #19 (The Kidnap Fantasy); also used are #'s 6, 8, & 30 (The wife as Belly-Dancer Fantasy; the I-Am-Sold-in-a-Slave-Market Fantasy; the Bitch Fantasy).

I guess to sum it all up---he has not improved but declined quality-wise but I still see no reason for all the uproar about it.

I can see no difference between the mocking of S&S by Norman (in his later works) and the mockery of Westerns in the recent Shasta Root Beer commercials or in BLAZING SADDLES; or the mockery of S&S and the Society of Creative Anachronism in the Shasta Orange Soda commercial or in MONTY PYTHON AND THE FLYING CIRCUS. ((Sounds like you're boycotting Shasta. Seriously I don't think much of their commercials either but I rarely take TV Commercials seriously.)) ((I also have a feeling you'll be getting letters, Sharon.))

#####

STAN WOOLSTAN

12832 WESTLAKE ST.
GARDEN GROVE, CA 92640

JULY 8, 1976

It is now that time of year again (for people to run for office). All it takes is a statement of intent to go to the Secretary and the official organ (with platform, preferably). What you will do as a director would depend on your interest and participation, with that latter element meaning both willingness to suggest and to consider what others bring up. A platform statement is fine, and can indicate prime areas of interest, but directors also pass on financial matters and new legislation, and directors need to be willing to discuss matters that may be somewhat boring to them.

The president is the middleman---the focal point for much action in the club. He or she must see that the club continues to function; this is not a title for honorary purposes but a working office. An active president with active directors can do much to keep things running smoothly, to prevent unneeded complications and solve what problems do occur.

As important are the appointive officers though---the Secretary/Treasurer, the editors and the bureau heads. Janie Lamb has been welcoming new members usually before anyone else knows someone is in the club, and answers problems before anyone else most likely. This can help iron out what otherwise might be confusions for new members.

As head of the "news" bureau, I do not want to write the news. Well not all of it. But I would be glad to have you---wherever you are---remember that fan and pro news is an important item for fans. So any clubwine has space for your news. In my mind's eye I can see those members who make news and sometimes send it to habitually to newswines like SAGUS or KARASS making TB and TNFF clatters of non-news. News makes a reading of TB or TNFF run smoother somehow.

This is why I try to get all the news I can even while hoping others will send in news and am thankful when they do.

But more people can send in news as Lynne and Joanne can find space for it only if it is sent. If you see a movie deserving comment or are involved in a project or zine, there may be news there. You can send it directly to a zine with a deadline soon or to me. Maybe I'll know a bit of news relating to it and can combine details to make it more informative.

Does anyone know about a sort of SF art Guild? Write me. It's news.

#####

ALLAN CHEN

23-05 126th St.
COLLEGE POINT, N. Y. 11350
JULY 10, 1976

TIGHTBEAM hasn't been the most visible zine recently mainly because of the upheaval in editors and the inconsistencies in putting it out. I guess the most primary objective is to get it stabilized and coming out on a regular basis. To get the letters coming in, maybe you could make a few controversial Ellison-type remarks on something in the introduction to the first issue. Fortunately, there's always a skirmish brewing in fandom. You only need people with thechutzpah to start yelling (no shortage really)

I suppose TIGHTBEAM can continue to be a forum for people with suggestions for improving N3F. The only problem is, too often, the same people end up appearing in TB. Perhaps people don't realize that this is the space where they can say anything at all.....well, almost anything. How much are you willing to pass through? ((I intend to be pretty liberal here but I don't want to have anyone sued for libel either.))

I don't really know much of what's happened in the last month because of an avalanche of work and tests and the lack of time to keep in touch. ((Allan is attending a summer session at Cornell and will not be at the above address until August 15.))

As long as I'm on the subject of N3F activities, I think I'll put in a plug for the Round Robin's Bureau. As of this moment, there are six people engaged in a RR which is not bad for a start. However I'd like to get a few more started, especially a story RR. If any of you like to write in a challenging, unique way: try getting in on a story RR.

CATHY MCGUIRE

339 EAST 6th STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10003

JULY 10, 1976

I've been disturbed recently by what I've read and heard about N3F. There have been many comments to the effect that the N3F is useless or bad for fandom. Taral Wayne's letter in the last TIGHTBEAM is typical of the comments I've been hearing and I'd like to make my own comments lest someone think that there are no supporters of N3F.

The comments have been along a few similar lines: 1) the N3F fulfills no purpose in fandom, 2) it is bad for fandom and neos, 3) it is exclusive in that it wants everyone to join and won't accept that fandom doesn't need it.

I've just recently joined fandom and it was because of the N3F that I did join and that I've been so active. It has a purpose for me and I advise as many friends as I can to join. One of the major "selling points" to use a phrase, is the friendliness and the willingness to help neos that is everywhere in the club. Not only are there opportunities to get really involved; there are people trying to help you get involved. Perhaps Taral and others can get involved with no help, but I certainly appreciate the wonderful bureau heads and others who made me feel welcome immediately. And the friendly feeling doesn't just apply to newcomers either. It seems that the whole club is united and on pretty good terms with others---unlike the many petty feuds and squabbles apparent in "fandom" (if fandom is separate from the N3F as they say it is). Perhaps it is easier to be friendly by letter but, on the whole, I feel much more at ease with the N3F group than with anyone who puts it down. With the "truefen" I get the impression that they not only don't like the Neffers, they won't accept them. I joined fandom to make friends and meet new people, not to become part of an elitist group that puts itself ahead of those poor unfortunates who haven't seen the light. And it's the same group who puts down the N3F for that attitude which displays that attitude most clearly. I don't like petty argument and little ego clashes and I therefore prefer those who can do without that. So far the N3F comes out ahead in that aspect.

Perhaps N3F has no use to some (even many) people. But who are they to speak for fandom and say that the N3F has no place? They have yet to prove to me that they are fandom. There are many different people that like SF and N3F is useful to a lot of us. If they don't like it fine---let the rest of us enjoy it. I don't deny their right to what they like but I wish they would stop saying I'm wrong in what I like.

Now to change my direction and be critical for a while. John mentioned that most fen stay in the N3F for about 5 years, then gaffiate and he wonders why. From what I've seen, there seems to be two types of fan in N3F; the neos and the old, experienced fen who've been here for years. Those in the middle seem to leave after the neo stage. This might be because the emphasis is on the neo and those that stay just spend a lot of time helping newcomers. It is obvious that a club needs more than just educational opportunities for newcomers. I'm not very sure what but I've been getting some ideas.

There are a lot of Neffers who have information about fandom that they could share, even more than they've been doing. I'm constantly coming across facts that are new to me or authors that I've never heard of and there's plenty of room in TNFF or other publications for bits of history and info. For instance, a regular column in TNFF could be the story of what N3F was like 10 or 20 years ago. I certainly would find that interesting. Or the biogra-

phies of some authors---I don't think everyone knows who every author is or what they've done.

And this doesn't have to be confined to the pages of TNFF---couldn't we publish booklets of info on certain topics? It seems that the goals of N3F, at least for the present, should be education. It is hard to know where we are going if we don't know where we are. (This is different from the education of neos in that it is info that can be kept as reference.) The more I think about it, the more it seems that the club could be of value to its members and others by making available info that is hard to get otherwise. Do you think it's a good idea? ((What does the membership think?))

#

RITCHIE W. DEAN

SAND GAP,
KENTUCKY 40481

JULY 15, 1976

John's second issue of TIGHTBEAM arrived yesterday---was this issue published late or just the P.O. screwed up again? ((Both. I got TIGHTBEAM at the end of June and that was the May issue.)) On second thought maybe I should be surprised if an issue is delivered on time. ((I hope to get TB out on the 15th of the month---this issue is a bit late; about a week late.))

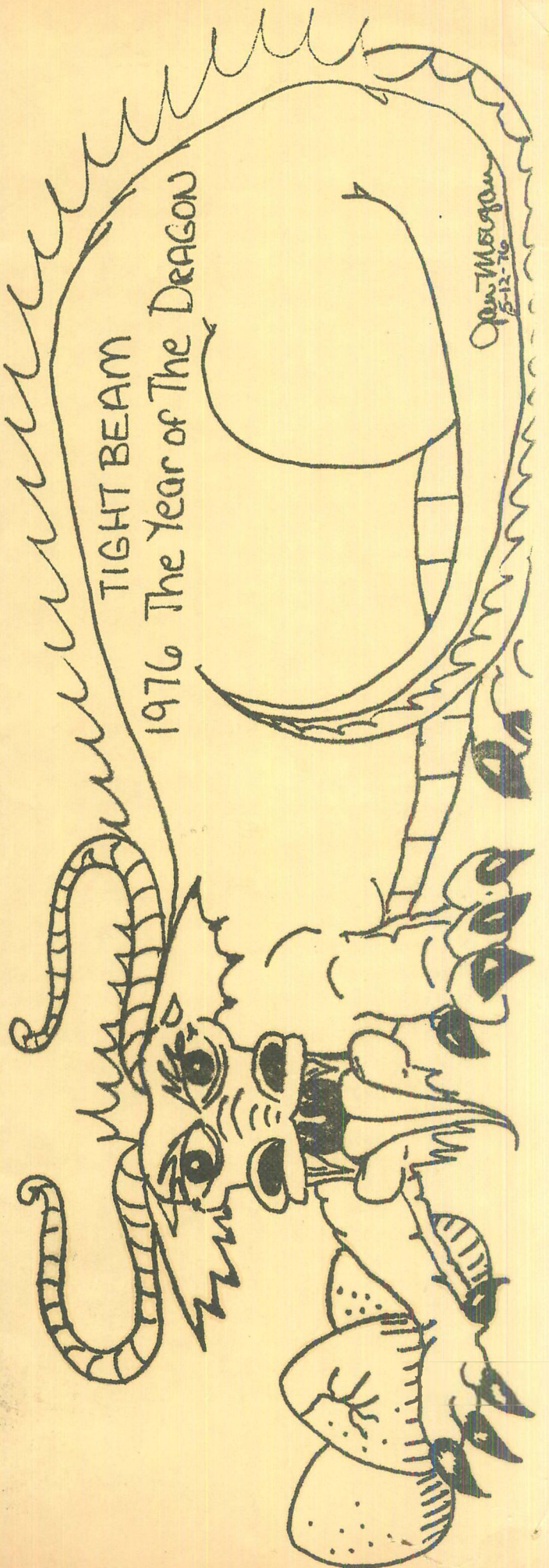
I have no real quarrel with Wayne MacDonald or for that matter with much of his criticism of the operation of the N3F. I do feel that John's charges of Wayne's "confusion and bureaucracy" have some merit and would like to point out one instance of this.

Without passing value judgements, it has always been my understanding that to use the title of another fanzine or another publication, even a defunct one, for one's own constitutes an unethical practice. Unethical or not, Wayne is certainly guilty of the practice and it pains me to have to point it out.

In 1968, upon the urging of then-N3F members Don Cowan and Alma Hill, I published my very first fanzine: SYNAPSE. I was still in high school at the time, with no duplicating machine of my own, so I had the local business supply store do the mimeographing. Since I was already paying for the reproduction of 125 copies, I saw no reason not to fill out the forms, pay the fee and send the copies necessary to have the zine copyrighted---so this was done with the permission of the contributors. Things went on in this fashion for six issues, the final number being distributed in 1970.

Since my return to fandom in 1975, I have received eleven letters from former recipients of my old zine, inquiring as to its status/fate and wanting to know if I had any connection with the "new" SYNAPSE. To these few and any others who may be concerned, I hereby say: NO, and apologize for any confusion caused by all this. (In Wayne's behalf, he may be guilty only through reason of ignorance. After all, the last issue of my SYNAPSE was copyrighted over six years ago, and I only recently became aware of his zine.) In my own behalf, I am at any time ready, willing, and able to prove to anyone's satisfaction that I did in fact have prior right to the title, and Wayne's use of same has caused some confusion on this end at least.

I apologize in advance for and am ready to live with any additional confusion ensuing from this letter.



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