

ORIGIN 64



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Origin is published monthly and circulated generally at the midmonth. The journal is devoted to historical matter and research pertaining to science fiction and fantasy. Those having interest in these topics are welcome to send articles and essays on the subject to be included in this publication, and commentary is also welcomed by our letter column, which we have when there is commentary.

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EDITORIAL



Which Way this World? What Is Life?

Some may accuse me of *hubris*, undertaking such a subject as this, but it seems to be a primary concern in the world today, and the chief philosophies of the present time are called existentialism, the interpretation of existence—who am I, what are we doing here, where are we going?—the insecurities of modern man, and woman too, as one reader of *Origin* has pointed out. (Jean-Paul Sartre has a woman co-partner in existential writing, Simone de Beauvoir; women aren't absent in existential circles.) This philosophy is intimately interrelated with science fiction, as well as its being a concern of fantasy; it was a chief consideration in the fan group *The Cult*, much discussed there by David Rike, Terry Carr, Kent Moomaw, P. Howard Lyons, Larry Stark, and others. They spread these discussions elsewhere, and it is seen being discussed now, on the net, where sf is discussed. Many of the stories in *F&SF* have had existential titles. Modern things, such as the dawning of the Age of Aquarius, the "psychedelic movement" of consciousness expansion, the hunting for Shangri-La, are of interest to science fiction and fantasy fans, and the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, Soren Kierkegaard, Arthur Schopenhauer, Bishop Berkeley, Immanuel Kant, Descartes, Karl Jung, and others are well worth reading by both readers of science fiction and fantasy fiction. Spiritual writing, such as the free handouts of Rosicrucians, is of interest to fantasy fans as well. One might also mention Jeanne Dixon here, as a spiritual inquirer. What are we doing these days? Where will all these things go? And where did they come from? What is destiny and fate? This should surely interest fantasy fans.

I think a lot of science fiction of today has some awareness of these considerations; the *Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* has been getting more and more into the avant garde, which has a progressive, now, futuristic attitude; for years they have been

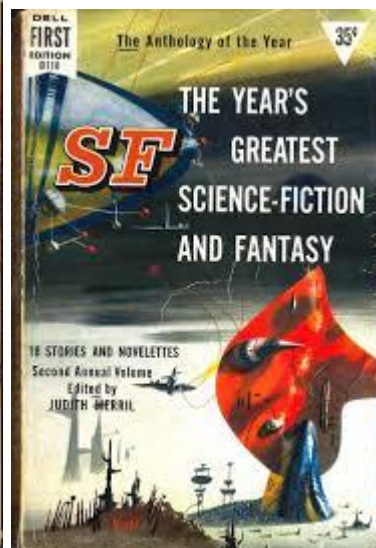
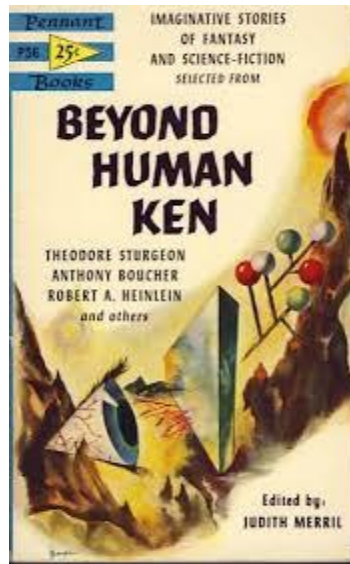
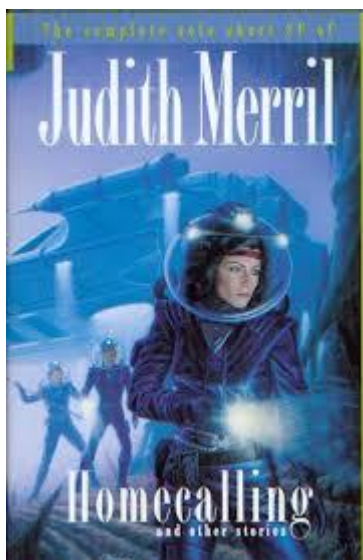
running post-holocaust stories, and there have been many changes made in science fiction since the late sixties. A lot of these new things have psychedelic writing and there is an existential consciousness in science fiction that is not much named, but the stories have been existential in the sense of relating to what shape the world is in and where we're headed and what's to become of us all; pessimistic, yes, but right there on the topic. There is also a lot of feuding with the cosmos in a lot of the stories and in the science fiction movies as well...that is, fighting for man's place and for knowledge. STAR TREK is very existential in its orientation, and STAR GATE SG1 ended in a no-return flight into the unlimited realms of space; TREK came out transcending space and time and going into new realities. DR. WHO explores everything there may be. Dan Brown explores the unknown mystic things in life in THE DA VINCI CODE and THE LOST SYMBOL, Heinlein looked into spirit things in STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND. There is a move toward going and keeping going, attempts to revive Amazing Stories and Weird Tales, and the N3F itself keeps on going despite all obstacles. We keep on finding out.

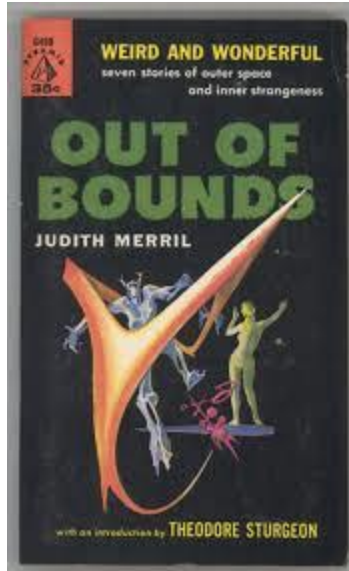
In our letter column last issue it was pointed out that women have not been finding a comfortable place in science fiction. This has not been so in The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, which has transferred over to a female editorship and the stories in it are averaging up to half of them being by women. The new editor shows a highly female attitude which is very beneficial to science fiction. And don't forget Sheila Williams taking over the editorship of Asimov's Science Fiction and making major changes that were improvements in its policies. It may still exist in fandom but we don't approve of it here, and both Jon Swartz and I have taken heed of this letter and are getting things changed around somewhat. Following this editorial you will see the beginning of a series of articles on women writers of science fiction. Also Judy Carroll has been providing us with a female outlook in her column so we have been partway there. I think not being attentive to women has been our lack and that women can do wonders in transforming our present somewhat sordid condition. With this in mind I have also taken a major step forward in this direction by interviewing Annalisa Nyback, a rather new member of the N3F who is running the N3F Adult Page on Facebook and sending pictures to the regular N3F group. This, I think, is highly beneficial to the group, as I think you will see in the August issue of Ionisphere. She got into the NFFF, incidentally, by way of our bureau member Jeffrey Redmond, who always has the NFFF in mind.

So expect new and interesting things as we ride along on our way down the road of science fiction and fantasy.

WOMEN GENRE AUTHORS: JUDITH MERRIL

by Jon D. Swartz, N3F Historian





Science fiction (SF) author, editor, and critic Judith Josephine Grossman (January 21, 1923-September 12, 1997) took the pen name of Judith Merrill in 1948, and used it for the rest of her career. For much of her life, she worked as a book editor for the United States, and then—beginning in 1968—in Canada. She moved to Canada, after spending time in England, because of the undemocratic practices she thought she saw taking place in the United States. In Canada, she became involved in social and political activism.

As a young woman, she was a member of the famous Futurians of New York, under her married name of Judith Zissman. She is credited with being the first woman to join the influential SF club who was not a wife or a girlfriend of one of the male members.

Daniel A. Zissman, her first husband, whom she married in 1940 (and divorced in 1947), was a SF fan, and a member of FAPA and VAPA. He introduced Judith to SF. As Judith Zissman, she published a fanzine, **Temper**, for two issues in 1945.

Her pen name, Judith Merrill, was taken from the first name of her oldest daughter, Merrill Zissman.

After a brief romance with fellow Futurian John B. Michel, while her husband was in the Navy, she divorced Zissman and then married her second husband, Frederik Pohl, also a Futurian, in 1949; when their marriage fell apart and they divorced in 1953, she lived for a time with fellow SF author Walter M. Miller, Jr.

Major Works

She began writing SF as a career in 1947. Her first notable story, "That Only a Mother", was published in the June, 1948, issue of **Astounding Science Fiction**.

Her book-length genre fiction included the following: THE BEST OF JUDITH MERRIL

(1976), DAUGHTERS OF EARTH (1968), GUNNER CADE (1952) [as by Cyril Judd], OUT OF BOUNDS (1960), OUTPOST MARS (1952) [as by Cyril Judd], SHADOW ON THE HEARTH (1950), SIN IN SPACE (1961) [as by Cyril Judd], SURVIVAL SHIP AND OTHER STORIES (1974), and TOMORROW PEOPLE (1960).

Merril is remembered for the popular SF novels she wrote with Cyril Kornbluth, another former Futurian, under their joint pseudonym of Cyril Judd (see above paragraph).

She is principally remembered today, however, for the SF anthology series that ran from 1956 to 1967. For some time, hers was the only regular SF anthology series being published.

In 1956 Merrill, Damon Knight, and other former Futurians founded the Milford Science Fiction Writers' Conference, an annual conference in Milford, Pennsylvania; it ended in 1972, when its counterpart in the UK was begun by another former Futurian, James Blish, and his wife, Judy Lawrence.

As a part of the New Wave in SF (that emphasized form over story), she edited the influential ENGLAND SWINGS SF anthology in 1968.

Awards/Honors/Recognitions

Lunacon 7 (1963)

Galactic Fair (1969)

UnreelCon (1978)

KulaCon (1979)

Contradiction 5 (1988)

ReinCONation (1995)

WisCon 20, Readercon 6 (1996)

SFWA Author Emeritus (1997)

Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Hall of Fame (2014)

Cordwainer Smith Rediscovery Award (2016)

Critical Comments

British SF author and critic J.G. Ballard once said of Merrill: "Science fiction is now dead, and died about the time Judy closed her anthology and left to found her memorial library to the genre in Toronto. I remember my last sight of her, surrounded by her friends and all the books she loved, shouting me down whenever I tried to argue with her, the strongest woman in a genre for the most part created by timid and weak men."

Professor S. H. Goldman, writing in Gunn's THE NEW ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE

FICTION, wrote: "The sum of Merrill's impact on science fiction is far greater than her output in the field...her stories and novels serve as prime examples of how this new material can bring a dimension of art to good, readable SF."

Fellow SF author Samuel R. Delaney once said that "Merril is perhaps the most important intra-genre critic the field has had..."

She spent much of her professional career struggling with a definition of SF, redefining it many times over the years. At one time she adopted the definition favored by fellow author/critic Anthony Boucher: "The literature of disciplined imagination." For the most part, however, she preferred to think of the genre as science *fantasy* rather than science *fiction*.

Some Concluding Comments

In 1947, she and her second husband, Fred Pohl, were two of the founders of New York's Hydra Club, an organization of SF writers, artists, and editors. Merrill wrote about the club in the November, 1951, issue of **Marvel Science Fiction**, an article that featured caricatures of 41 of the members drawn by SF artist/author Harry Harrison.

The first time I remember seeing her name in print was as editor of the early Bantam Paperback, A SHOT IN THE DARK (1950), with stories by such popular authors of the time as Theodore Sturgeon, Fredric Brown, Robert Heinlein, Ray Bradbury, and Murray Leinster. My adolescent friends and I hesitated to buy this book, however, because money was hard to come by at the time, and the book was marketed as an anthology of mystery stories—hence the title.

I bought it, however, because I recognized several of the names whose stories were included, and because "science-fantasy" appeared in small print on the back cover. The striking Bischoff cover, illustrating the Leigh Brackett story ("The Halfling"), was another plus in my decision to buy. Merrill included stories by some of her former Futurian friends, including Isaac Asimov, James MacCreigh (Pohl), and Hugh Raymond (Michel).

During 1965-1969, Merrill was Book Editor of **The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction**.

In 1970, while living and working in Canada, Merrill began an endowment at the Toronto Public Library, and donated all her books and magazines to the Library. This collection of research materials, known for a time as the Spaced Out Library, was later renamed the Merrill Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation, and Fantasy.

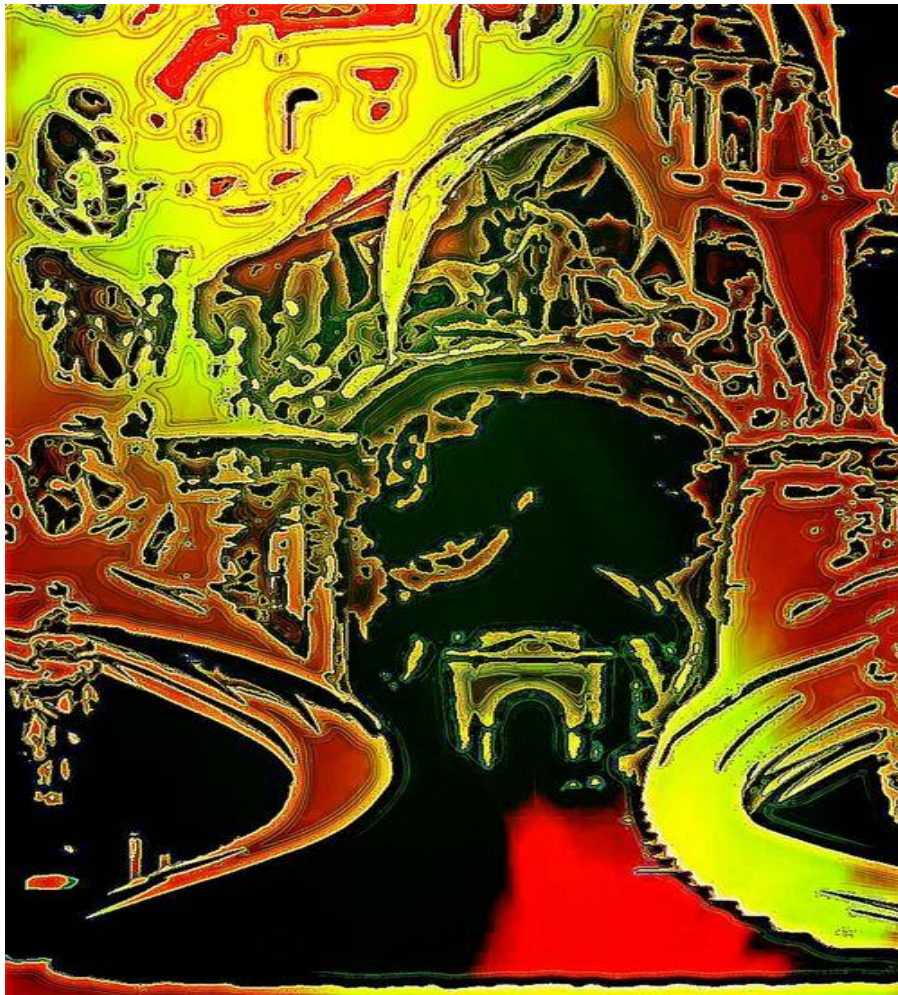
She was a judge of the International Fantasy Award.

Emily Pohl-Weary, the granddaughter of Merrill and Pohl, is a Canadian writer. She completed Merrill's autobiography, BETTER TO HAVE LOVED: THE LIFE OF JUDITH MERRIL (2002) after Merrill's death. The book won a Hugo Award.

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Stairway to Heaven. Art by Richard Andre

Continental Divide by Jeffrey Redmond



Jeffrey Redmond returns with a story which is surely his own, written over twenty years ago, which might qualify it as historical science fiction. It's one of a number of stories about a world which is mostly concerned with war, as this story shows. It is about the futility of warfare.

From the ancient Er-Dan manuscripts (Codex 2559), as translated by Ed-Mon:

On the planet of the three moons, after the first phase of the greater continental wars, there was a period of relative peace in the major areas of that world. However, on the Western Continent, the military commanders soon became discontented with the inactivity and sought to revive and regain the past actions and glories. The hereditary monarchs attempted to restrain and prevent any of this, but they were soon deposed. The victorious Western army supreme leader personally executed the old inter-tribal king, and banished his son and granddaughters to the northern coastal islands.

The legions leaders all met with the higher military commanders in many great conferences to the Western capitol. There they planned in complete detail for the coming wars and conquests. It was realized, at least by all those present at the conferences, that the only way to maintain the economy, political stability, and social cohesiveness in the society was through military decisiveness alone.

There was once again massive buildups of the Western army legions. Mass conscriptions ended unemployment, emptied the prisons, and cleared the urban centers

of all vagrants. Females were given jobs in the education and production centers, and once again in the governmental offices. Civilians were this time all given new uniforms to wear, well identifying their place, rank, and position in the new order. Both younger and older males were included in the military call ups, and this time all of the legions were brought up to full strength.

The new military leaders were all fully confident of their vast organizational and administrative skills, and soon a much more efficient bureaucracy developed throughout the continent. Indeed, things ran on time, activities were done much more effectively, unemployment ended, and the entire society once again had meaning and united purpose to it. Finally the season came in which to begin final plans for the future, and the military leaders met at the capitol city for their final conference.

The new Chief of Staff, Po-Eli, as second highest leader, reported to the first, the Commander-in-Chief, Mor-Lan, personally. He told the supreme Commander that great things would come about from the New Discipline. The Chief of Operations, Swar-Kop, third in the ranking order, reported to the Chief of Staff that all of the legions were now up to full strength. The other members of the head staff gave their reports, that training, supplies, personnel, transportation, equipment, weapons, communications, and unit organization were all in complete readiness.

There was, however, one truly great problem to overcome. That was what to actually do with the newly-raised, trained, and armed legions. Mor-Lan wanted to conquer another continent, and further add to his glories. Po-Eli wanted to use the units to smash and destroy any possible further dissension or uprisings among the various and diverse inhabitants of the Western Continent. Swar-Kop wanted to send most of the troops home to save expenses and lives to be used elsewhere. All three leaders argued their positions to the rest of the head staff, and all agreed that each of the three had a valid point.

For the sake of military command harmony and tranquility in the new leadership, a final compromise position was adopted. One third of the troops were sent home, with these being the older and weaker ones. One third of the troops were stationed throughout the continent, to maintain a military presence of determined occupation. This left one third, the younger and stronger ones, to be used for further adventures abroad. But even with these there was a difficult problem.

The Commander in Chief wanted to use them to invade the distant Central Continent, since the Western armies had never fought there before. The Chief of Staff wanted them to invade the Southern Continent, since he had visited there once before on a family vacation. The Chief of Operations wanted them to be used to occupy and

hold the islands off their western coasts. He feared a possible future invasion from the forces in continents beyond the fresh water great Sea. Once again they decided to compromise, and they used the final third of the troops for all these purposes.

The legions thus became depleted and dispersed, overextended, and overworked, in trying to accomplish far too many military objectives all at the same time. Nevertheless, it seemed that the Western Continental army might just achieve its new goals. The western islands were seized and fortified, the troops kept home maintained order and control throughout, and the invasion force was loaded onto sea transports to be sent eastwards to the Central Continent. The future looked bright indeed for the new military leaders.

However, life, being such a complicated entity, does not always go exactly as planned or hoped for. The troops were being transported across the fresh water Lesser Sea, towards the Central Continent, when storms began to scatter and disperse the naval fleet ships. Some were lost, some were damaged and turned back, and less than had originally embarked actually made it to their planned destinations. The troops disembarked and invaded the continent, attacking any and all targets of opportunity, both military and civilian.

The Imperial Administrator, ruler over most of the Central Continent, immediately assembled his forces to defend his system and their way of life. The other inhabitants, those who had not been previously under his sway, now joined with him in opposing these impudent strangers from across the waters. United together they at last managed the counterattack, and to push the Westerners back to the coasts. Many of the invaders were lost in the fighting, more were lost at sea trying to return, and only some managed to return to the Western Continent, exhausted and demoralized.

Their defeat and ragged return caused a great consternation throughout the Western Continent, and great rejoicing throughout the rest of the planet. The rulers of the Southern Continent negotiated secret treaties with the ones of the Northern Continent. Both had their armies and navies coordinated in simultaneous invasions of the Western Continent, from their opposite directions, taking full advantage of its now weakened state. Troops were removed from the western coastal islands to stop these attacks. This then provided the kings of the continents beyond the opportunities they had hoped for, for so long. They managed to unite and invade the Western Continent, with their armies and fleets, through the now undefended coastal islands.

Troops previously sent home were now mobilized once again to also try to stave off these new invasions, and finally, after great loss of life, the attacks were stopped. The Western Continent managed to survive almost intact as a still somewhat united power.

Soon, however, the society became greatly disenchanted with the warfare, defeats, losses, economic costs, and enormous expenses. Riots and upheavals broke out, with few troops left to quell them.

The civilian populations blamed the military for their troubles, the military blamed the members of the head staff in the capitol. They blamed the Commander in Chief for misleading them. Something had to be done, and immediately, to restore order and peace. The Chief of Operations convinced the Chief of Staff to remove the Commander in Chief in a seizure of power. This would have been done except that the Commander in Chief found out about it all, through contacts Mor-Lan's wives had with Po-Eli's wives. The Commander in Chief then killed the Chief of Staff in a surprise move of his own. Mor-Lan's personal guards broke into Po-Eli's house well before dawn, and, at the behest of their Commander in Chief, they murdered the Chief of Staff, his entire family, all of his guards, and everyone and everything else that they found there.

The Chief of Operations then decided to save himself, and personally led his own guards against the Commander in Chief's house, well before dawn of the very next morning. After a short but sharp fight, all of the many inhabitants were slaughtered, including Mor-Lan's sons-in-law and even his daughters and their newborns. Mor-Lan himself fought valiantly and violently, killing many of Swar-Kop's guards. But even he was finally vanquished, and an eerie quiet settled upon the capitol.

The body of the Chief of Staff was given a great public funeral, and mourned as that of a great hero and patriot of the nation. It was preserved in a new monument built specifically for that purpose in the main capitol area. The body of the Commander in Chief was decapitated and all mention of him was removed from public records, educational institution texts, and the scrolls of the sacred archives.

The Chief of Operations then declared himself to be the new leader. He had negotiated away bits and pieces of the continent to pacify the invaders. He demobilized the legions, signed peace treaties with the other continents and the leaders of the Western dissident groups. He promised all of the Western inhabitants peace and prosperity, and it is believed that he would have lived up to his promises, had he been allowed to fulfill them.

The rulers of the Northern Continent annexed the northern coastal islands, and then decided to set up the eldest granddaughter of the old inter-tribal king as the new monarch of the West. They plotted with her, and with the dissidents, and with the former military commanders of the now demobilized legions. The latter lot were unhappy with their sudden loss of commands and dynamic purposes. They self-mobilized many of the survivors of their previous commands, and led further revolts

against the capitol itself. The new ruler, the former Chief of Operations, killed himself rather than be captured, tortured, and executed. His family was spared, though most of the members of it were banished to internal exiles in the more remote places of the continent.

The granddaughter was then installed as the new inter-tribal monarch and restorer of past traditions. She married the son of the leading Northern ruler, and they became a queen and her prince in the capitol city. Their offspring were allowed to remain in prominent positions of importance until well into the future. And, at least for a time, there were many seasons of peace in the area.



1950s comic book



by Judy Carroll

It is June, as I write this, the middle of June. I can't believe how fast this year is going. It's hard to understand how some days can seem to last several hours longer than they should. While other days gallop by so fast I'm hardly out of bed when it's time to return to bed. But, whichever pace each day chooses, the year responds with record speed.

The passing of time brings memories of yesterday, last week, last month, last year. Little things can trigger memories of things almost forgotten.

I remember when I was a child I thought my eighteenth birthday was so far away—almost an impossible journey for one to go through. I wasn't trying to grow up fast or dreaming of leaving home when I turned eighteen to be an adult and be in charge of my own life. The importance of the eighteenth year seemed to be popping up everywhere—in movies and TV shows. Eighteen seemed to be the magical birthday year.

I was quite content with my family—my parents and my younger sister. My childhood years seemed to go at a small pace, even while I was living them.

In the Autumn, school started and our parents would take my sister and me shopping for school clothes. We had to get used to new teachers and classrooms. Many times we were in the class with the same friends we had known since starting school. At home we would spend hours, especially on a Saturday, playing in the playhouse our father built for us. We would swing from the walnut tree as we watched the leaves turn color and fall to the ground covering it in a beautiful mixture of red, brown, and yellow, crunchy leaves.

In the Winter my sister and I would put on our coats and sit on the front porch as we played Crazy Eights and Go Fish, watching the rain falling from a dark sky and listening to it drum pitter-patter-pat, pitter-patter-pat, on the roof. We would swing in the tree looking up at the sky through bare branches that looked as if they were balancing the clouds. In the early evening we would gather in the living room with our parents and drink hot chocolate as we watched TV. Enjoying each other's company. Feeling cozy and

safe.

In the Spring, as the days became warmer, my sister and I would play on the front porch dressed in our mother's old clothes. We would swing from the tree watching as the buds turned into new, fresh, beautiful leaves. We would talk about all the things we wanted to do in the summer—go to the beach, sleep in late, play, and have an entire week to stay with our Grandma Margaret—without our parents. We were finishing up another school year and looking forward to summer vacation.

In the Summer, we would bring our dolls to the back yard, lining them up as we settled them on stuffed animals—dogs, rabbits, cats. They were lost and orphaned children looking for a home. We would sit in the swings and look down at the ground pretending we were looking at the earth from high in space, or we would swing so high that the green leaves would touch our faces. We would have backyard picnics with our mother while our dad was at work.

Memories can be such precious things. Something to hold close to one's heart. Of course, not all memories are beautiful things to remember.

Yes, we will always have the sad memories, the disappointing memories, the unspeakable memories. But we don't have to keep them in the foreground of our minds. We can back them away in an old chest and bury them, or attach them to a kite and send them to the clouds or shove them into a satellite orbiting the earth.

I have found a place for my unwanted memories. It is a forest of Aspen trees. The trunk with the white bark and the black markings, the branches that start high above the ground and leaves that seem to reach for the sky. Why did I choose aspen trees instead of evergreen trees—tall with thick trunks? I don't really know. I had a set of memories that had been bothering me for years. Finally, one day, I found a place to put them. As soon as I made that decision I saw a forest of aspens stretching out in front of me. They were covered by a grey fog.

I have an idea that might help with remembering the good memories.

All that is needed is an inexpensive notebook and a pen. Every day write down something about that day you would like to remember or a past memory that you wish to keep. Possible title, A JOURNAL OF POSITIVE MEMORIES TO REMEMBER.

By keeping this kind of journal, you will not only be helping yourself to remember positive things, you will be able to help others see the world in a more positive light.

Sometimes, I have found myself looking at the foggy aspen forest. I smile, take a satisfying breath, while my heart beats in relief, and I walk away.

There are plenty of happy memories to visit.

The Issue in Review

A Look Back at Our Offerings for this Month, by the Editor



Well, are we getting on the stick, or not? Roscoe, what do you think of the issue? Have we defied the Malevolent Muskrat and come through in spite of all obstacles that he has placed before us, or is it otherwise? Is this issue being more aware of the ladies and their part in science fiction? If not, surely we have made a start?

Judith Merrill's *BEYOND HUMAN KEN* was one of my earliest introductions to science fiction, and the tales within it really caught me up. She expressed the faraway viewpoint I like, the sense of wonder as it were, in other anthologies, seemed to look over the top of things, and to like things out of the ordinary, and she is one of those who took science fiction into the realm of the far out. ("Ken" means "understanding"; she suggested that people's lives need more than what is commonly known.) It's good that the collection of books mentioned in the article were later housed in the Judith Merrill collection, as "spaced out" means "knocked out of this world" and is a hipster term for getting too high. A downer. "Into space" is a better and more appropriate term, as in "Are you into space fiction?" "Spaced out" suggests a loss. I didn't like her "Best Of" anthologies as well, as she was better at searching out lesser known works and placing them before the reading public. She seems to have been shanghaied into mundane establishment conceptions in the making of those anthologies, and to have been conceding her impeccable selective abilities to a vote. Also I don't like "best of the year" shouting; nothing is really the best—by what criterion? A lot of the stories weren't the best at being science fiction in these selections; other standards were being used. I think the compilers were ignoring her critical judgment and her own conceptions of a good story. If this can be understood, there wasn't a good awareness of her true talent among the people of the literary establishment. They might have known it but not liked it.

Jaffrey Redmond's story in this issue, although it takes place in an alien world in an unknown time, is very relevant to what is going on here and now, with world wars that

are coming more and more to justify being called that. Where is there not warfare? The story shows war as a negative proposition, which is contrary to all the best principles of life on Earth. Wars bring only disaster, not gain.

Judy Carroll's column reminds us not to forget the past. Memories add much to the present. I think as an organization we should all remember these things.

