


CUSFuSsing 15



"Science Fiction Newsletter: Issue free to Columbia alumni. Write (you know where). The Society would like to thank Mr. George Leonard and Mr. William Bridge for their generous donations to our library." That ad in Columbia College Today as so far garnered about 10 letters from alumni and the third large donation in the Society's history. Marion F. Horrigan '47 I.E. sent us about 275 magazines from the '40's and '50's. We'd like to thank her very much and she is automatically on the list of people we send CUSFuSsing. The College released the estimated costs for the '79-'80 year. For residents average room will be \$1,188, food \$1,440, books \$225, miscellaneous \$575, and tuition and fees \$5,172. For

commuters the tuition, fees and books will be the same, while travel costs will be \$293. In response to the no-cooking ban in the dorms, the Columbia Dining Halls will offer a 7-day a week meal plan with Saturday and Sunday consisting of a brunch and dinner. Total cost will be \$1370. I'll be cooking in my room for about \$30 per week, which is much less than the meal plan. If you expect to do the same remember the risks of getting caught. But all that money would be nice to have to spend on SF. The Jefferson statue in front of the Journalism Building has been sandblasted and looks quite nice. I have no idea if they will be doing the same thing to some of the other statues, but Alma Mater won't be one of them since she has a glaze over her to protect against weather and vandals.

About this issue. Included are the first four letters about issue #14, three book reviews by William Lancaster, a few by myself, a quiz by Ben Fulves on first stories and the answers to the Lensman quiz from Carol Downing. There is also a special article on SF brains written and illustrated by Merrick Lex Berman. A couple of errata from the last issue. Frig means fridge or refrigerator. My apologies about the misunderstanding. Also my deep thanks to Dani Eder and Susan Kahn for helping to collate and address issue #14.

CUSFuSsing, issue 15. Published by the Barnard-Columbia Science Fiction Society every three weeks, school or no school. Available for loc, contribution to the newsletter or the library, trade, editor's whim, or 20¢ an issue and \$2.50 for 15. Address is 317 Ferris Booth Hall, Columbia University, NY, NY, 10027. Edited by Charles Seelig.

eh!
fold!
do not
Please

1/2 Quiz Answers to #5 by Carol Downing

Lensman Quiz

1. Doc Smith's first name is Edward
2. A DeLameter is a raygun, thionite is a drug, a Bergenholm is an inertialessness generator, an Overlord is a Delgonian torturer, and a zwilnik is a drugrunner or dealer.
3. The color associated with the Kalonians is blue, the Chickladorians pink, and Unattached Lensman Gray.
4. The only woman ever refused a Lens was Virgilia (Jill) Samms and the only one given one was Clarrissa (Cris) MacDougall (Kinnison)
5. The First Lensman was Virgil Samms, Jill's father and Cris' ancestor. Roderick Kinnison, the Second, later became North American President for one term.
6. The Eddorians were based in Lundmark's Nebula. Arisia, home planet of the "good guys", was in our galaxy, the Milky Way.
7. Clarrissa, who, though qualified, refused to call herself a "real Lensman."
8. Roughly in order of age, the Children are: Christopher (Kit), a Gray Lensman himself; Kathryn (Kat), who worked with her father Kimball (Kim) Kinnison; Karen (Kay), with Nadreck of Palain VII; Camilla (Cam), with Tregonsee of Rigel IV; and Constance (Con), with Worsel of Velantia.
9. QX means OK or all right.
10. Kim Kinnison used Sybly White as an undercover ID; he is a sci-fi (I use the phrase advisedly!!) writer.

Give yourself a point for each correct answer.

Scoring: 0-3: It's a great series; you should read it...

4-10: It's also worth rereading...

11-25: You're already rereading it...

26-28: Congratulations; you're Lensman grade!

Quiz #6 by Ben Fulves--First Stories

A while back I bought a very useful book called the Visual Encyclopedia of Science Fiction edited by Brian Ash. Included in the book was a timeline of the sf magazines, stories published in them, novels, films, and fan history, plus many essays on various subjects about which sf is written. That is besides the point though. I painstakingly studied the timeline and put some of what I found into quiz form: for each of the authors listed below, find the name of their first published, and the date it was published. There are 25; each is worth 4 points for a possible score of 100. By the way, if there are any authors that aren't listed here and you would like me to give the same information about, just make a list and forward it to me through Charles Seelig.

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Isaac Asimov | 14. Edmond Hamilton |
| 2. Alfred Bester | 15. Robert A. Heinlein |
| 3. James Blish | 16. Damon Knight |
| 4. Leigh Brackett | 17. C. M. Kornbluth |
| 5. Ray Bradbury | 18. Henry Kuttner |
| 6. John Campbell | 19. Fritz Leiber |
| 7. John Christopher | 20. Anne McCaffrey |
| 8. Arthur C. Clarke | 21. C. L. Moore |
| 9. L. Sprague de Camp | 22. Fred Pohl |
| 10. Lester del Rey | 23. Clifford Simak |
| 11. Gordon Dickson | 24. A. E. van Vogt |
| 12. Harlan Ellison | 25. Donald Wollheim |
| 13. Joe Haldeman | |

Book Reviews by William Lancaster

Nebula Winners 12 edited by Gordon R. Dickson

There's not a lot that can be said in judgement of the overall quality of the stories in this book. Three of the six were given Nebula Awards. A fourth received a Hugo. But even if you own most of the stories elsewhere, the volume is worth owning. In addition to the stories is an introduction by Gordon R. Dickson, an article on "Science Fiction in the Marketplace" by Algirdas Jonas Budrys, and an article by James Gunn giving the "Academic Viwe-point." Altogether, it is a nice package.

The book opens with Charles L. Grant's "A Crowd of Shadows," which won the short story Nebula. This is a moody little piece about people's mistrust of robots, people's hatred of each other, and loneliness. The story is set at a beach resort, and yet Grant creates a dark atmosphere from the first sentence that is quite effective. More than that I'd prefer not to say; the story has cloudy depths that I'd rather not explore in print.

The second story is Thomas F. Monteleone's "Breath's a Ware That Will Not Keep." This story explores a bit the question of what is human. It shows the need for relationships between people of all kinds, and it shows how shallow these can be. "Breath" is similar in many ways to "Crowd," differing mostly in the extent of the atmosphere and the metaphors used to illustrate the author's points. "Breath" is, I think, more accessible than "Crowd," but "Crowd" seems more fulfilled; that is, one gets the impression that the author achieved exactly what he wanted to. The mood of both pieces verges on hopelessness; it is impossible to emerge from either without having been moved somewhat and forced to think just a little. And while you're thinking, please notice how nicely they are written and constructed. Grant and Monteleone are good as well as thought-provoking writers.

While Grant and Monteleone both use a futuristic, science fictional background in their stories, the background is used as a vehicle, a means to achieve an end. In Joe Haldeman's Hugo-winning "Tricentennial," the science is the point. The story is about the efforts of a few thousand dedicated men and women to explore and learn something about this universe of ours. They are held back whenever possible by short-sighted bureaucrats and the ignorant masses, but in the end it is nature herself who thwarts them the most effectively. I am unsure as to what Haldeman wanted to show here. He is apparently in favor of space colonization and exploration, yet God strikes at those who attempt it. Or maybe the point is a good story well-told, which "Tricentennial" certainly is; simply an event in the history of the universe with no more point to it than anything else. I can appreciate this sort of hard science story, but I don't enjoy it as much as the type by which Grant and Monteleone are represented here. Which is not to say that I read Grant and Monteleone more than I read Haldeman: the opposite is true. But in the context of this anthology, "Tricentennial" doesn't come off looking as good as its two "competitors."

Next we have John Varley's "In the Bowl". Varley is one of my favorites among those writers who have come to prominence in recent years, and "Bowl" is an excellent example of his work. All of what I've read of Varley's takes place within the solar system; he has a seemingly inexhaustible number of things to show and say about it. He makes the solar system a fun place to live in. Varley writes as if he were a visitor from the future telling us what it is about the future that he enjoys. Someone living in the fu-

wouldn't notice the same things about it that we would: he would take what he had for granted and talk more about odd things that can be done with what was available. So the opening sentence in "Bowl" is not, "Gee it's nice to have easily-available organ transplants," but rather, "Never buy anything at a secondhand organbank." He doesn't talk about the joys and conveniences of owning a car but the fact that the damn thing guzzles gas and breaks down once a month. The result is a beautiful, living vision of the future that convinces whiee it entertains.

After two articles by people who know a lot more about science fiction than I do, we come to Isaac Asimov's "The Bicentennial Man." While Asimov has long been a favorite of mine, a collection of his more recent work, Buy Jupiter, was a great disappointment. "Man" restored my faith in Asimov. While it wasn't as satisfying to my tastes as "Bowl," it is nonetheless a marvelous story. I had thought that Asimov had already written the ultimate robot story for Final Stage, but "Man" shows that he was capable of doing even more. "Man" is told very simply with a minimum of stylistic embellishment. In straightforward terms, it tells about a robot's search for humanity. It is a story of love, caring, and self-sacrifice. It is interesting company for Grant's robot-oriented "Crowd." Both deal with thr relations between men and robots, and both assume that these relations will be strained at best. And yet, the two stories are so very--and fascinatingly--different from each other. The boy in "Crowd" and Andrew in "Man" are almost opposites. Reading this story, it's nice to see that Asimov hasn't lost his touch.

Finally we arrive at the longest story in the book: James Tiptree Jr.'s (Alice B. Sheldon) award-winning novella "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?" "Houston" tells of an all-male group of astronauts who find themselves in the future. They spend the story trying to adjust, while at the same time they are shown more and more just how different the future is. They are misled because people look the same and their language has changed very little. There also seem to be very few technological advances. But the society of the future, much as it may look familiar at first, does not bear close comparison with ours. This is a masterfully-told story, a joy to read. But then what did you--or I--expect from a collection of award winners and runners-up. I got what I expected: six excellent stories that made me think at the same time as they were entertaining me.

New Voices II edited by George R.R. Martin

There are a lot of good new writers on the rise these days. Each year, several of them are nominated for the John W. Campbell Award. It is easy to just pay attention to the winners and let the others slide. George RR Martin, himself well on his way to prominence, was one of those who didn't win the first year the award was given. He won a Hugo not long after for "A Song for Lya," one of my favorite stories, and several of his other works have been nominated for awards. With his New Voices series, he gives all the nominees--not just the winners--a chance to show how many of them have developed into full-fledged writers in the past few years. New Voices II contains stories by those writers voted on by the 1974 World Science Ficiton Convention.

Lisa Tuttle was nominated two years running. The second time she won, tying for the award with Spider Robinson. She is represented here with "The Hollow Man." "Man" calls to mind Robert Silverberg's excellent Nebula-winning novella "Born With the Dead." A woman decides to have her husband--who killed himself--brought back to life. She has heard all the warnings about the process,

but decides to go ahead with it anyway. What she gets is a hollow man; a man who, although he moves, breaths, and goes through all the movements of being alive, is still dead. Something--the soul, perhaps--had died and cannot be retrieved. This is inevitably a sad story, written by a careful hand as it skirts the edges of despair. The story is actually quite different from Silverberg's--I'm sure Tuttle wouldn't have written it if she didn't feel she had something new to say. Silverberg's protagonist never really had a chance to find out how his wife felt. Moreover, her way of thinking was quite beyond him. Here, the husband, when pressed, is able to explain the way he feels--or doesn't feel. Also, the major way in which he is changed is that he is despite appearances, dead. The dead in Silverberg's story are different from the living, but have a certain new sort of "life" to them. Tuttle's story is very moving, the work of a fast-developing professional. I think we can expect even better in the future.

Guy Snyder's science fiction is hard, hard, hard: you can count the rivets and the bolts. After spending most of my life reading this type of stuff, I've become jaded. It's one thing to use hardware for a background, but when the hardware overwhelms the story I start to yawn. Also, if a writer is going to use the same conventions that writers before him have been using for many years, then I'd like that writer to do or say something new. If a story was written in 1979, by God I'd like it to read like a story written in 1979. I don't mean that I want it to use the jargon and conventions now in fashion: I'd like the writer to do what he feels comfortable doing. But I'd also like today's fiction to build on yesterday's, not to seem as if the writer is unaware of anything written in the last 20 years. Now all this doesn't necessarily apply to Guy Snyder's "Lady of Ice"--I'm mostly just stating my own prejudices. But much of it does apply. A good deal of "Lady" is given over to describing in loving detail the technical aspects of asteroid mining. The characters get bogged down in this and never get a chance to come alive. Still, the concept Snyder explores here is an interesting one, one well worth exploring. I'm not going to write off Snyder on the basis of this one story, but I will think twice before picking up something else by him.

Jesse Miller's "Twilight Lives" is fascinating. It is unpolished but exuberant enough to take the reader past that. Miller comes off in this story as energetic: someone who has not yet fully mastered all the craft and technique of writing fiction but who will shortly. And when he does, he will be something to see. There isn't a lot I can say about this story, except that you should read it.

Spider Robinson isn't on his way up; he's there. Along with Tuttle, he won the Campbell in 1974. He won a Hugo for "By Any Other Name." He and his wife won both the Hugo and the Nebula for "Stardance." His Callahan's Place stories are a delight to read--most of my friends and some enemies have read my copy of the book. Robinson is an optimist; sometimes, as in the Callahan stories, that's pleasant and even reassuring. But "Satan's Children" almost gave me diabetes it was so sugary-sweet. It was fun to read, but by the end not only do things end happily for the protagonist but for the whole country and probably for the whole world. Enough is enough, and this is just too much.

I've saved the best for last. Thomas F. Monteleone isn't a writer I've read much by in the past, but he certainly will be in the future. "The Dancer in the Darkness" is a tour de force, award material, one of the best stories I've read in a while. In content, it really isn't science fiction. But it is written like a science

fiction story. That is, there is an air of speculation and creative adventure that pervades throughout. Monteleone gives the impression that he is writing about something that matters to him. The story is gripping, always well-told. Monteleone has been nominated a number of times for awards in the past few years; now he is ready to start winning them.

All in all, it is an excellent anthology. Three excellent stories, one good story, and one that left me cold. It is an important series as well. Some of these writers appear entirely too infrequently. Some of them just haven't been given enough exposure. In New Voices, they all have equal opportunity to be seen, heard and appreciated. We should all thank George R R Martin for giving us--and them--this series.

The Girl Who Cried Flowers by Jane Yolen,
illustrated by David Palladini

Remember those wonderful, magical stories our parents used to read to us, or that we, once we were old enough, read for ourselves? For me they were ancient Greek myths, a record of Cyril Ritchard reading Alice in Wonderland, and C.S. Lewis' Narnia Chronicles. These are stories that enchant when you're young, and when you grow up you learn to appreciate even more. Jane Yolen writes stories like that, and I envy the child who is having these stories read to him right now.

For the benefit of us older people, Yolen's stories have been appearing for a few years now in F & SF: stories like "The Pot Child," "The Hundreth Dove," and, more recently, "Brother Hart." Even amongst all the other excellent writers in F & SF, these stories stand out.

The Girl Who Cried Flowers is a collection of five new fairy tales by Jane Yolen. It was published in 1974, but you, like me, may be able to find it in the children's section of your local public library. Don't be embarrassed; if you must, pretend you're getting it for your little brother. Then read it. Then let your little brother read it. The stories here are beautiful, gem-like pieces. They sparkle and glitter and come to life before your very eyes. When reading the book, you might think it's a collection of old European folk tales. But the stories are Yolen's, using to full effect the techniques of those old stories.

Because this book was meant to be read primarily by children, the writing is not as overtly sophisticated as in a so-called adult book. This only means that the syntax is very straight-forward and uncomplicated. But Yolen isn't writing down to her readers: as much thought goes into the writing as goes into any adult work of fiction. And there is much more tender loving care behind what Yolen writes than you'll see practically anywhere else. The result is five pieces of poetry, stories so full of imagination, joy, and sorrow as to make you stop for just a moment after each one to think about it, to digest its meaning, or to smile a little.

There are also illustrations. If you've seen David Palladini's covers on F & SF--illustrating stories by Yolen--you probably liked them. But they were nothing compared to the illustrations that appear here. Each story is decorated with several pictures, most of them in color. Palladini being from Italy, many of his illustrations seem to be of medieval or renaissance Italian characters. Considering the European folk-tale flavor of the stories, Palladini is perfect for them. If I wax exuberant, I am to be forgiven. The Girl Who Cried Flowers is such a beautiful book that I don't see how anyone could resist it. So do yourself a favor and seek out this book and the others that Yolen and Palladini have done together. It will only take a few minutes, and I can assure you that you'll be glad you made the effort.

Believe it or not folks, we have another review of Alien and our first review of Prophecy both from Vic McNeil.

Alien

To start, Alien was an excellent science fiction movie. I loved everything in it, except for that annoying mistake of having air whining in noiseless space. To anyone who hasn't seen it yet, I don't want to take away your surprise and pleasure. But I personally enjoyed Alien for its setting, plot and story line, special effects, and most of all, the acting.

I also want to point out that in Alien, a woman is the main character and protagonist; the first time (at least in my memory), that this has happened in modern (post-1950's) science fiction flicks.

One final note! After Alien, if Star Trek: The Movie is as least as good, then '79 will be remembered as a banner year for science fiction movies.

Prophecy

A familiar theme in science fiction-horror movies, especially in today's nuclear age, is mutation. Them! is possibly the best example as it concerns giant ants attacking Los Angeles (I was rooting for the ants). And at the end of the movies there was a slightly corny, but true message: if man attempts to destroy nature, nature might turn around and destroy man.

Prophecy is the newest type of these mutant (coupled with message) movies. It opens with a rescue team mysteriously disappearing in the Maine woods. A committed doctor (Robert Foxworth) and his wife (Talia Shire) journey up to these woods to find out if a lumber mill is affecting the environment. They find that the mill's mercury waste has created a 15-ft. tall thing that looks like a bear with terminal acne.

Prophecy isn't a very good horror movie. In fact, many people laughed when the monster made its attacks. The acting, lighting, etc., were bad, and the whole film was structured as a B- ~~version~~ of a land Jaws. Don't bother viewing Prophecy unless you don't have anything else to do.

The Quickie Board some book reviews by Charles Seelig

The Third Body by Sam Dann, Popular Library, \$1.75, p. 255, c. 1979

Once and awhile you do read a book that has nothing going for it. Fortunately this hasn't happened to me for quite some time. But this book, The Third Body broke the streak.

It is in the "If this goes on" category of SF and takes as its premise the war between men and women. It carries it into the future where the two sexes have formed two nations. Both are controlled by a trio of forces, Government, Religion, and the Military. And they are constantly at war in some fashion or another. To me, this is ridiculous. All "If this goes on" stories are slightly absurd, but this takes the cake. The author really never explains how this came about, and I can't figure out by myself how something like this could actually happen.

The characters have come from the depths of the East River. They just aren't full-fledged. When they change, they change all too quickly, revealing the shallowness of themselves. And they just don't interrelate well. I can't sympathize with anybody.

And the actions the characters take are just absurd as the rest of the story. They seem to have very little intelligence. And this includes everybody, not just the protagonists.

There are quite a few more things wrong with this book, but I don't have to mention them. Just make sure you don't buy this book.

The Tall Stones by Moyra Caldecott, Popular Library, \$1.95, pp.255

This is the first volume of The Sacred Stones Trilogy and it isn't half bad. It is a very heavy morality tale, but it moves well-enough so you will continue onward.

Basically there is a village with a ring of stones, like Stonehedge, and a priest that uses the stones to communicate with nature and the other priests in his group. Problem is, he is dying, and there is a real baddie set to come along and take power over the village. Three children, really in their adolescence, slowly join forces with the priest to combat the one who comes.

A lot of this book is simply a Platonic discussion of what is, what was, and what is to be. If this book was written for younger readers, a lot of this is going to go completely over their heads. As it is, I found myself skipping long passages so I could read the story.

The characters aren't too badly drawn. They change, but for good reasons, especially when they realize what they must do to save their village. Even the bad guy has his reasons, though they may be simple.

There are two other books of course, and I hope they have less Aristotle and more story.

A Swiftly Turning Planet by Madeleine L'Engle, Dell Books, \$1.50, pp. 256, July 1979

The back cover of this book calls this a companion volume to Madeleine L'Engle's first two books concerning these characters. In some ways it is, since it has little to do with the events that took place in A Wrinkle in Time and A Wind in the Door. And this might be a bad thing. Even though the most extraordinary events occur in those first two books, many of the characters seem to have forgotten that they have happened. Why this is, I can't figure out.

In this book, more interesting events occur. Meg and Charles Wallace must save the world by changing the course of history. Some Latin American dictator has gotten hold of some nuclear weapons and is planning to use them if he doesn't get what he wants. Charles is sent out to try and change what happened to the dictator's ancestors so as to change the character of the dictator. Meg keeps in contact with her brother through kything and sends information to him once and awhile.

Most of the book is a travel through time, but so many whens are covered that the minor characters become confused. You don't know who is who or who is on what side even at the end of the book. A unicorn is Charles' travel companion this time, but really has very little character compared to some of the others we have met during the other two books.

One positive aspect to the book is the lessening of "Oh joy, the flowers smell so pretty and everyone is so nice" passages that were prevalent in Wind. Also the characters are more real, at least the ones we see in the past. They have problems unconnected with those of the main plot, making them more than just devices.

As to buying the book, if you liked the first two go out and buy this one. You won't enjoy it immensely since it doesn't have the same quality of the first book (but what does), but you should like it well-enough

Flandry of Terra by Poul Anderson, Ace Books, \$1.95, pp.291, July 1979
Cover by Michael Whelan

This is the second of a series of Flandry books that Ace has started

publishing. They follow Flandry's career. The first, Ensign Flandry, chronicled the first adventures of this officer of the Terran Empire. The second, this book, has Flandry a little older, a little more experienced, and definitely much more cynical.

Flandry is out to keep himself alive and alive to enjoy all of life's pleasures. He does the former by constantly getting by rocks and hard places and the latter by getting paid well by the Terran Empire and others. The reason Flandry is so cynical is that the Empire is falling apart. Full of people not serving the public good it is on the defensive, moving enough to stay alive, but otherwise doing nothing. This is the age just before the Dark period of Anderson's Future History.

Flandry, in the three stories in the book, is required to save three worlds. He finds himself doing this because he gets into situations where nothing else could work. This could get quite boring if the rest of the books are like this, but if the survey only extends to this single item, the repetition doesn't get too bad.

What does make these books are the characters and the alnds where Flandry visits. The tone here is almost completely serious, much more so than the stories of the Retief series. But things are much more serious in Flandry's locale so this seems reasonable. When you read these don't expect style but substance and you should be satisfied.

One should mention the cover also. Last issue I gave Michael Whelan my vote as Best Pro Artist and this is a great example why. The cover, except for the fact Flandry looks like he's posing for newsmen, is completely accurate. And there is definitely a light source placed where the light source should be. I mean this is good stuff. Check it out.-----

LOCJAW the letters column

Patrick L. McGuire, 5764 Stevens Forest Rd., Apartment 204,
Columbia, MD, 21045

One of the signs of Advancing Years is the possession of more money and less time. I fought this about as long as I could, by the traditional expedient of taking my time about finishing graduate school, but by now, alas, the day has arrived.

I just haven't got time to give you one of my traditionally wordy locs. Not do that and write four short articles I have to get off before Season, and cope with the Real World besides.

But at the same time, yours is easily one of the most readable clubzines I've seen in some time. Which isn't saying all that much, considering clubzines. But then too, your subscription rates are low enough. So enclosed is a dollar for 5 issues of CUSFuSSing.

Oh yes--there's only one of me. You sent a duplicate of this thing to my parents' place in Florida.

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740

Any twenty-page fanzine that succeeds in going through the mails for little more than three cents postage deserves an immediate loc. This is a positive throwback to an older form of civilization, in addition to being evidence that ingenuity is not extinct among fanzine editors. As if that weren't enough, this issue arrived with less damage from its rite of passage through the postal system than many a fanzine which cost forty cents or so to mail.

I enjoyed reading CUSFuSSing for other reasons. It's always interesting to read material by fans who haven't appeared frequently as writers in other fanzines. Besides, there's the extra excite-

ment inherent in your name, involving how it's pronounced. If I murmur the title in my dreams (I'll sleep several times before I see any other fans, so it's more likely to be spoken by me in bed than to someone else during the next few days) am I expected to accent the penultimate s and then give a much lighter emphasis to the s that follows it immediately?

The material about Hugo nominees should be useful to jog memories of various fans and maybe help some of them make up their minds about which nominees should win. You've also served a different sort of useful function in providing these summaries of what seems to be best suited for votes on the final ballot. When this and that contributor to the section admitted to unfamiliarity with some of the nominees, you've symbolized the basic problem of the entire Hugo concept and, for that matter, most of the awards that are given nowadays by popular vote. So much science fiction and fantasy fiction is being published that even a voracious reader may not encounter some of the best stories of the year, and fandom has grown so large that only the most active fans are apt to have real familiarity with all the nominees in the fanzine and fan writing categories, I doubt if there's any way to solve this problem, so the next best course of procedure is for everyone to keep in mind the fact that people don't win Hugos as a result of infallible workings of the eternal verities. If this is kept in mind, the significance of winning a Hugo becomes slightly less and maybe there is less tendency to get involved in nasty fusses over Hugo matters since it becomes clear that the Hugo winner isn't necessarily the absolute, heads-and-shoulders-over-everyone-else best.

The Disclave report made pleasant reading. I did feel a trifle out of the swim when I couldn't figure out who were some of the fans referred to only by their first names. I assume that they're Barnard-Columbia fans but I can't be sure of that. Remember, a quarter-century in the future, some fan historian may be scouring old fanzines for information about past events, and think how much more useful a conreport will be to him if it contains full names for everyone on first mention. I can't claim ownership of any of the items Cam Nyhen is trying to return: after so many years of being criticized in fandom I've developed such a thick neck that the small silver necklace wouldn't fit it, even though I'm increasingly absent-minded in old age I've never bought the wrong sort of underwear for myself and therefore couldn't have lost the ladies' edition, and I need to have socks custom made for my feet, because of that darned cloven hoof.

Locjaw is an ideal title for a letter column. It seems like an obvious one, but I can't remember having it seen it used in any other fanzine previously.

The note about the alumnus who gave your library so many prizes is a fascinating one. The name of George Leonard is completely unknown to me. So I assume that he has been a fan who specialized in collecting and did little or nothing in fanzines, didn't take a prominent part at cons, or indulge in any of the other more obvious forms of fanac. It makes you wonder how many other individuals there may be like him who have quietly amassed big collections over the years. It also creates concern over the danger that some collections of this sort may be dispersed or destroyed when the collector dies or loses interest, when the collectors don't make some sort of disposition as George Leonard did.

Thanks for thinking about me with this issue. I hope you folks will be able to continue to publish CUSFuSSing for a wider circle than your own club members. I suppose it's too much to hope that you'll forgive me for trying to pound one more letter out of this badly dessicated and corrupted typewriter ribbon.

((The way you are pronouncing CUSFuSSing is completely correct. The other attractive part of the name is that it is an attention getter, which helps in the publicity. It is quite hard trying to find and read all the nominees. In the future it might become more difficult if the fans who want more awards have their way. Probably the Gandalfs could be let go since there are now Howards and Balrogs for the fantasy field.))

((I'm also surprised that Locjaw hasn't been used before. The first name for the fanzine was Quandry, which was soon changed to the present name. Win some, lose some.))

((We are doing quite well with the alumni. We got some more good news during the week. Check out pg. 1.))

((No matter how faded the typewriter ribbon we are always glad to receive a letter from you.))

Ronald R. Lambert, 2350 Virginia, Troy, Mich. 48084

Thanks for the complimentary copy of whatever it is you call it. Enclosed is my subscription check. I also subscribe to SFR, Thrust, and Starship (nee Algol), but for some time have wanted to read some fanzines that were really fannish. (I did subscribe to a couple, but got Murphied, apparently--only very seldom did I get copies.) Your whatchamacallit seems to fit the bill--especially if it is issued as frequently as you say it is.

You asked for locs (or should that be lox?), and if you can get more, they would enhance your line. After all, it is the locs that really put the zing into zines. What can match the electric thrill you get when you read a loc that begins, "Listen here, buzzard-bait...?"

Which reminds me, I have a bone to pick with you, Charlie. You missed the boat and fell splash in the drink with your criticisms of James P. Hogan's novels. I for one think there is plenty of drama, plot, and gripping interest in the dynamic struggle to understand, which provides the basis for Hogan's novels. Fiction does not have to fit into the Elizabethan mold to be good fiction. You may think it is boring to have most of the action consist in intellectualizing via a blackboard. But in real life, that is where the real action is.

Hogan writes a particular kind of science ficiton--call it super hardcore if you will--but it is viable, valid, and therefore should be judged on its own terms, just as Stephen R. Donaldson's Illearth trilogy must be judged on its own terms, for what it is (fantasy with an anti-hero). Hogan, by the way, was fully conscious of what he was doing in writing a particular kind of science fiction stripped of traditional Elizabethan conventions and relying instead on the drama inherent in the dynamic struggle to understand. He said so in a recent loc in Thrust #12.

Granted, you personally may not like super hardcore sf. But you have no business saying that is wrong. As a writer, I wish that I could write the kind of sf that Hogan does.

Now a positive suggestion: Some comments in #14 concerning a cryonics ad you ran previously gave me an idea. How about having a "phoney baloney" section, where fans pay to have bogus, humorous ads inserted? Who knows, it might start a new tradition in sf--and it might bring in a little extra money for you. Just a thought.

I liked issue #14, and I hope you will keep up the good work. I don't know if I would go so far as to say "Don't ever change Boopsy," but at least, don't ever lose heart.

((Asking for lox might be dangerous in New York City. Somebody might decide to send bagels, and other materials for consumption.))

((Just as good for an ending is, "And please send me another issue of your crudzine.))

((I like hardcore sf. It just has to meet the requirement of being good hardcore sf. In many ways Hogan is a good writer, I even nominated The Genesis Machine for a Hugo. But in two of his novels his characters gain knowledge and understanding but do nothing with it. I don't need a practical reason for learning, such as feeding the poor, but I need something. It's there in Niven's books, or Clarke's or Sheffield's Sight of Proteus. It isn't there in Inherit The Stars or the Gentle Giants of Ganymede. Of course my attitude could just be off kilter. I will read Thrust #12 though, as soon as I can get a copy.))

((The cryonics ad wasn't a phony ad, but the idea is good. Does 5¢ a line sound O.K.))

Joe Braman, 444 E. 82 St. Apt. 4M, NY, NY, 10028

Well you've made yourselves a new friend. #14 was the first issue of CUSFuSSing I've seen and I'll take your word for it that it's the best. I agree with Ben Fulves, the colored paper is certainly more interesting to look at, if not more attractive than plain white. But it's what's on the paper that matters. You make a big deal about the artwork in this issue, but frankly, I'm not impressed. Either it's in the quality of the reproduction or the original or maybe both, but if it's going to come out like this it's not worth thr extra 73¢ a page. It is the quality of the written work however, which makes this zine a good one.

The introduction was fine and the quiz seemed well-researched. The Disclave report was rather dull. C'mon Cam! There are so many better ways to get some ego-boo than writing a gossip column. I liked Bil Lancaster's review of Alien. Alien was an experience, neither good nor bad. It scared the hell out of me too. The other reviews and LOCJAW were at the very worst interesting. Which brings me to the Hugo analyses, an ambitious undertaking and one I, for the most part, enjoyed. I have only one major criticism, you ignore the fact that the Hugos are popular awards and that certain more popular nominees will win out over certain better, but less popular nominees that are destined to lose. With this in mind, I have prepared a short listing of the categories, with the nominee I think will win listed, along with my choice in parantheses.

Dramatic Presentation-Superman (Lord of the Rings)

Fan Writer-Richard E. Geis(Bob Shaw)

Fan Artist-Bill Rotsler (Stu Schiffman)

Fanzine-SFR (SFR)

Gandalf Award-The Courts of Chaos (Ditto)

Gandalf Grand Master-Ray Bradbury (Jack Vance)

John W. Campbell Award-Stephen Donaldson (James P. Hogan)

Pro Artist-Vincent DiFate (Ditto)

Pro Editor-Ed Ferman (Ditto)

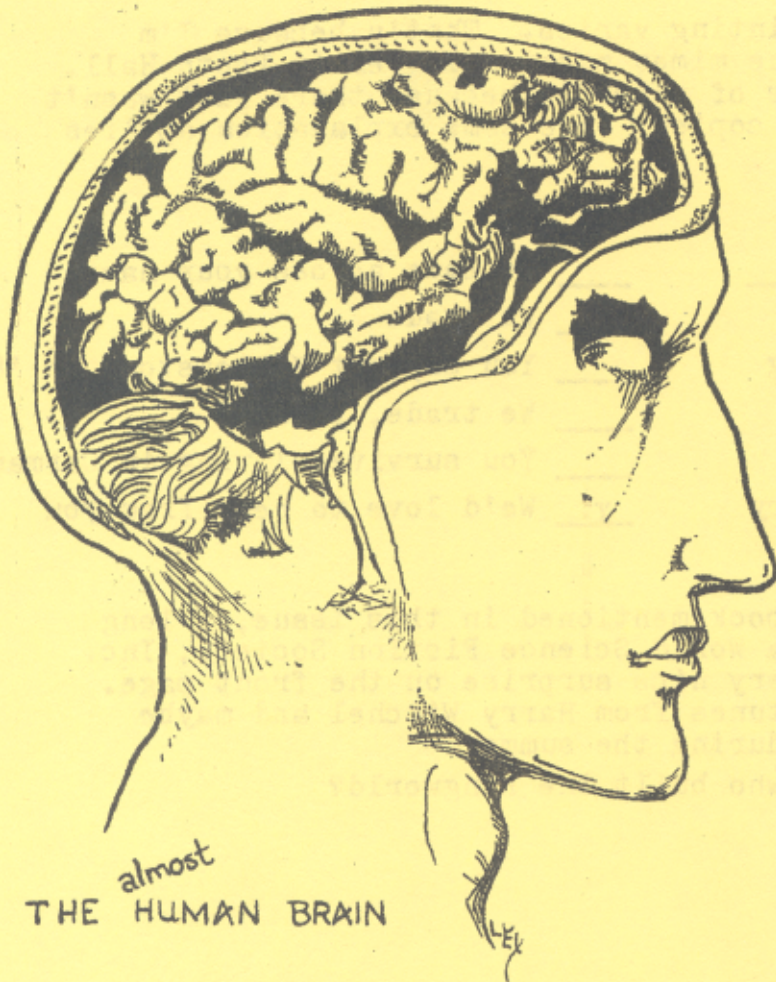
Short Story-"Count the Clock That Tells the Time" ("Cassandra")

Novelette-"Mikal's Songbird" ("The Barbie Murders")

Novella-"The Persistence of Vision" (Ditto)

Novel-"The White Dragon" (Blind Voices)

((Not all nominees are hopelessly forgotten in the voting, Listening to Joan D. Vinge at a meeting of the Bergen County SF Society, I found out that she had not expected to win a Hugo last year, and there was even an odds sheet at Iguanacon with her story, "Eyes of Amber," at 40-1. So who can say until Sunday the 26th. I'll have more on that meeting and one of the Lunarians in the next issue.))



almost
THE HUMAN BRAIN

It has recently been discovered that the cranium and cerebral cortex of persons related with science fiction differ dramatically from those of a randomly chosen group of control brains. Although this fact was originally shrugged off by the AMA because, "Those sf people have always been deranged. No doubt they have abnormal diets," it is now the cause of a lot of excitement in the medical field.

A project conducted simultaneously at Stanford and MIT took measurements of 753 heads which were attached to human volunteers. Exact readings of cranial capacities were made with those obnoxious silver tongs that made the subjects feel like an archeological dig. Unfortunately, nearly half of the science fiction enthusiasts were annoying juveniles with no brains at all, and their data had to be removed and then thrown away. From the earnest sf people; artists, writers, editors, and a few fans; however, a pattern was emerging.

Certain portions of the brain, in particular the motor control, were unusually elongated. The frontal lobes were expanded and rest lower in the cranium. Professor Stival of Princeton brought up the point that it has a somewhat archaic appearance. (See illustration.) Note the out-dated, almost antiquated look it has as it rests lazily in the skull. Stival says that these changes in the sf person's brain, "are due to the influence of the illustrator Frank R. Paul." This opinion was originally disregarded but is now gaining favour as research of sf history grows in the Institute for Neurological Research.

Professor Hiroshige of Tokyo University claims to have actually dissected the brain of an ex-sf enthusiast. Strangely enough, he reports: "...the brain appears to have become a single, immense optic nerve. All segments of the brain, in addition to their usual functions, have been given an extra visual capacity. My question, now that the transformation has taken place is, what good does it do? The only seeing to be done is thru the eyes."

Now any sf person would be quick to inform Professor Hiroshige that there is a lot to be seen with the mind. How else could we drift along a lavender moonbeam, see inside the soul of crawling green muck, or alugh at the naivete of androids. There must be something more to sf than rocketships and laser guns, if not I must have an incredible imagination.

(For more info see Dr. Melnix's informative "Oozing Brains from Planet X," in v. 14 of the Bulletin of Neuro-pathological Studies, Akron.)

As you can see, the quality of printing varies. That's because I'm still quite an amateur at using the mimeo machine in Ferris Booth Hall. The reason we are using two colors of paper is because there just wasn't enough yellow to print up all the copies. The same explanation applies to the last issue.

WHY YOU GOT THIS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> You subscribe until issue _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> We came across your name |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You lotted | <input type="checkbox"/> We trade |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You contributed to CUSFuSSing | <input type="checkbox"/> You support Yellowstone in '81 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You are an alumnus | <input type="checkbox"/> We trade, please? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> You are an incoming freshman | <input type="checkbox"/> You survived living in Carman |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You contributed to the library | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> We'd love to hear from you |

In issue #16, a review of an old book mentioned in this issue, a long analysis from William Lancaster, a World Science Fiction Society, Inc. from Dani Eder, and hopefully a very nice surprise on the front page. Plus some more verses to Beatles tunes from Harry Witchel and maybe an article on living at Columbia during the summer.

How many of you have figured out who built the Ringworld?

Columbia University in the City of New York
Science Fiction Society
206 Ferris Booth Hall
NY, NY, 10027

Nonprofit Org.
U.S.-Postage
Paid
New York, N. Y.
Permit No. 3593

Art credits
Merrick Lex Berman pg. 1 and 13

Next issue Aug. 27
But since we will be printing
the issue almost
immediately after
this one don't worry about
deadlines

Atul Chandra Khanna
7 Rockdale LD Ruparelmg
Bombay, 400 006
India