

# winding



**1**

# numBERS

# WINDING NUMBERS

WINDING NUMBERS is a late second attempt at fanzine publishing (it has been some 8 years since my first attempt, and in order to save face, the name of my disaster shall remain a guarded secret). WINDING NUMBERS is published by Randall Reichardt, 58 Penrose Place, Winnipeg; Manitoba, Canada, R2J 1S1. Phone: 1-204-256-2637. This zine is available for locs, artwork, "publishable" contributions, or 50¢. No subs, please. If you send artwork, please submit it in black ink on thin white paper, as all artwork is electrostencilled. Vol. 1, No.1, Fall 1975 issue.

## INSIDE:

FACSIMILE: "Perhaps I wanted to let others know that there was a budding fandom in Winnipeg", by Randy Reichardt.....3

THE PRINCE AMONG THE PLANETS: MACHIAVELLI AND GORDON DICKSON: "Now we have arrived at the point at which we begin to look at Gordon Dickson. As with Machiavelli, we will look for general patterns, rather than detailed examples", by Tony Dalmyn..5

HOW TO MAKE A BELIEVABLE SCIENCE FICTION MOVIE: "...or they will either: a) leave the theatre, or b) change the channel to Hollywood Squares reruns",  
by Bern Roy.....8

SOME THOUGHTS ON SCIENCE FICTION AND RELIGION: "Is man to become an Overman, or even an Overman, or are these concepts merely misreadings of human nature due to the illustrations of progress?", by Andris Taskans.....9

RAH RAH RAH!!!: "The Spaniard then cupped his hands together over his mouth, motioned the American to bend closer, and said, 'I like him.'", by Johnston Smith.....11

A NOSTALGIC APPRAISAL OF THE PULPS: "...and writing techniques had certainly not progressed to the level of sophistication they now occupy.", by Stu Gilson...13

AN EXERCISE IN FRUSTRATION: "...and The Dispossessed are all classified as Fiction (Science), novels such as Dune, A Canticle for Leibowitz, and The Man In The High Castle can be found classified as general fiction", by ye editor.....15

SWORDS-PLAY AND DERRING-DO: "...rather than being a critique it is more generally a list of some of the novels I consider worth mentioning that have appeared recently in the field of fantasy.", by Bob France.....16

\*\*\*\*\*  
Editor: Randy Reichardt; Editorial Assistance: Johnston Smith; Columnists: Tony Dalmyn, Bob France, Andris Taskans, Bern Roy, Johnston Smith, Stuart Gilson.

Art Credits: Barry Kent MacKay: 5, 7, 12, 17, bacover. Ted Parnell: 9, 10.  
Stuart Gilson: Cover "Homing Pigeons"

You might find this issue postmarked from Pembina, North Dakota. That will be done only if the mail strike is still on by November 22. If the postal strike lasts well into December (God, I hope not) and you wish to write, send all correspondence to Randy Reichardt, c/o George Chale, Box 183, Pembina North Dakota, 58271. But please be sure the strike is still on if you do so. I don't want to make a trip for one or two letters. Everyone involved help collate, staple, address, and lick stamps. Thanks, all.

Thought of fantasy for the season: Winnipeg in '88.

# FACSIMILE

HANDY REICHARDT

Welcome to WINDING NUMBERS 1, brought to you from the land of postal strikes. First, for the curious, a winding number is a concept in topology to do with positions of curves and their direction, etc. Unless you've done it yourself, you probably don't realize how hard it is to come up with a name for your zine that you're personally satisfied with.

## A SHORT FAN HISTORY, OR HOW I GOT INTO ALL THIS:

Some eight years ago, in the summer of 1967, I first heard the word fandom. I had been collecting comics for about a year, and a fellow collector who had been receiving fanzines for some time and introduced me to it. A few months later we attempted a zine, printed one issue, and that was that.

Thomas Clareson edited a book called SF: The Other Side Of Realism, a series of essays about different aspects of sf. One of the essays is by Alexei Panshin, entitled "Science Fiction In Dimension". In it, he deals with the ever-increasing number of fans, exploring some of the possible reasons for this increase. One line from it was: "What magic touched the people who saw 2001?" I don't know what the magic was, but it was all I needed to get me reading sf. After 2001 came other Clarke gems like Earthlight, Childhood's End, and The City and the Stars. In the fall of 1969, two fellow Winnipeggers, who I would meet later, went down to the Worldcon in St. Louis. Back they came loaded with memorabilia and souvenirs, and after I met them I was introduced to sf fandom. If I recall correctly, I think I had the "Say, Conrad, what's all this fandom stuff about?" feelings, and my memories of the time I spent learning about fandom, etc., back in '69 can be summed up in one big word: GOSHWOWOBOYOBOY!!!

Some months later I latched onto a copy of LOCUS, and was hooked for good. I remained inactive as a fan, but continued to follow fandom, largely through subscriptions to LOCUS, as well as the odd single issue of other zines, like COSIGN, TRUMPET, and CROSSROADS, (remember them?).

Skipping a few years, we have now arrived to May of this year. My exams have ended. My degree is sitting in my lap, and I am unemployed. After four years of university I still can't decide what the hell I want to do; so it's off to search for summer work. Work happened to be hard to find as usual, so when our illustrious post office phoned up and offered a couple weeks' work, I accepted. Eight students were hired for envelope surveying. As it turned out, one of the other seven was Andy Taskans, whose work can be found elsewhere in this issue. Andy, however, was one of the two previously mentioned people who had attended the '69 worldcon. Over the course of the two weeks, Andy brought his memorabilia from the con, including the program, autographs, and an album stuffed with photos. Well, this seemed to give me the feeling that over the past 5 or 6 years I'd been missing something. The final push I needed came in the beginning of July when two fellows from Amsterdam came over and opened up a bookstore which specialized in sf (20-25%). After a few visits we got to know each other, and the idea of a regularly meeting sf group came up. When their initial attempt failed, I decided to try something.

To begin with, I mentioned the idea to two friends, also readers of sf. I met with mixed reactions at first, but convinced them that it was worth a try once at least. I met with one of them on a Saturday night, and we composed a letter which I hand-copied eight times. The letter's contents consisted of a plea for help: "We

are here and/or are there, and you're in an established group. Can you advise us on formation, membership, blah, blah, blah... The letters went out to groups in Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Toronto, Pittsburgh, Cambridge, Denver, and two cities in Maryland. The addresses were taken from convention listings and fanzine reviews in LOCUS. When I look back on this venture, I realize letters such as these were not all that important to our cause. Perhaps subconsciously I wanted to let others know there was a budding fandom in Winnipeg. Anyhow, I made a good move sending letters to Philadelphia (via Pittsburgh) and Toronto. People in those cities were the only ones willing to take the time to answer us with some words of advice and encouragement. The response from other cities as of this writing has been nil. Not even a postcard. (Late flash: card from Minneapolis. Thank you, Fred Haskell.)

The letters from the two other towns proved invaluable, and we had our first "meeting" on September 27, on the campus of the University of Manitoba. There were only four of us, but it was a start at least. I introduced the idea of a fanzine to them; something we could centre our group around, and this is the result. After many name and format changes, Winding Numbers #1.

\*\*\*\*\*  
PERSONAL PLANS: As is usually the case, I hope this excursion lasts for a little while. Now if it does, my own plans are eventually going to get in the way. I've applied for graduate school, and if I get accepted it means I'll be leaving for Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, or Montreal next September. Leaving Winnipeg means leaving everything behind including Winding Numbers. If I can get enough material, and a favourable response from some of you, I can promise 2 or 3 more issues, under my direction at least. Perhaps someone else might take over; I don't know.

Finally, it's credit time. First, from Toronto, Phil Paine with Pat Hayden: Thank you for your letters and the \$18 one hour phone call; all very much appreciated. Secondly, Pittsburgh, Frank Richards: Frank sent us an answer saying he couldn't be much help, so he passed his copy of the letter onto Philadelphia, and Linda Bushyager: I especially grateful to Linda, simply because she wrote to us with advice and a free NF guide, and I hadn't even written to her directly! Thanks, Linda. Other acknowledgements: All the contributors and artists (special thanks to Barry Kent MacKay in Toronto), Co and Esco at the Paperback Gallery, and Marc Shannon for his constant words of encouragement and unfailing support of the zine.

PLUGS: I'm not sure if any copies of this issue will be sold through ads or reviews. Very few might be a safe prediction. Most copies are being mailed out free to various addresses acquired from other zines. With this in mind, I thought at first that a few plugs might be worthless; most of you have heard of or receive (or produce) the following zines. Yet I can't resist, for two reasons: quite a few copies will be mailed to other Winnipeggers who might want to try them; and secondly, with reference to LOCUS: I am not ashamed to admit that I was weaned on LOCUS, first getting it back when it was at #50 (it should be at 182 by now). Charles and Dena Brown are responsible, to a degree, for my getting involved in fandom. LOCUS provides a good news service to the isolated fan like myself, as well as the rest of you, I suppose. Try it: 15/\$6, 30/\$12 from LOCUS Publications, 34 Ridgewood Lane, Oakland, California, 94611. Also try the following:

- 1) KARASS, available from Linda Bushyager, 1614 Evans Avenue, Prospect Park, Pennsylvania, 19706. 4/\$1
- 2) SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW, available from Richard E. Geis, P.O. Box 11402, Portland, Oregon, 97211. 4/\$4.50
- 3) OUTWORLDS, available from Bill Bowers, P.O. Box 251, Canton, Ohio, 44720. 4/\$4

That's it for now.

# TONY DALMYN

THE PRINCE AMONG THE PLANETS:

MACHIAVELLI AND GORDON DICKSON

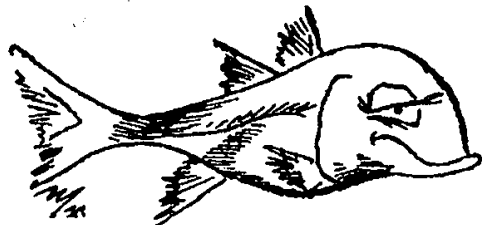
The distance between Gordon R. Dickson and Machiavelli spans five centuries. It is therefore at first sight incongruous to discuss the social theories present in their works in a comparative context. However, the resemblance is there, and it is worth inspection. My point is that both writers seem to accept a theory of history which involves opportunities occurring through chance and fortune, upon the happening of which a single talented man can infuse a new vigour into society by doing acts of leadership.

I have stated that the works of both men embody social theories. I will discuss Machiavelli as a thinker in due course, but first I will comment on social theory in science fiction. It has several aspects, and I will mention some at the risk of oversimplification. Social theory in general involves certain observations on the human condition which form the basis of either scientific or intuitive conclusions in the form of a description of human nature. The social theorist then reasons from these conclusions, and from certain postulates as to the nature of reality, and constructs a model of human society as it is and as it could be. His approach could be that of a scientist, a philosopher, or a poet. The science fiction writer expresses social theory in several ways. By describing an alternative future he speculates on the interaction of social structure and human behaviour. He makes assumptions about human nature. He makes empirical observations and extracts from them. And his (her) work has a normative impact. He (she) is concerned with whether a given society is good, judged by standards implied in the work.

So we arrive at Machiavelli. Many recognize this name, but few understand its significance. Machiavelli for many is the Iago in Shakespeare's Othello: the sinister, scheming, corrupt, power-seeking politician. This individual is painted as brilliant but completely amoral. This popular view is not without its valid points, but it is a distortion. Niccolo Machiavelli was a fifteenth century civil servant and diplomat in the city state of Florence. He moved among the Borgias and the Medicis and rubbed shoulders with the leading figures of the Renaissance. When he fell from grace with the ruling family and was stripped of his rank, he became a farmer by day and a scholar by night, producing various poems, essays, a commentary on the works of Roman historian Titus Livius, and his monumental work, a short treatise called The Prince.

The ideal society for Machiavelli was that of the Roman Republic. He concerned himself with discussing how to obtain such a society, and having attained it, how to maintain it. His view of history was basically a cyclical one: human societies move through a pattern of political orders manifesting the good and bad qualities of the citizen. However the pattern is not immutable. Fortuna is capricious. She may present opportunities to the wary and skillful. The skill required to take advantage of these opportunities is called virtu, which is even less capable of translation than fortuna.

Briefly, these terms represent the two key elements in the political situation. Fortuna represents the given, the independent variable. It defines the



the parameters of political action by limiting the possibilities of effective action. Fortuna represents an entire complex multitude of factors including the political consciousness and public spiritedness of a given community, relationships between communities, available resources, geography, organization and personnel within a community, and many other factors. Virtu represents the function. It involves cleverness, strength, courage, and perhaps most of all, a sense of proportion and value. The Roman nation at the height of the Republic had virtu, and the achievements of the Republic were possible only because of that. Virtu in an individual is the ability to personally manifest these various qualities and to infuse them into a nation.

It is at this point that I should mention the infamous Machiavellianism, "the end justifies the means". I have not found this passage in Machiavelli's writing, but I have found certain concepts consistent with that maxim. Politics is a part of a human order. It has its own morality independent of religious consideration and is judged by standards appropriate to politics alone. A man undertaking political action is judged by the effectiveness of his acts, and not by their morality. Virtu is a political concept, and that must be considered when we read Machiavelli, especially when his chapter headings are, for example: "17. Of Cruelty and Clemency and Whether it is Better to Be Loved or Feared; 18. In What Ways Princes Must Keep Faith; 19. That We Must Avoid Being Hated and Despised;".

Machiavelli often refers to history, particularly in the classical period to illustrate various ways in which power can be constructively employed. His concern was always whether the conduct made the best use of the circumstances, and whether it tended to infuse virtu in the people. A successful, a good act is one which lifts a human community out of mediocrity and into virtu as it were, into a higher state of humanity.

Now we have arrived at the point at which we begin to look at Gordon Dickson. As with Machiavelli, we will look for general patterns, rather than detailed examples. However, some references to various works will be necessary to establish the pattern.

In NONE BUT MAN the protagonist Cullihan O'Rourke When is a hi-jacker and pirate. On Earth, he discovers a paranoid fear of invasion by the aliens, the Moldaug, and a fear of revolt and conquest by her colonies in the Pleiades. Earth is afraid of expanding further into space. Cully When proceeds to provoke the Moldaug by mocking their religion and performing what the Moldaug consider to be atrocities. He engineers secession of the human colonies in the Pleiades and by careful timing returns to Earth just ahead of the irate Moldaug, managing to seize control of the organs of government to be able to meet the Moldaug as the representative of the human race. In the final confrontation the significance of his various actions becomes clear. Had he not had control of the final negotiations, the timorous human leaders would have attempted to appease the Moldaug, which would have been an unspeakable insult and made war inevitable. Only Cully When had understood the nature of the Moldaug aggression as a stylized cultural gesture intended to discover whether human beings were a "respectable" life form, which demanded an appropriate response. Accordingly, he pursued a course of conduct which served the double purpose of conferring status on himself in the eyes of the Moldaug, and which established the human race as respectable. In doing so he saved the human race from both war and a diffident policy of isolationism. He established the human race as a legitimate presence in space and infused the leadership of the human race with the vigour necessary to lead man to the stars.

In THE OUTPOSTERS, the human race has found its way into space, but it is reluctant to stay there. Human colonies are populated through shipping out colonists chosen by lot and dumping them on various planets. The home planet takes minimal steps to protect their colonists from the Meda V'Dan, a mysterious alien race that persistently raids the colonies. Security on the colonies is in the hands of the

Outposters. One Outposter, Mark ten Roos, decides to alter the shepherd-sheep relationship of outposters and colonists and to organize the community in his charge for self-sufficiency. From there we move to a carefully engineered confrontation with the Meda V'Dan, who are actually space nomads, with the social system of the Bedouins. The Meda V'Dan, surprised by resistance, seek easier prey elsewhere. The Space Navy runs for cover, abandoning the colonies. In this power vacuum, the now self-sufficient colonies secede and form their own society, new. The colonies are diverted from serving a life of luxury for those at home, forcing both societies to turn to sapce.

Or in TACTICS OF MISTAKE another military hero--this time a former staff officer at a military academy, is featured. He resigns his position to take part in a confrontation in a remote part of space which causes a major shift in the balance of power and a crucial re-orientation of human affairs.

Now consider: each time, a single individual by comprehending the nature of the power relationships in existence is able to follow a carefully planned course of conduct to exploit that balance and to change the future of the human race. Every time the choice is between stagnation and a radical move into space in order to channel and direct human energies in a constructive fashion.

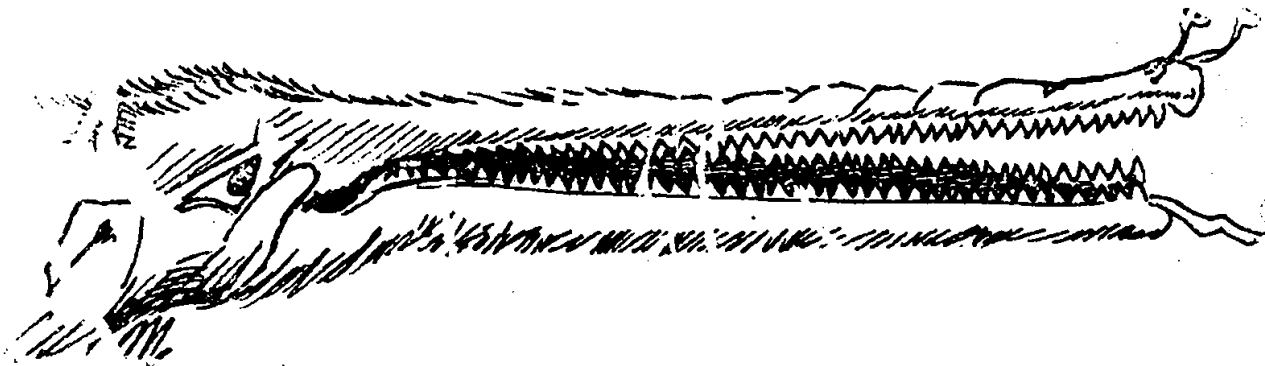
It is my opinion that in these books and elsewhere Gordon Dickson causes Machiavelli's theories to be acted out by the characters he creates. Please note the qualifications which I impose on this opinion. I do not say that Dickson does this consciously or deliberately. I do say that Dickson advocates a Machiavellian philosophy. I do not myself comment on the philosophy embodied in the writings of either author.

My point is simply this: any writer, but especially a science fiction writer inevitably embodies a unique social theory. But especially inevitably, those theories resemble in various respects those of accepted social theorists. Dickson demonstrates a theory similar to that of Machiavelli. Both appear to embrace a humanism which emphasizes the destiny of Man as the key value. Man is seen at his best when he stands as master of his world, be it the environs of the Mediterranean or the vastness of space.

This certainly is not a theme which Dickson always adopts; readers of his short stories DANGER: HUMAN, and DOLPHIN'S WAY will know that to attribute a "manifest destiny" brand of humanism to Dickson is to do him a great injustice. However, as my analysis shows, he approaches that theory in some places.

I think that my study serves to show the value of a social theory analysis of science fiction, and if I have provoked any thought on the matter, this effort will not have been wasted.

.....Tony Dalmyn



We are constantly being bombarded in theatres and on television with "bad" science fiction movies. Before I say anything further, let me define a "bad" science fiction movie: A "bad" science fiction movie is one which is not believable. The corollary to this, of course, is that a believable science fiction movie is a "good" one.

In the interests of upgrading the art of science fiction movie making and indeed the very art of cinema itself, the up-and-coming film maker should endeavour to create "good", not "bad" science fiction movies. What does this require? The easiest way to tackle this problem would be to list the "do's" and the "don't's" of sci-fi cinema. This would be practically impossible, however, because the "do's" are an ever-expanding field; new ideas and methods are being thought up every day for sf films. It would indeed be detrimental to the art to limit in any way the creation of new ideas in film production. So let us look at this from a negative standpoint. The "don't's" will be listed. Should you have intentions of making a "good" science fiction movie, draw up a list of all the things you plan to do; then check them against the following list of things not to do. Should something occur on both lists, re-write it in a more respectable manner, drop it from the script altogether, or prepare yourself for severe criticism.

### THINGS NOT TO DO:

1) Cliches: These exist for one reason only, and that is for satirization. If, for example, you wish to "beam" someone from an orbiting spacecraft to the planet's surface, derive a method for this that is as far removed from Star Trek as possible. If your method comes anywhere near it, your viewers will expect to see a landing party from the Enterprise materialize or they will either: a) leave the theatre, or b) change the channel to Hollywood Squares reruns. Seriously, though, the audience is thusly removed from the film and you must now work to get them back into it.

2) Include Easily Dated Equipment (i.e. "phoney"): Nothing could be worse than fabricating a model of a "Pocket Nuclear Disintegrator" and including it in your film only to discover that some pharmaceutical company recently marketed a "Pocket Enema" which highly resembles your disintegrator. To anyone who has seen both devices the comparison will be rather humorous, not to mention your film. (One can imagine the look of surprise on the face of our hero, Commander Bolt Upright, when he takes aim and fires at the onrushing Martian hordes only to shoot at them a thick but harmless stream of warm mineral oil!)

One should try to make his equipment and surroundings look both functional and practical. See 2001, Silent Running, Sleeper, just to name a few good examples of films with such equipment.

Another approach would be to avoid altogether themes which require large amounts of such hardware. Adapt a story such as Clarke's The Nine Billion Names Of God or Niven's Cloak Of Anarchy. These stories are not projected that far into the future and require little in the line of gadgetry.

3) Words, Words, Words: If Commander Upright employs a solar-powered knife



to slice his steak, refrain from giving it a title: "Auto-Knife" or "Slicey-Sun-Pow" or anything as silly. Call it a knife. Do you call the electric doors at your local shopping centre "electric doors" or "auto-doors"? No. They're doors, right? Do you call your eyeglasses "plastics" simply because they're making lenses out of plastic nowadays. No. You still call them glasses. Remember, names stick and the names of common everyday items last a long long time.

Also watch the length of your new words. People tend to abbreviate words and shorten phrases to speed up communication. Try and do as Frank Herbert does in Under Pressure when he has his characters abbreviate Bureau of Psychology to "Bupsych", or Larry Niven again in Cloak of Anarchy, when he calls an aerial police surveillance and law enforcement device a "Copseye". In short, make your words hold a minimum of syllables with a maximum meaning.

In closing, it can be suggested that if you really want to break any of the above rules, you might try animation, because children don't mind if Spiderman uses a Super-thermal-volcanic-atom-smasher to overpower his latest opponent; perhaps they know something we don't.....

.....Bern Roy



## ANDRIS TASKANS

SOME THOUGHTS ON SCIENCE FICTION  
AND RELIGION

"My own personal seminal influence for the fantasy that is the basis of all great speculative fiction is the Bible. (Let us all pause for a microsecond in prayer that God does not strike me with a bolt of lightning in the spleen.)"-Harlan Ellison

"I myself have no real belief about God; only my experience that he is present.....subjectively of course; but the inner realm is real, too. And in a science fiction story one projects what has been a personal inner experience into a milieu; it becomes socially shared, hence discussable."-Philip K. Dick

A few years ago, I became intrigued by the question of "the death of God", whether regarded as a true "departure" of the Ultimate, or, in Martin Buber's phrase, as an "eclipse of God", or as simply the secularization of culture. The

question seemed to me significant and of far-reaching importance both for faith and for an understanding of reality. At the time, science fiction was my great interest and I embarked upon an ambitious study entitled "Science Fiction and the Death of God". I planned to pursue the topic further, but various events intervened. My years in university further deflected me from science fiction, although the religious questions remained. Eventually I moved into the field of religious studies. And so we come to where we started, and know it for the first time.

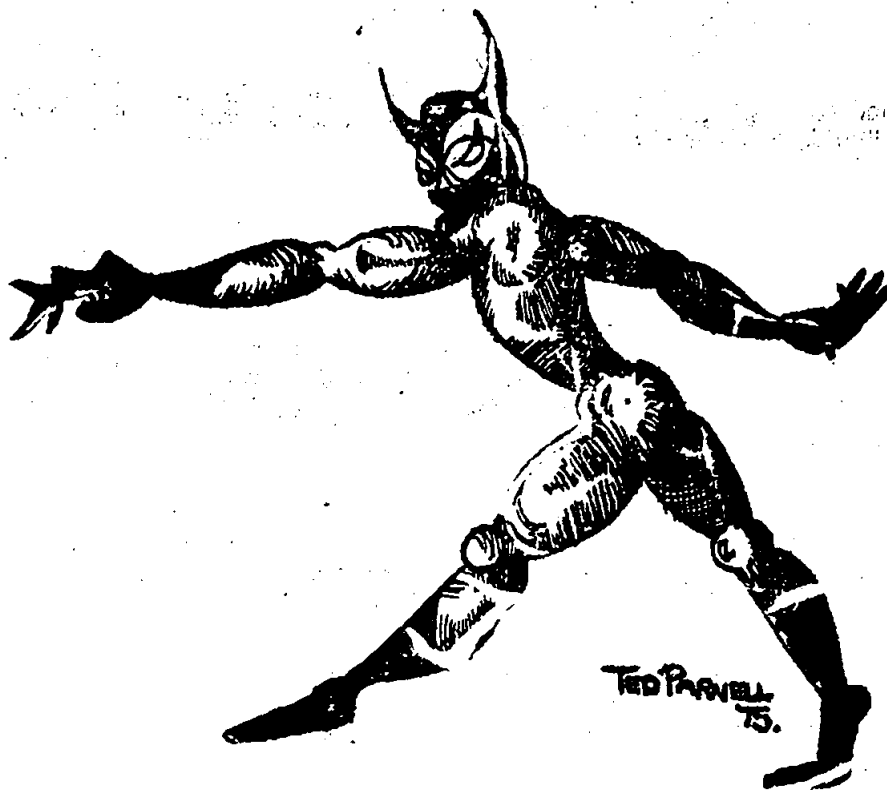
Utilizing the opportunity given me by the editor of this journal, I would like to examine at leisure and at length the issues that intrigued me some years back. Specifically, I am interested in the ideas of God and religion as they are discussed, either incidentally or characteristically, in that branch of literature we call speculative fiction. What, for example, are the ramifications of science and technology on questions of meaning and existence? Is "faith" possible in a religionless context? What does space travel "mean"? Is science fiction a new mythology? Is Man to become an Overman, or even an Overmind, or are these concepts merely misreadings of human nature due to the illusion of progress?

These are some of the broad questions I intend to appropriate for my explorations. The explorations will not be any sort of systematic mapping, but rather they will be a tenuous and perhaps even haphazard searching for a pattern. This sifting through the prophecies, the flukes, and errors of sf will no doubt seem exasperating to some. To them, I apologize in advance and plead that I am only a novice critic. For my part, I invite the participation and opinions of readers, and I would ask the readers' help in compiling a bibliography of science fiction novels and stories dealing either explicitly or implicitly with religious themes or topics.

My own partial and exploratory bibliography will appear in the next issue, along with some definitions and discussions.

.....Andris Taskans

\*\*\*\*\*



## JOHNSTON SMITH

RAH, RAH, RAH!! (or: They used to tell  
a story in Spain.....)

They used to tell a story in Spain. An American tourist approached a resident of Madrid and asked him, "Tell me, what do you think of Franco?" The rather prosperous looking shopkeeper looked furtively over his shoulder and replied to the American, "Come with me."

He hurried the tourist into a cab which took them to the central plaza in Madrid. From there they took another cab to the large park in the center of Madrid. The shopkeeper once again looked around nervously, and then he boarded the tourist onto a row boat and they rowed out to the middle of a lake. The Spaniard then cupped his hands together over his mouth, motioned the American to bend closer, and said, "I like him."

I've got a confession, too. It's to do with Robert A. Heinlein: I like him.

It didn't take me long once I first came in contact with a bizarre form of human endeavour called fandom to discover that Heinlein, to the more chic fans is considered, sniff, ah...a little puerile? "Oh, Heinlein, yes...Stranger in a Strange Land, an important book when it was written. A little bit flower-powerish, don't you think?"

Or you could get, "Heinlein? Oh, a pioneer, one of the all-time great writers, right? Four Hugos and all that. Why, I cut my teeth on Heinlein."

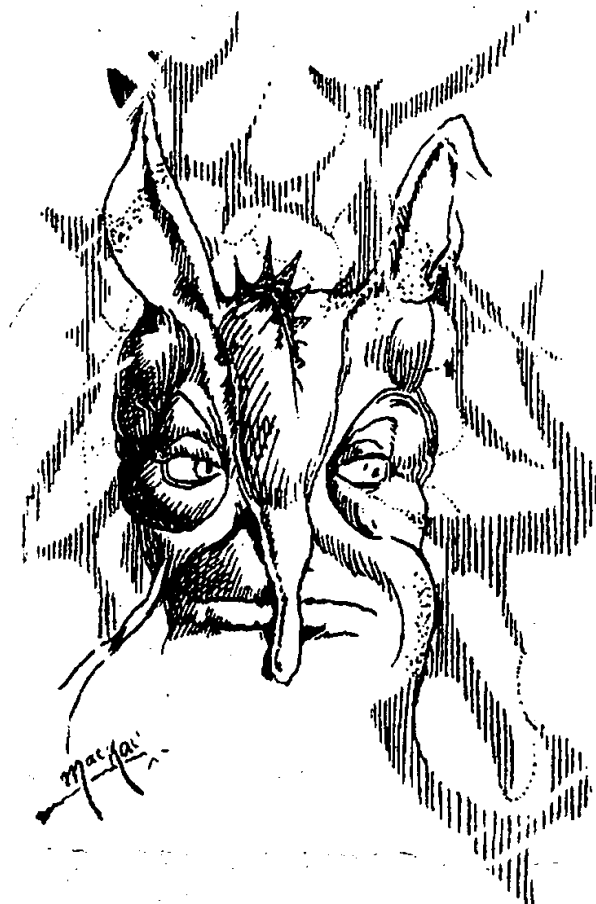
As I said, my arrival into fandom occurred quite recently, but my arrival in the creative world of Robert Heinlein occurred many years ago. What's really quite strange about Heinlein as a cult hero is that he really received no general recognition before the phenomenal success of Stranger in a Strange Land. Of course by general recognition I mean recognition from the general public. Two Hugos for best novel of the year before 1963 isn't exactly hiding in the closet, now, is it?

And yet it seems to me that as Heinlein (or at least Valentine Michael Smith) started to become a popcult hero, Heinlein's stock started to drop with the specific in-crowd. As is often the case with select circles (i.e. fandom), as soon as the in-heroes (gurus) become popular with the outside world they become no-nos with the in-side world.

Still and all, much as I know that the cogniscenti of the MidWestercons, Lunacons, Windycons, NoReallyTheWholeGoddamWorldcons consider it bourgeois to dip into RAH, I can't help myself. I am a Heinlaholic.

Everybody has read SIASL, IWFNE, TALAHM, and the really strange TEFL, but how many have looked at such gems as (to employ the in-the-know abbreviation forms) RSG, HSSWT, TRS, or one of my old favorites GR?\* Sure, in a number of ways these stories are old fashioned: they are filled with precocious little kids, little ten year old scientific geniuses who build spaceships, and all sorts of the stereotypes of the 1940-1950 Space Adventure type of story. But there are no scientific inaccuracies, no horrible bloopers, no going-for-a-stroll-on-Ceres. But more than anything there is just a good exciting story. To me, specific must be two things: it must create

\* Rocketship Galileo, Have Spacesuit Will Travel, The Rolling Stones, Glory Road



a believable universe; not a "willing suspension of disbelief" but an "anxious yearning to believe". And it must have an arresting plot. Now, I really enjoy fantastic worlds, novels that are essentially setting-dominated (e.g. Herbert's DUNE). But unless you've got a compelling story, forget it. You might as well read articles in *Whispering Fingers*, or whateverthehell this crudzine is called.

Heinlein always delivers a plot. I have never, that's right, never read a single Heinlein creation that bored me. His prime goal is always to entertain, not to mystify, to impress, or to preach to his readers. In his early novels especially (say up until 1959) he's not out to teach us a lesson. It's only in his later works that he starts to peddle this solipsist polysexual claptrap; and to the extent that the later novels devote themselves increasingly to preaching, they lose out as entertainment, and thereby fail as novels. Time Enough For Love might be a nice, thick book with pretty music but as a novel it can't hold a candle to Glory Road, which is about one-fifth its size (and sales). Yet as Heinlein tries to get us all to pull our clothes off and start hustling our sisters (or brothers or

daughters!!) he still delivers an entertaining story which is more than I can say for the groovy Stand on Zanzibar.

Now I am the first to admit there are problems with RAH. Every story has an irascible old man a la Jubal Harshaw (except for The Rolling Stones which has an irascible old woman, Gramma, and is interesting if only for that reason alone.) And of course Heinlein's rather smirky style can get a bit wearisome after a while. But I defy anyone to come up with a tale by RAH that is boring, 'cause there ain't no such animal. And if you want to see the craft of writing at its finest, please look at some of his earlier novels, the ones "you cut your teeth on". They're not just for kids....or perhaps I'm wrong. They ARE just for kids, and kids are the most discerning audience of all: if they don't like a book, they stop reading it; if they don't like a show they start booing.

If this dreckzine should come out again, and if The Galactic Overlord His Supreme Spacewarp The Universal Murd Randy Reichardt wants it, my next column will probably deal with some of the recurrent themes and characters in Heinlein. But until then, go and dust off some of those old novels stored away in your hope chests and re-discover Grandad Bob.

RAH RAH FOREVER!!

HEIL HEINLEIN

.....Johnston Smith

While fondly looking through my run of Thrilling Wonder Stories, it occurred to me that the now sadly departed pulp magazines managed to generate an almost tangible atmosphere, possessed a distinct "flavour" that has somehow failed to survive in the present circle of professional science-fiction magazines. Despite their many faults, the pulps had a certain vitality, an individuality that makes them warrant consideration not only as unique art forms, but as important contributors to the status science-fiction now enjoys.

The writing in the science fiction pulps was so varied in style, plotting, and thematic execution as to render it virtually impossible to describe it under one all-inclusive heading. A good deal of the earlier pulp writing, particularly that in the earlier Gernsback publications, is by today's standards unrefined and cliché-reeking; every possible variation of a theme would frequently see exposure within a few issues of any particular magazine. As a result of these "growing pains" in the genre, besides the dubious impression of the pulps established by the many hack-magazines of the time, writing that is described as "pulpish" is viewed under a derogatory light.

This is basically unfair, and furthermore shows an astonishing lack of critical sense on the part of those who are so hasty in allowing the rotten apple to infect the whole barrel. In defence of the earlier writing, it must be realized that science fiction had not yet matured as an individual genre of literature, let alone having been accepted as one by general readers. Concepts and themes were as yet in the experimental stages of their long evolution, and writing techniques had certainly not progressed to the level of sophistication they now enjoy and occupy.

Another likely explanation that accounts for the erratic production from the writers was the presence of a greater number of markets; it was estimated once that there was actually in excess of twenty different science fiction magazines available on the stands at one time. Certainly with the fiction thusly spread about, magazines could hardly afford to be as discerning as they are now. In addition, the best fiction was usually first submitted to the premier and highest paying magazine of the time, Astounding. With the constant threat of bankruptcy looming over most of the magazines, they could hardly lure in excellent writing with substantial rates; with dismally low payments offered for fiction, or for that matter artwork, most writers would be under no obligation to establish themselves as profoundly literate craftsmen. Simply put, the markets were many and easily accessible.

It's unreasonable, however, to unearth excuses for the bad writing when so much really excellent material enjoyed an appearance in the pulps; in fact, much of the fiction was classical, and beyond merely surviving today in multitudes of paperback reprints, has acquired a new significance that has influenced a whole generation of writers. Undeniably, Astounding and Weird Tales ran the highest calibre of fiction in their respective fields, and yet, of all the pulps, those that displayed the greatest consistency in the level of writing and illustration were the fantasy magazines included under the Popular Publications chain: Famous Fantastic Mysteries, Fantastic Novels, and A. Merritt's Fantasy. Although as a rule they obtained their material from sources available elsewhere, they nevertheless showed an acute editorial ability, and seldom failed to maintain a remarkably fine appearance. Of all the pulps, with the possible exception of Argosy, these were the most dependable sources of entertainment: Merritt, Cummings, Farley, Stoker, England, and Leinster:

all masters who eventually found their way into these memorable magazines.

The artwork in the pulps had to withstand the buffets of an even greater number of obstacles than did the fiction, and yet remarkably, many of the finer representative examples of the illustrating have survived until the present as the most beautiful work ever done in the field. Artists not only had to contend with poor grades of paper and unrefined techniques in printing that left many illustrations horribly mangled, but also had little financial compensation to look forward to; rates for illustrations were even more alarming than was the case with writing, and it's little wonder that many frustrated artists simply refused to turn out work of a quality that was more than barely acceptable. The cover artists were under still another handicap: in the interests of competing with all the many other pulps for the buyer's attention, editors would frequently advise them to sacrifice any artistic virtues in the art for eye-riveting garish displays of colour and action. Small wonder the stereotyped image science fiction suffers from had its genesis in that period.

The illustrations in the pulps may have been disfigured by a variety of things now long overcome, and yet, in so many different, inexplicable ways, they had a dramatic power, a wonder about them. Certainly pulp artists enjoyed, although sometimes abused, the luxury of large-size full-page spaces. The talent of the artists themselves, however, was that which contributed most to the lasting imprint of pulp art in the field. The pulp age was fortunate enough to have prospered at a time when many of the field's greatest artists were at the height of their development. Finlay and Lawrence turned out some beautiful creations, the full imaginative scope of which is still being marveled at. Few artists displayed such meticulous and detailed precision in their work as these masters, and their presence in many a magazine was often its only saving grace, as many a brief glimpse through out-of-print lists will testify.

Of all the science fiction illustrators, it was Frank R. Paul who most firmly established himself as a source of inspiration to both artist and writer. As evidenced by his cover work in many issues of Amazing and Fantastic Adventures, he possessed an almost magical ability to convincingly depict alien cultures. His work had its structural flaws, yet few other artists could rival his genius for imaginative beings and settings, and his influence is apparent in countless modern styles. As well, Frank Kelly Freas, the nine time Hugo winner, first saw exposure in the pulps; his two-paged spreads in Planet Stories largely established his reputation as a powerful stylist.

Many of the covers cannot be taken seriously, of course, since they were designed in the interests of economic strategy and must be viewed with an affectionate, light-hearted attitude. Of all the pulp artists, certainly Earle Bergey is most vividly impressed in our memories as one of the main architects of the stereotyped covers: bright yellows, expansively limbed females, and stock heroes boldly graced his covers on most issues of Thrilling Wonder Stories and Startling; so frequently in fact that it was virtually impossible to distinguish between the two. But even he had his occasional moments of artistic genius, rare as they may have been. Unfortunately, for an artist of such potential, quantity detracted from quality. Still, one cannot glance through his work and resist its appeal, for no matter how glaring his cover may have been at times, they were strongly representative of the period.

Whatever their relative merits and faults may have been, the science fiction pulp magazines not only contributed to the general public's growing awareness of science fiction as an important genre in literature, but as well, catalyzed the first fandoms through the letter columns; through encouraging open and intelligent exchanges of opinion between the first fans, regardless of how juvenile or naive the

magazine's attitude may have been, the letter columns are rightfully considered as the progenitor of the first fanzines. There was something about the pulp magazine itself that inspired the enthusiasm of its readers and countless collectors to follow; there's a vital informality, an attractiveness and appeal about the pulps as individual magazines. With the recent appearance of several attractively done pulp histories, including a fine study by Ron Goulart and a beautiful book from Bonanza that includes numerous colour reproductions of the pulp covers, the pulp magazines are only recently being appreciated fully for their lasting effect on a generation of dreamers.

.....Stuart Gilson

~~\*\*\*\*\*~~

AN EXERCISE IN FRUSTRATION (Or, Don't Live in Winnipeg and Read Science Fiction at the same time.)

The selection of science fiction in Winnipeg public libraries is not good at all. The main library, which presently houses over 200,000 books, has but seven shelves of science fiction. The cataloguing, which, granted, is quite dated in some cases, is questionable, too. A quick check, say, for a few Hugo winning novels will reveal that although The Left Hand of Darkness, Stranger In A Strange Land, The Gods Themselves, Stand On Zanzibar, and The Dispossessed are all classified as Fiction (Science), books such as Dune, A Canticle For Leibowitz, and The Man In The High Castle can be found classified as general fiction. The number of books in each branch is less, of course, and the selection is nothing to rave about either.

Now the system of libraries at the University of Manitoba has quite a few more books than the main library, including a massive periodical section. These libraries serve upwards of 20,000 students. The available sf here is practically nil, but I could always accept that fact, assuming that the University libraries are designed to serve student needs as opposed to public and/or personal demands. But recently I had that theory shot down when I visited the University of Winnipeg library, which serves 5-6000 students. Out of curiosity, I checked the subject catalogue under science fiction, to see if the library housed any criticisms or histories. To my surprise, I discovered 2 partial and 1 full drawer exclusively listing every novel; criticism, 2 con programs (Chicon '62 and Discon '63) and much more. Apparently, they had an extensive sf section, and had given every novel a separate classification under Science Fiction in the subject catalogue. The novels constituted the bulk of the collection, and I found many out-of-print books, such as The Wanderer, as well as some Mark Clifton novels (but, alas, not They'd Rather Be Right). So I moved frantically into the stacks and began my search for the section; it was the Library of Congress system, so they were listed as PZ. But to my frustration, I could not locate them, so I checked with circulation and discovered they were all on reserve. Reserve???!!! It appears that during the first years the books were in the stacks, over 400 were stolen, so it became necessary to move them behind the desk, out of the reach of library shoplifters.

I still cannot understand why, though, of all the libraries in town, the best selection of sf should be at the U of Winnipeg. They don't even offer a course in the subject (U of M devotes part of a half course to sf). On the positive side, it certainly is gratifying to know there is a good selection of sf somewhere in Winnipeg (outside of private collections, of course, Mr. Cuthbert!). But the main drawback is that access is restricted to U of W students only. The other point is this: given such a marvelous selection, one could browse for hours, but that's not allowed, uh-uh. You must present a list to the clerk, and she'll retrieve them for you. I asked, if there was some way of obtaining special permission, but all I received was a sideways shake of the head. Perhaps if the Spaced Out Library opened up a branch in Winnipeg.....

...ze editor

---

**SWORDS-PLAY AND DERRING-DO**

Being called upon (rather begged) by ye editor to fill in space for the first issue of his fanzine, I was requested to attempt "a bookreview of sorts..., please?" Inquiring as to whether there wer any guidelines or qualifications I should adhere to since I had never seen let alone read a fanzine, he replied that the books should have been published fairly recently. Keeping this in mind, I have attempted the following: Rather than being a critique it is more generally a list of some of the novels I consider worth mentioning that have appeared in the field of fantasy.

**AS THE GREEN STAR RISES Lin Carter; DAW Books, \$1.25**

Continuing the great tradition that Edgar Rice Burroughs created 70 years ago Carter excells himself this time, in this, his latest work in the four volume Green Star series. Carter himself admits to being called a near carbon-copy-writer whose works have no individuality of their own from their predecessors and contemporaries. It is my feeling, if I may quote the Python crew, "Anything worth doing is worth overdoing". Since Burroughs isn't with us anymore someone has to fill this empty void in science-fantasy literature, and Carter does it admirably.

True, even as fantasy is considered this book doesn't stand beside the masters (Gormanghast and Once and Future King) come to mind) but it is a different style of writing and succeeds in what it sets out to do: entertain you. This is just a simple swashbuckling adventure at its best, nothing more, nothing less. Carter here even surpasses ERB himself at times during the narration. As can be expected, there are lost princesses, evil villains, loyal comrades, and of course the famous cliff-hanger ending that makes this novel so typical yet so enjoyable.

**THE HOUNDS OF SKAITH Leigh Brackett; Ballantine, \$1.75**

Within the last year we have seen the re-emergence of many of the famous writers of old. One of these is Leigh Brackett, famous for her countless stories that thrilled thousands during the dying days of the pulps. Her old hero, Eric Stark, is back again for more of the same, this time only greater and better. While not a direct outright copy like Carter's she makes no secret of the fact that Burroughs was her model. This book along with its predecessors in this series (published last year) is reasonably competent, harmlessly entertaining, but not so quickly forgettable as the countless number of other "Conan prototypes" on the shelves today. They (her books) seem to have a magic all their own, a sort of magic which is hard to put a finger on. Unique she is not; enjoyable she is, made evident by this latest outing.

**BLADESHAN OF ANTARES Alan Burt Akers, DAW Books**

As the title suggests, this novel is yet another off-world yarn of adventure but with one particular that sets it apart from the previously mentioned books- it is execrable! This does not only apply to this book but also to the previous eight in the series as well. The entire series gives me the impression that Akers exhausted all his ideas in the first 150 pages of the first novel and for the next 8 he just pulled and stretched the dreck as far as it could go until...in this latest



fiasco of his, it has finally broken up and gone back, flying into his face. It is rarely that I cannot finish a novel no matter how bad it is- this book I'm afraid is one of them. No plot, boring scenery, boring adventures (see also: tedious, uninteresting, dull, prosaic; vapid, commonplace, colorless, drab, arid, dry, flat, humdrum, insipid, lifeless. To be continued next issue.), boring..... Seventy pages was all I could take of this piece of excrement before it was tossed into some moldy corner of my room, and there it lies today under a pile of textbooks that I never touch.

The backjacket of this book says it is better than the Gor books and compares it with LOTR. Nothing could be farther from the truth. It's hard to believe that these books sell enough for DAW to start reprints. I can think of only one good reason to invest in this book: starting to read it will put you in a sweat to re-read Tolkien.

.....Bob France

---

One final word as I type the last stencil: I don't know what the repro is going to be like, but you'll know by the time you read this. I certainly hope it will be readable and that the illos look OK. For any mistakes or poor reproduction, I apologize now to everyone; I had a hell of a time cementing these electrostencils for the first time, but it was fun and good experience. Next issue should be much better; the only direction to go is up.

---

This is number 28 in a run of approximately 200.

---





de last word: As I type this we're half way through running this off, and I've noticed a few typing mistakes and some poor repro on the illos. So, may I just apologize to the artists and writers here again. Sorry; all.

de final plug: In Winnipeg; visit The Paperback Galaxy, 333 Hargrave; phone: 1-204-957-0540. The latest new sf and fantasy paperbacks; easily the best selection in town. Ask them to send you a catalogue.

WINDING NUMBERS  
58 Penrose Place  
Winnipeg  
Manitoba  
Canada  
R2J 1S1

CHESTER CUTHBERT

TO:

1104 MULVEY

WINNIPEG

MANITOBA.