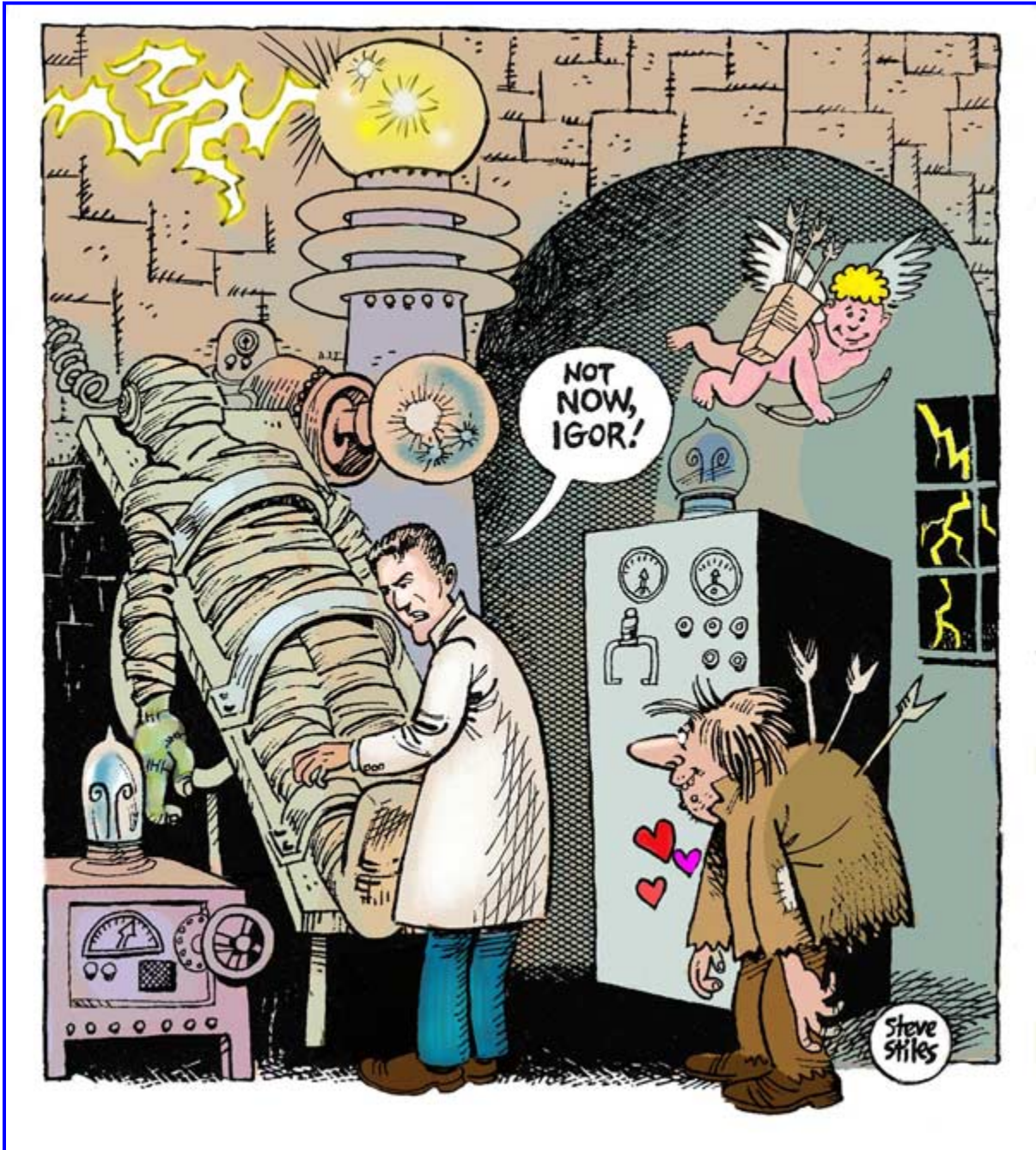




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"Valentine's Day," by Steve Stiles

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Thanks to TV and for the convenience of TV, you can only be one of two kinds of human beings, either a liberal or a conservative.

--Kurt Vonnegut, “Cold Turkey”, *In These Times*, May 10, 2004

THIS ISSUE OF *eI* is in memory of The Philadelphia Science Fiction Group and the guys of Prime Press.

In the strictly science fiction world, it is also in memory of the #1 Fan Face, Forrest J Ackerman, Edd Cartier, Jim Cawthorn, and Donald E. Westlake.

#

As always, everything in this issue of *eI* beneath my byline is part of my in-progress rough-draft memoirs. As such, I would appreciate any corrections, revisions, extensions, anecdotes, photographs, jpegs, or what have you sent to me at earlkemp@citlink.net and thank you in advance for all your help.

Bill Burns is *jefe* around here. If it wasn't for him, nothing would get done. He inspires activity. He deserves some really great rewards. It is a privilege and a pleasure to have him working with me to make *eI* whatever it is.

Other than Bill Burns, Dave Locke, and Robert Lichtman, these are the people who made this issue of *eI* possible: Wrai Ballard, Victor J. Banis, Bruce Brenner, Dian Crayne, Stephen J. Gertz, Jacques Hamon, Earl Terry Kemp, Lori L. Lake, Michael Moorcock, Gerald W. Page, Les Wiley, and, from the Eaton Collection: Melissa Conway and Rob Latham.

ARTWORK: This issue of *eI* features original artwork by Steve Stiles, Harry Bell, and Ditmar, and recycled artwork by William Rotsler.

It has been my experience with literary critics and academics in this country that clarity looks a lot like laziness and ignorance and childishness and cheapness to them. Any idea which can be grasped immediately is for them, by definition, something they knew all the time.

--Kurt Vonnegut, *Palm Sunday*

...Return to sender, address unknown.... 32

The Official *eI* Letters to the Editor Column

Artwork recycled William Rotsler

By Earl Kemp

We get letters. Some parts of some of them are printable. Your letter of comment is most wanted via email to earlkemp@citlink.net or by snail mail to P.O. Box 6642, Kingman, AZ 86402-6642 and thank you.

Also, please note, I observe DNQs and make arbitrary and capricious deletions from these letters in order to remain on topic.

This is the official Letter Column of *eI*, and following are a few quotes from a few of those letters concerning the last issue of *eI*. All this in an effort to get you to write letters of comment to *eI* so you can look for them when they appear here.

Wednesday December 3, 2008

Thomas Ramirez: Yesterday afternoon I had an empty moment (horrors!) and went back and looked at your October issue.

I don't read everything of course, not being an sf or Weird fan, but I chanced on the piece by Jerry Murray, "SLODGE."



And I didn't read EVERYTHING here either. BUT I did zoom in on the details of San Diego and Hamling and Kemp. These I am vaguely—very vaguely—familiar with. So much of that Mexico stuff was like fantasy to me.

All I can say is that Murray really pushed the envelope. (and I thought MY 28-page autobiography was overlong) as regards testing reader endurance.

And I can also wonder at my TOTAL naiveté when I was pounding out Calvanos etc. for *Nightstand* et al. God, the stuff I didn't, don't and never will know!

Anyway, his beginnings (you never sent me "Elements of Style"—maybe because I didn't really need it—I knew that stuff in sixth grade) were most interesting, and the photo books you two got involved in was a revelation of sorts. (I recall Jerry Somebody (?) who was moonlighting on similar projects when I was at Nat. Features Syndicate in Chicago back in 70-73, and he wanted me to write scanty story lines for same—which I passed on.)

The Mexico adventures were both rollicking and fucking scary. What a fascinating life you and Jerry have led, Earl! (When you were clear any way.) As you may recall, I got my porno backgrounds from *National Geographic*. Murray lived through enough wild stuff to suggest plots forever. And yet, being the timid, mild-mannered type that I am, I don't think I'd really have enjoyed living through such frantic episodes. But some of the plots I could have spun if I had. Wow!

That machete scene was one of the highlights of the Murray piece.

As for Roy Masters, I don't recall ever reading any of these. Sound like very original stuff.

Anyway, thanks for the memories. Nice to see how another Greenleaf writer handled the topic.

Thursday December 4, 2008

Gregory Benford: *eI41* Great issue. So much content! You've got my Hugo nomination.

Lichtman is right on the depth of UCR fanzine holdings—but I hope he eventually donates Terry Carr's complete files to UCR. *Innuendo* was a great fanzine, and *Lighthouse* the same. Deft.

Lloyd Penney says (I think): I eagerly await John Purcell's report on how Jim Halperin is treating the Warner Collection. I'd like to see Greg Benford up here as a guest at Ad Astra, but no such luck.

Monday December 15, 2008:

John Purcell: A bit late with my comments on *eI40*, but wotthehell...

You would be pleased to know, Earl, that I am assembling a complete run of not only *Askance* (first 11 issues) but also of *In a Prior Lifetime* and ...and furthermore to send to Melissa Conway at Eaton. Thanks to the Eaton Collection, I have re-acquired copies of older zines of mine, particularly *This House* from the 1970s, for my files. The articles that you and Chris Garcia contributed to this issue of *eI* have inspired me to do a much better job of archiving my fannish memorabilia, which is definitely A Good Idea.

Still, I doubt I will bequeath the goodies I have acquired over my fannish career to Eaton. The more I think about it, the more I believe I will donate the whole kit and kaboodle to Iowa State University. Hal Hall here at Texas A&M University makes a good case for being the repository of my crap, but ISU holds a strong spot in my heart because that's where I earned my BA and MA degrees. I would like my books, zines, and convention memorabilia to form the basis of a decent sf & f collection at ISU. If anything, I can contact Dr. Conway and get ideas on how to approach ISU for doing this.



And this is the extent of this loc. At least you have done the Right Thing and made me think of what to do with all of my stuff once I shuck this mortal coil. For that, I thank you.

Tuesday December 16, 2008:

Lloyd Penney: Ah, another *eI*, issue 41, and another interesting read. Always welcome and always enjoyable. I'll make another attempt to write a decent letter. Some zines make it difficult to write a good loc; I like the challenge. Nothing says I'll actually rise to the challenge, but I'll take a shot at it.

I keep hoping that Richard Lynch's book on fandom in the '60s will see the light of day soon. I wonder if Rich found the whole project a little too much, or if because he had to travel extensively for work, if he ran out of available time for research.

My loc...I know where the Anticipation fanzine lounge is going to be. It will be in the middle of the convention display area/concourse on the Palais de Congres's second floor. Not my preference, but at least I now know. I have sent my furnishing preferences to John Mansfield, Terry Fong and Bruce Farr, and I will be asking them about an internet connection so we can get some content for the virtual Fan Lounge. I am still waiting for my copy of the Drop. I have some people to pester in the new year.

I don't get to every Worldcon, and I know how many people feel about the fan Hugos, but when I am a member of Worldcon, I do vote, and Steve Stiles gets one of my nominations each time. The Fan Artist rocket could use a little more spreading around, and Steve is the number one artist I'd spread Hugo to. I'd also nominate Schirm.

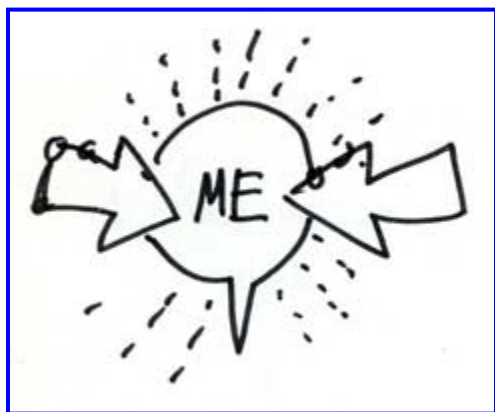
I admit, I'd never seen the artwork of Ronald Clyne before, or if I had, I didn't know his name. Marvellous artwork, definitely pro quality, so I think fanzine editors were fortunate to get his artwork. His later work looks interesting, and so professional for the age...I hope there might be a book of his work so that we could study how the artist developed over the years. So many examples of work that started good, and became excellent.

Lots of cover art to illustrate the rise of Ray Palmer. The photo of Palmer and Shaver...Palmer must have been 6 foot tall, and Shaver all of 4 foot and a bit.

Thursday December 18, 2008:

Mike Deckinger: The highlight of the current issue, for me, was Richard Toronto's fittingly titled "The Man From Tomorrow" about Ray Palmer.

Palmer has always fascinated me for his fierce dedication and his willingness to embrace the most ludicrous of concepts if he felt there were others equally overcome by these pursuits. The magazines he held free rein on, were unflinchingly, joyously garish, awash in flamboyant imagery and ultra-pulp storylines. You prayed no one would ever catch you reading them, as you pored over them, entranced.



Toronto failed to note what was RAP's final great crusade, to publish *Tarzan on Mars* by John Bloodstone (Stuart J. Byrne) in *Other Worlds*. Palmer was a self-confessed Burroughs devotee and wished to print a 100,000-word novel, by the little-known Byrne, concerning the ape-man's adventures on the red planet.

There was only one catch. The Burroughs estate said No. And not just a non-committal "you're-out-of-luck" subdued no. They were most emphatic in criticizing the story; "not very good or very interesting" and declaring it would never see print, at least featuring the celebrated jungle man.

Palmer was aghast and spent several issues crusading for his right to print it; urging readers to contact the Burroughs estate direct and prevail upon them to allow publication. The estate stood firm, having weathered much more substantial assaults on their copyright, and the story never appeared under the title "Tarzan on Mars." When it became clear that all this prodding was unproductive, Palmer moved on to other things.

It is possible this novel appeared years later from a paperback publisher under the title *Godman*, but I'm unable to locate my copy, to confirm this.

A recent net surfing expedition provided some fascinating results. Do a Google search on "University of Iowa, Gertrude M. Carr." This brings you to the repository of correspondence, both from and to G.M. Carr. A list of several hundred names reveals she had a very extensive and varied circle of correspondents. Besides displaying most of the fans active in the '50s and '60s, there are some truly dumbfounding inclusions from Sen. William Knowland and Sen. Joseph McCarthy. How I would love to leaf through THEIR letters.

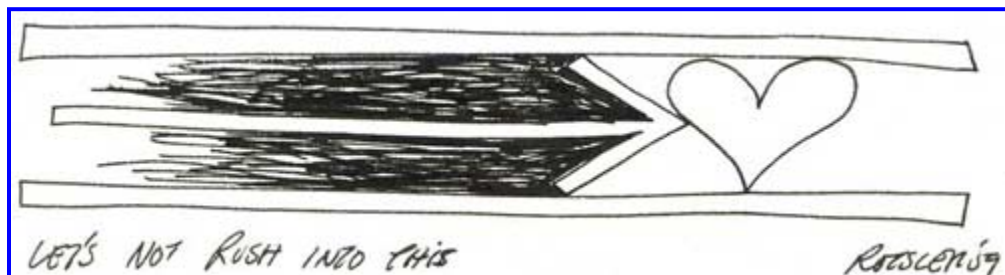
For more about Gertrude Carr, see Outsiders #128 elsewhere in this issue of eI. —Earl Kemp

Thursday December 25, 2008:

Jay A. Gertzman: Earl: Another fascinating issue. Those Wallace Smith illustrations that Ronald Clyne issued were originally part of a book that Ben Hecht hoped would incite censorship, so he could challenge the moralists. Covici published the book, called *Fantazius Mallare*, in 1922. It was more decadent than modernist, but had the kind of sophistication, explicit language, and erotic content that would attract an upscale readership. Censorship

would help sales, and Covici even had copies placed in his bookshop windows opened to some of the illustrations. Wallace Smith had drawn penises surrounded by thorny branches, writing naked figures, and someone having intercourse with a tree. My copy is in the black boards and red end papers that were a code for erotica. I think those illustrations were in the style of the great Austrian artist Egon Schiele.

Your friend Raymond A Palmer is another example of a popular publisher working in a disrespected (“pulp”) genre who turns out to have more serious ideas and a more lively audience with which to discuss them than genteel and academic publishers of Little Magazines. And unlike those, he is willing to face ridicule and hostility for being subversive regarding his country (atomic testing and military intrusion into people’s lives and health). Another example was Alex Hillman, an opportunistic publisher of detective mags (some spicy) who, like others, ran exposes of police corruption in major cities and the symbiosis of the politicians, gangsters, and police. But he had spicy images of women, and images of violent people, on his covers, to increase sales. So, of course, the public was warned off such “shady” publishers as cheap crooks who of course could have nothing legitimate to say.



Sunday January 11, 2009:

John Boston/Fmzfen: Maybe I had better ward off bad luck by telling you that the Dan Steffan piece on Ronald Clyne in the last *eI* was about the most interesting thing I have read in the last month, even though

I barely knew Clyne’s name before that. Good show.

#

Randy Byers/Fmzfen: Same here. When I saw how long it was, I groaned, but I ended up reading the whole thing. I particularly loved some of the digressions, such as the stories about Hannes Bok and the scammer who took everybody to the cleaners and fled to Colorado. Fascinating stuff, and lots of great JPEGs, too, which I gathered into my folder of stefnal art. (Also true of the long piece on Shaver.)

To connect this to another thread here, it’s long past time that *eI* got a FAAn Award, isn't it? I'll be nominating it for the Hugos, too.

#

Robert Lichtman: Steve turned in a lovely seasonal cover for this issue! The snowflake fairly shimmers. In your verbal paean to Steve you write, “Isn’t it time that someone besides Bill and me recognize his accomplishments and acts accordingly.” Except that Steve has never managed to cop a best fanartist rocket, I believe he’s been very well recognized over the years. Along with Dan Steffan, I consider him one of *Trap Door*’s staff artists (not to exclude others who’ve provided good custom artwork over the years as well, of course).

Mike Deckinger poses an interesting question: “I’m wondering too, how the Eaton library is coping with the growing trend to produce fanzines only in digital, and not hard copy formats? Do they offer digital storage and retrieval for these products? Will their present accumulation ever be converted to electronic issues?” I would hope that at the very least they’re downloading everything that’s available via Bill Burns’s site, whether or not they print hard copies. As for the last point, *that* would be an enormous project but one I’m sure I’m not the only one looking forward to. I hope Rob Latham or Melissa Conway has an answer in the next issue.

Victor Banis's short piece was very affecting, and quite unlike much of his other work in *eI* over the years as chronicled on the following page. Thanks to him for writing it and to you for publishing it.

Dan Steffan's "A Labor of Love" describes not only Ronald Clyne's artwork but also Dan's amazing—no, Herculean—effort in gathering all this information and putting it together into such a fascinating, informative and (dare I say it?) compelling narrative. I'm pleased and proud to have been able to provide many of the fanzine cover scans and several of the book dustjacket scans that illustrate it. And I appreciated Dan's mention during the process of Clyne's illustrations for *Voltaire: Shorter Works*. He sent me a couple of his scans, which led me to seek out and buy a copy of the book. I may never read the stories, but I love the artwork.

I hope Dan gets so covered over with egoboo for this article that it moves him to carry on with his dream of producing something similar about Hannes Bok.

Richard Newsome's interview with Clyne was a nice addition to the coverage. I wish there had been more photos of what looks to be a very interesting house.

I enjoyed reading Nic's and Peter's contributions to this issue but can't think of a single thing to add to my appreciation for jobs well done.

Richard Toronto's long article on Ray Palmer—and by extension, Richard Shaver and Fred Crisman for the influence they had on him and his editing and publishing over the years—was a very welcome piece. Although I've known bits and pieces of Palmer's life narrative over the years, Toronto tied it together for me in a coherent fashion for the first time.

Participation in an art, although unrewarded by wealth and fame, is a way to make one's soul grow.
--Kurt Vonnegut

Sailing With the Sun

By Les Wiley

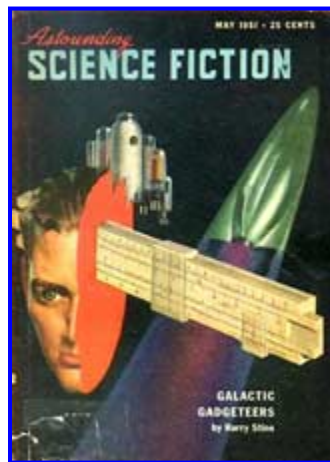
“Are the Clipper Ships gone forever?”

Believe it or not, the odds are great that within the not to distant future, spaceships attached to huge metallic sails will be propelled by sunlight between the planets and eventually beyond our solar system.

These solar sailing space ships will be reminiscent of the Clipper ships that were driven before the wind as they navigated the world’s oceans in the not to distant past.

Sounds incredible? Let me explain.

An electrical engineer, Carl A. Wiley, aka Russell Saunders, was one of the early pioneers of solar sailing. He first worked out his ideas on how to construct and operate solar sails back in the early 1950’s, and published a magazine article announcing his results.



Carl’s article describing solar sailing appeared in the May 1951 issue of *Astounding Science Fiction* as “The Clipper Ships of Space.”

Light particles, *photons*, are little packets of energy that, like bullets, transfer their momentum to physical objects upon impact. The energy contained within a single photon is minute, but the accumulated energy of countless photons impacting on a solid object like a huge metal sail attached to a spaceship will drive that spaceship to the speeds required to make interplanetary passages.

Unlike noisy lift-off of a Saturn V rocket going to the moon, a solar sailing vessel accelerates at a very slow rate. The Saturn V can lift heavy objects from the surface of the earth into earth orbit but our solar sailing vessel must be constructed in orbit and remain there at all times. A solar sail is a fragile craft. The Saturn V makes a great commotion for just a few minutes then runs out of fuel and becomes lifeless. A solar sailing vessel accelerates quietly 24 hours a day, month in month out, year in year out.

Carl’s big insight was that a small continuous acceleration applied over time results in an exponential growth in the speed of a solar-sail-powered spaceship. Our solar sail’s exponential growth in speed rapidly reaches the point where our spacecraft is traveling so fast that rapid interplanetary trips become possible. The time it takes our spaceship to accelerate to a high speed is less than you might think due to the wonders of exponential growth.

Exponential growth affects us in many ways. Imagine the money accumulating in your bank account due to the accumulation of interest. Your bank account can rapidly grow to contain large sums if you just leave it alone and

allow the wonders of exponential growth to work its magic.

A popular Internet video lecture on the mysteries of exponential growth, given by Dr. Albert Bartlette at the University of Colorado at Boulder, "Arithmetic, Population, and Energy," can be found on YouTube at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-QA2rkpBSY>

Dr. Bartlette insists that one of the greatest failings of the human mind is its inability to comprehend the powers of exponential growth.

We use the "term miles per gallon" to describe the efficiency of internal combustion engines. Rocket engineers have a similar term to describe and compare the efficiency of rocket engines. The rocket term is called Specific Impulse.

The five awesome J-1 first-stage rocket engines on the Saturn V that took men to the moon during the Apollo Program had a specific impulse of 304s.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rXtG3vfAIA>

The Saturn V upper stage J-2 engines had a specific impulse of 426s.

NASA's Variable Specific Impulse Magnetoplasma Rocket (VSIMR) has a specific impulse that can be as high as 30,000s.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVsgSjm_vXg

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zj53rVWK5z0>

Our solar sail has them all beat with an infinite specific impulse. As long as the sun is shining there is power, low power to be sure, but power nonetheless. Our solar sailing vessel gets out of the gate slowly but we all know who won the race between the tortoise and the hare.

Carl Wiley visualized a spaceship constructed like a huge parachute with rigging wires supporting the crew capsule suspended beneath. Much like a modern parachute, pulling and releasing the suspension cables could control the spaceship. Carl's solar sail would be constructed out of an aluminized Mylar fabric that was a new product back in the 1950s. The suspension lines would be made out of drawn tungsten wires. Today's materials are lighter and stronger than what was available in the early 1950s.

A number of other types of solar powered ships have been proposed since then, including solar sailing craft that look like huge helicopters. These are called heliogyros.

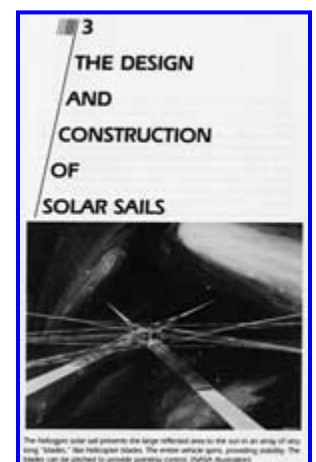
Heliogyro simulation

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W51fKMqIen8>

Our solar sailing vessel can, like a sailboat, run before the wind to the outer planets or tack back up-wind and drive inward toward the sun. The gravitational pull of the sun acts like a keel on a sailboat and allows our ship to tack upwind, so to speak.

In addition, our solar sail can take advantage of the gravitational slingshot effect of a close planetary encounter to accelerate its speed as well as change the direction of its flight. NASA uses this gravitational slingshot effect to good purpose to direct their current space vehicles to other planets. The most famous of these voyages was what was called the "Grand Tour," which took the Voyager 1 and 2 spacecraft to the outer planets and out beyond our solar system.

A good summary of the current state of the art of solar sailing can be found at:

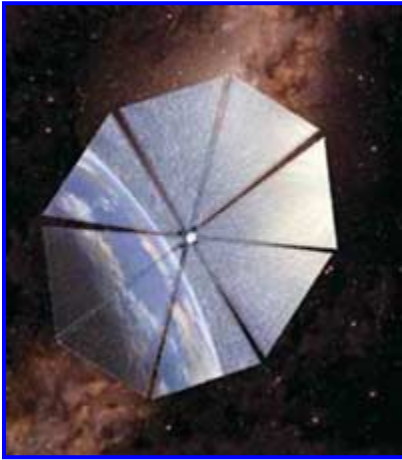


http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solar_sail

The next question is: “If you are so smart why ain’t you rich?”

Where are the solar sailing space ships?

It is not for the lack of trying that solar sailing has not yet arrived on the scene.



Cosmos 2

Back in 1977 and '78, NASA began work on a project to send a spacecraft to catch Haley's Comet. No chemical rocket could accelerate a spacecraft to the speeds required to rendezvous with Haley's Comet that was traveling at a tremendous rate of speed. Haley's Comet falls into the inner solar system from far outside of the solar system and has a long time to accelerate before whipping around the sun and racing once again out of the solar system. A new type of spaceship would be required to catch up with and study this comet. A solar-sail-powered spaceship offered a solution.

In 1977, at JPL, a solar sail spacecraft design team was assembled consisting of NASA engineers Jerome Wright, Louis Friedman, William Layman, and William Carroll. Their task was to undertake a crash program to come up with a design for a solar sail in less than a year for a spacecraft that would have to be launched in 1981.

The project to build the *Yankee Clipper* was canceled before construction began. NASA management decided that it was not willing to engage in such a bold undertaking in such a short time frame. A more conservative design approach was selected using an engine similar to VSIMR. Budget problems and time constraints eventually killed the Haley's Comet mission and the solar sailing idea returned to the drawing boards.

Despite the fact solar sailing has generated much interest, until recently no such spacecraft has been constructed or tested.

The Planetary Society, Louis Friedman, along with support from Carl Sagan's widow, Ann Druyan, and the Cosmos Studios has undertaken a program to launch what they call the first “Flight by Light” spacecraft. This will be a small, remotely piloted proof of concept vehicle.

http://www.planetary.org/programs/projects/solar_sailing/

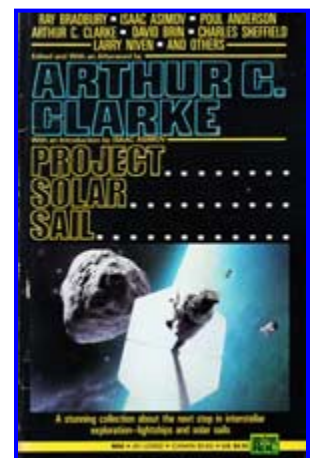
The first Flight by Light solar sail, Cosmos 1, was built in Russia and launched on the 25th of June 2005 from a Russian ballistic missile submarine. The Volna launch vehicle failed to reach orbit, dooming the experiment.

The Planetary Society and Cosmos Studios are still determined to launch a Cosmos solar sail. Undeterred, they are currently constructing a replacement, Cosmos 2.

Arthur C. Clarke put together a collection of short stories about solar sailing that are included in a book which can still be found on the Internet called, *Project Solar Sail*. This book includes a collection of fictional short stories such as, “The Wind from the Sun” and “Sunjammer,” as well as some more serious reviews of the art.

A French team has proposed a Solar Sailing Race around the Moon and return to Earth.

Who was Russell Saunders?



Why did Carl Wiley use the pseudonym Russell Saunders for his article?

After WWII science fiction was a popular genre. Monthly magazines like *Astounding Science Fiction* sold well. Engineers and well-known scientists of the time were writing science fiction stories, but many writers wanted to distance their professional lives from their speculative writing.

One such author was the famous Dr. John R. Pierce of Cal Tech and Bell Labs. Dr. Pierce used the pseudonym, J.J. Coupling, a name that would immediately resonate with physicists and engineers.

The classical view of an electron is that of a tiny top spinning on its axis which, like any spinning object, has an angular momentum associated with it. In addition, our electron moves in an orbit around the nucleus like a small planet. This motion also gives angular momentum to our electron.

The spectral properties of atoms are directly related to the behavior of electrons in their orbits around the nucleus of atoms. In order to ease the complexity of the calculations regarding electron behavior in atoms, it is useful to combine the spin and orbital momentum calculations into a single number. In large atoms with atomic numbers greater than Iron 57, the term for the total combine angular and orbital spin momenta of the electrons is called JJ Coupling, the name Dr. Pierce adapted as his pseudonym.

Carl Wiley admired Dr. Pierce so he decided to get in on the joke by calling himself Russell Saunders.

Russell Saunders Coupling is the total spin/orbit angular momentum computed for electrons in atoms with atomic numbers lower than Iron 57. Russell Saunders Coupling does not take into account the relativistic effects needed to compute JJ Coupling in the larger atoms.

Carl was a wonderful and inspiring father to my brother Keith and me, and a loving husband to our mother, Jean. He retired as the Chief Scientist, Technology Division, Space and Communications Group, Hughes Aircraft Company in El Segundo, CA and passed away peacefully at home on April 20th 1985.

Carl was a Fellow and Life Member of the IEEE. He held 25 patents with applications in radar, antennas, radiometers and solid state devices, and was the first to propose the construction of the large spherical reflector radio telescope which was finally realized in the form of the Arecibo Radio Telescope located in Puerto Rico.

Arecibo Radio Telescope - Astronomy

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ks8_J3mF5Jg

The Arecibo Radio Telescope played a bit part in the science fiction movie, *Contact* starring Jodie Foster. The Jodie Foster character, Dr. Ellie Arroway, is introduced as a scientist working at the Arecibo Radio Telescope on the SETI (Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence) Project before losing her grant, thus setting the stage for the story that follows.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PwEsmOQ0yBc>

Carl is best know for his invention of Synthetic Aperture Radar, patent number 3,196,496 dated July 20th 1965, Pulsed Doppler Radar Methods and Means. SAR radars are found far and wide on military aircraft, orbital remote sensing and intelligence gathering satellites, and on missions to study the planets.

The Magellan spacecraft whose mission was to map the surface of Venus used SAR to image the surface hidden below thick clouds.

Magellan



Carl Wiley

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWmIG0TWcYE>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbVLTlhqXE>

Cassini SAR maps the Saturn Moon Titan

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_YC3237Noo

Many people are anxiously awaiting the Age of Solar Sailing to begin. With a little luck the Planetary Society's first "Flight by Flight" spaceship will be on its way soon.

Solar Sail Simulations and Videos

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wfa1ggUIKnk>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DgtG7LweEjU>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1MLOMkuQrw>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eTrsCJqVNHc>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mb8f5GkP8tY>

- - -

Special thanks to the Eaton Collection, Melissa Conway and Rob Latham for suggesting that this article be written for and published in *eI*.

I think that one of the things parents have to do is to teach children hypocrisy, because that's how you survive -- by being nice to people who are contemptible. So the kid coming into the world sees hypocrisy and wants to point it out. You're nice to this awful person? What you're doing is a crime, isn't it, Dad?

--Kurt Vonnegut, *Salon*, October 1999

The Wall of America by Thomas M. Disch*

By Michael Moorcock



Thomas M. Disch

A few writers—Bradbury, Vonnegut, and Ballard among them—possess such coherent, idiosyncratic talent that, in spite of their visionary imaginations, the reader becomes engaged chiefly with their style or characters. The invention, superb as it is, becomes almost secondary. Thomas M. Disch, who shot himself in Manhattan on July 4 this year, was such a writer.

An ironist and a satirist, he published his final novel in June, the hilarious *The Word of God*, in which Satan sends Philip K. Dick back to Minnesota in 1939 to ensure that he, Disch (or God), will not be conceived as a result of Thomas Mann's affair with Disch's mother in a Minneapolis hotel room.

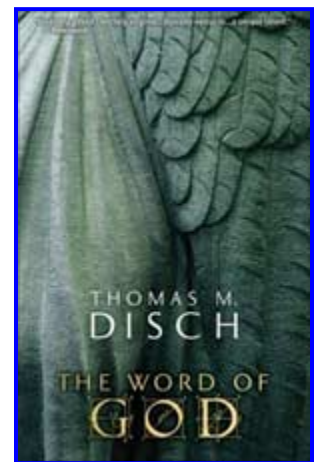
Disch knew Dick and had a low opinion of him, certain he had conned the public. Dick, not the most mentally stable of writers, and frequently jealous of his talented contemporaries, had attempted to turn Disch in to the FBI as a spy. Disch himself did not easily forgive a bad turn; *The Word of God* was his comical revenge. *The Wall of America* is a collection of short stories compiled before he died.

Disch's fascination with mortality permeated his fiction and poetry. His first novel was called *The Genocides* (1965) and his second story collection *Getting into Death* (1971). Some readers found his work pessimistic; others regarded his fascination with mortality as a romantic posture. His blog gave a taste of what an original, funny and clever companion and poet he was, and the stories in this collection offer an idea of his extraordinary range.

The title story mocks the thinking that leads to the construction of a vast, high wall across the US-Canadian border. The wall is soon used by artists as an informal gallery space and we are drawn into the life of one not especially good painter. "The White Man" is a delicately complex tale set against a New York City of the near future where global warming gradually breaks down the familiar life of the city. Rising tides, changing weather patterns, and the erosion of the social infrastructure make life less comfortable for those unable to move away.

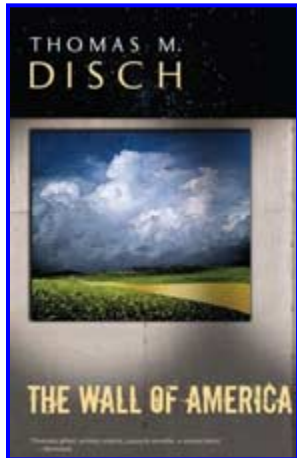
A black schoolgirl, coping with collapsing public services, comes under the influence of a church leader not unlike President-Elect Obama's own Reverend Wright, who blames all ills on "the white man." She strikes up a relationship with a quirky shopkeeper whose *raison d'être* is to bring a little light-hearted fantasy into the lives of those who pass his window. Her misunderstanding of her pastor and the white storeowner's motives result in a tragically ironic development with as many moral surprises as the best of Annie Proulx.

Not all these stories are so ambitious, but all are every bit as good as Ballard or Vonnegut. "Ringtime" amusingly suggests how people of the future learn to make a living as surrogates for more jaded citizens. "The Owl and the Pussycat" looks at the relationship between human beings and the creatures we anthropomorphise, while "The Abduction of Bunny Steiner, Or a Shameless Lie" comments slyly on the modern penchant for publishers and agents to persuade writers to tell outright lies to their readers.



Given that Disch, who regretted joining the military in the late fifties, and finessed an honorable psychiatric discharge by telling as his own the story of Oedipus (transformed to a Minnesota farm house), "In Praise of Older Women" is a sharply knowing version of the Jocasta myth. "Painting Eggplants" again riffs on Disch's belief that much conceptual art is, like science fiction, a kind of children's art, a conspiracy between a public yearning to be bamboozled and con artists only too willing to comply.

Since Disch held several gallery exhibitions of his paintings (many conceptual), the story is somewhat self-mocking. "Three Chronicles of Xglotl and Rwang" is another commentary on the use of science fiction for witty and sardonic ends.



Disch thought a lot about his calling. "In Xanadu" is about the relation between art and commerce. Indeed, most of these stories deal with Disch's thoughts on the relation between the worlds of creativity and venality, whether it is "One Night, or Scheherazade's Bare Minimum," "The Man Who Read a Book," or "The First Annual Performance Art Festival at the Slaughter Rock Battlefield."

Disch was a working writer, producing a substantial body of poetry, criticism, and fiction, including his classic homage to Mann, *Camp Concentration*. If there is a sense of finality about these stories, all his work can probably be seen as a progress toward death, for he talked often of suicide when not entertaining us. These stories are usually humorous, thoughtful, and in no way pessimistic. They are as good as any you will find this year, whether published as "science fiction" or "literature."

If you enjoy the work of J.G. Ballard, you will, I guarantee, get as much from his contemporary, Thomas M. Disch.

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*Reprinted from *The Daily Telegraph* November 22, 2008, with the permission of Michael Moorcock.

Time is liquid. One moment is no more important than any other and all moments quickly run away.
--Kurt Vonnegut, *Bluebeard*

Angel Land*

Artwork by Harry Bell

By Victor J. Banis

Late in the 21st Century—ravaged by the deadly Sept virus, the one time United States has disintegrated into The Fundamental Christian Territories, where Catholics, Baptists, and Jews are registered as heretics, and gays are herded into walled ghettos: The Zones of Perversion.

Harvey Milk Walton, a runner, finds his way to the ghetto in Angel Land, oldest of the territories, where a legend says that his long ago martyred namesake will return one day to lead his people to freedom—but even to speak of freedom, of leaving the FTC, is punishable by death.

In a crumbling totalitarian society, where evil masquerades as piety, two men fall in love and begin to dream of escape—from Angel Land.

SENIOR ELDER DORWIN let himself into his house. Considering his position, he liked to think it an admirably modest house. Certainly he might have had a much larger one, up in the hills, say, but he was not a man for unchristian display. Christ had made do with humble quarters, had he not? Granted, perhaps a bit more humble than this, but no one could accuse him of living in luxury, certainly.

It was evening. Reverently he put his silver cap of office on its special peg just inside the door, lit candles, and took two of them with him into the kitchen. He might have had a generator as well but that, too, he thought, would have been taking advantage of his position. He was not unwilling to do so if it meant doing the Lord's work, but he did not think it seemly to pursue his own ease.

He had stopped on the way home to buy a single pink rose, and he placed that now in a white glass vase and set it aside. He lit a gel fire, and while the water for porridge was heating, he sat at the kitchen table and contemplated with satisfaction the day's events.

He had been right all along with his suspicions of Elder Aram Johnson. Of both the Johnson brothers actually, though he was unsure just yet how the brother fitted into the picture that he was putting together. That Elam Johnson was also a part of that picture, however, could hardly be doubted. Hadn't Elder Johnson visited his brother's fiancée this morning on his way to his rendezvous with the Walton girl?

He had realized at once who *she* was, when her name first turned up in the Elder's reports. Jenny Walton, who had once caused him such anguish and who had, indirectly, at least, caused that crimson scar that ran across his buttocks.

She had been pretty then, but life had surely not been altogether easy for her in the years since. He might not have recognized her had he not known in advance who she was. To her credit, however—and his—it was evident that her rebellious spirit had been crushed, as he had intended it to be.

He only wished he could say the same for her brother. Harvey. Harvey Milk Walton, as he called himself now. The name had rung a bell the moment he saw it in Elder Johnson's files. It was the Milk part that had temporarily thrown him for a loss. That had been added since he and the tiger cub had clashed years earlier.

It could hardly be coincidence, could it, that the boy's name was in Johnson's files, a case that ought to have been handled with a great deal more severity, and here was Johnson today meeting with the sister, to whom he had offered an important job with the Angel Land administration. And the brother, Elam, prying around in places where he had no business.



Yes, something was afoot. It was galling to think of all he had done for their benefit, for that foolish girl, certainly, and he had been nothing if not generous with Aram Johnson, and lenient, too. Yet it was clear that in some way they were plotting against him. He wasn't altogether sure yet just what that plot was, but he would find out, of that he was determined. He would catch the traitors, all of them, in a single web. He would punish an old enemy and foil new ones. In the end, he would triumph in the Lord's name.

He had long ago observed that most people's actions are dominated by one stimulus over all others. With some, it was vanity; with others, sensual gratification; and with still others, wealth, the love of money for its own sake. He served only his Church. And God, too, of course.

His water had come to a boil. He fixed the porridge, and when it was done, poured it into a bowl and set it on a tray. A spoon and a good linen napkin went alongside and the vase with the single rose. He brushed a pink petal, velvet and sweet-scented, lightly against his lips. *Like the lips of a woman's nether parts.*

For a moment a great wave of dizziness swept over him. The room itself seemed to swirl about him.

He pushed that thought forcefully aside. He had forgiven himself his youthful lusts, but he was a Senior Elder now, God's servant. More importantly, he was the servant of the Council and of The Shining Ones. Some things were no longer seemly for him to do or even think. He prayed a quick and silent prayer for clean thoughts and carried the tray into the front room.

An old-fashioned bookcase stood against one wall. He shoved it to the side to reveal steep and narrow stairs going up. A faint light from above flickered in the draft and guided him up with the tray. The woman seated by the window turned as he came up.

"Not by the window, Mother," he said. "I've told you before."

"It lets me see the people on the street," she said in a querulous voice.

"And lets the people on the street see you," he said, "if they should happen to look up."

He set the tray on her little table and came to help her from the window seat, holding her with one hand and her candle with the other. Her hand shook on his arm.

"It's so lonely here," she said. "You're gone for so long."

"The Lord's business is not to be rushed."

When she was seated at the table, he pushed the tray in front of her and made a flamboyant gesture of unfolding the napkin and tying it under her chin. "There. A nice bowl of porridge for you."

"If I could just go downstairs. I'm not helpless, really. I can get around. If I had one of those walking aids." She glanced in the direction of the stairs. "Maybe not the stairs, but you could help me down them before you left of a morning."

"Mother, we've been through this so many times. Here you are, have a taste. I know you must be hungry. That's the girl." He waited for her to swallow and dabbed at her chin with the napkin. "You're, what, seventy-eight. You should have gone to Paradise Camp years ago. If anyone knew you were here—"

"But what's so awful about that?" She ducked her head aside to avoid the spoon and fixed watery eyes on his. "I was just reading that old Paradise brochure. Private rooms, full-time nursing, and no end of activities: gardening, bingo, and spin-the-angel. 'Fun with your own age group,' is what it says."

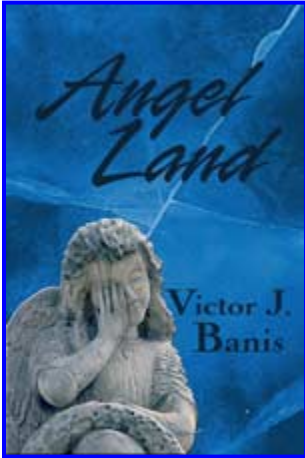
"You can't believe everything they say in those brochures, Mother. Here you go, open up. They make things sound better than they are. That's what sales brochures are supposed to do."

“You could come visit and if it wasn’t what they said you could bring me home.”

“I couldn’t bring you home, Mother. You aren’t supposed to be here at your age and once you are there, you are there to stay. And I couldn’t come visit.”

“It says families can visit anytime.”

“I couldn’t visit you because—” He checked himself and finished, after a pause. “Because it’s too far and you know how busy my work keeps me.”



He could hardly say, “Because most likely you would be sent to your reward soon after you arrived at Paradise Camp for Seniors.” Most newcomers were. Those who were still active, who could work and produce, they remained, but there were no family visits. No private quarters, either. There were barracks, dorms, with sleeping cots crowded one against the next, nothing to relieve the stifling air of the desert, and certainly no energy left for playing games.

There was gardening all right. The residents of Paradise worked the fields and the greenhouses from sun-up to sundown, planting, weeding, and watering endlessly. The others, the garment makers, the furniture finishers, the candle makers, often worked longer than that. Two shifts, day and night. They worked; they endured, really, because it was quickly clear to them that so long as they worked, they lived. It was as simple as that.

Who would know this better than he, who had been the chief architect of Paradise Camp? It had gotten him his appointment as Senior Elder years before it might otherwise have been conferred upon him. That was the reward he had asked when he made his proposal.

“I will build your camp for you,” he had told the Council. “I ask only for no interference in my methods and an appointment as Senior Elder when I have finished.”

They had agreed. Good Heavens, of course they had agreed. The project had been mired in failure for five long years. In the summer, the Mojave heat was too great, and in the winter the rains and the flash floods undid what little had been accomplished the summer before.

No one could work in such conditions, not willingly at any rate, not and survive for long. It little mattered to him, however, or to the Council, as it turned out, how many old people, people too elderly to contribute meaningfully to society, perished in that blazing sun.

Even less did they care about the others. The oldsters were not enough, of course, could not work hard enough, however hard they were driven. He had always known that. The Council had not minded, had been glad, even, when he asked for the prisoners from the territorial camps as well. Who were they after all? Criminals, runners, homosexuals, Jews, Catholics, Baptists, wanton women, unrepentant Borns, all the stumbling, mewling detritus of the territorial populations. Slave labor, it was all they were fit for, and the more slaves who died, the fewer mouths to feed, the fewer bodies to clothe. He worked them literally to the death and brought in truckloads more to replace them in the fields and, only a short time after for most of them, in the burial trenches.

He finished three months ahead of the promised date and graciously accepted his appointment and the Medal of Good Deeds that had come with it and which he had since worn proudly on his lapel.

Of course he had not known at the time that his own mother might one day be threatened with the rigors of Paradise Camp. She had qualified then for exemption: parents of Elders, medal holders, those with money enough to buy their freedom.

How could he have guessed, even suspected, that the exemptions would be cancelled within a year, his protests notwithstanding? What a scramble that had been for him then. Papers falsified, records altered. Officially his mother was deceased now. Cremated, so there could be no telltale exhumation should any question arise.

There were some, he knew, who were happy to surrender their aged parents to Paradise Camp. Like snuffing out a candle when you no longer needed its light. But where did the flame go?

Ironically, it had been Aram Johnson's brother, Elam, who helped him with the false medical papers. A teary conversation late at night, a sobbing declaration that "I would rather die myself, tonight, right here!" A softhearted man was Elam Johnson. There were few things in life harder to forgive than the unwarranted kindness another has done you. He could hardly help hating Elam, all the Johnsons. It was hard not to despise a soft heart.

Never mind that, though. His mother was safe, safe in all her frailty, as safe as he could make her. There should be no reason for anyone to come here looking for her, to brandish the paperwork declaring her one of the Golden Lambs, Candidates for Paradise, the official justification to take her away.

Still, you could never be entirely sure, or too careful. So the bookcase had become necessary and the hidden stairs and all the hundred little details of concealment. He must remember to find something to cover the windows. It wouldn't do to have her looking out. It was sad, confining her to the darkness, but better than the alternative.

Someone went by on the street outside whistling "Shall We Gather at the River." She listened with a wistful smile until the sound had faded. "I miss the church," she said. "The music. Surely I could go to church, couldn't it? No one would notice me in church."

"Another bite. Here we are." His thoughts circled back, to the Johnsons. His traps were set. Soon. Soon they would cease to be a problem for him. For the Council, he amended. For the FCT. For Christ.

"It's so lonely here all day." His mother's voice went up on a whining note.

He got another spoonful of porridge past her lips. "I know, darling," he said, his voice a croon. "I'll try to get home sooner, I really will. I promise."

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*Excerpted from *Angel Land* and reprinted with the permission of Victor J. Banis.

Our awareness is all that is alive and maybe sacred in any of us. Everything else about us is dead machinery.
--Kurt Vonnegut, *Breakfast of Champions*

There is No Reason Not To Trust that the Act of Writing Will Be Enough

By Lori L. Lake

"I think you overdid the homophobia."

That statement, along with other pointed criticisms, stopped me in my tracks. It was written in a rejection letter I received from the final publisher to whom I sent my first novel attempt. I realized there was no hope for my story. Dead end. Nowhere else to go. I had failed, despite the fact that I had worked on it for three years and fourteen drafts. I had perfected the grammar, cleaned up the diction and usage, perfected the syntax -- and all to no avail. Even though I had read almost one hundred books on the craft of writing and taken several writing courses at the local writer's guild, this train was derailed. What did "they" want -- damnit! I labored over the novel, *Ricochet in Time*, for so long. What did I need to do to get it accepted by a publisher?

I've heard of authors shelving their manuscripts, putting them away in drawers, and burying them in metal tins in their backyards. I didn't do any of those things. The 300-page tome went on a zip disk, and I set it aside, heavy of heart and now certain I was no writer. I had failed with essays, short stories, and now a novel. It was 1996, I was 36 years old, and I had spent ten years trying to get published.

I gave up.

I believed it was the death of a dream. Even though I continued to write in my journal, to observe the oddities and peculiarities of the world around me, I grieved. I remembered wanting to be a writer since age 10 when I sent a story to *Reader's Digest* about a scuba diver (a diver who was remarkably similar to Lloyd Bridges from *Sea Hunt*). I never heard from that magazine, but there were times over the years when I remembered how fearlessly I mailed off my first scribblings while still in grade school. Surely I could summon up the confidence of that 10 year old? Yes, a voice in my head said. *You can . . . but not yet*. Not quite yet? When? I didn't know, so I resorted to what any aspiring writer who doesn't drink would: I promptly got a cold which turned into bronchitis which turned into walking pneumonia, and by the time my fever was gone, I had blanked the disappointment from my conscious thoughts.

Life went on, and a dear friend, Marie Sheppard Williams, got word that her book of inter-linked short stories would be published. We celebrated with bagels, cream cheese, and orange juice while listening to an old tape of Cris Williamson's lovely album, *Changer and the Changed*. It wasn't too long before I was serving as moral support while Marie went through a hellish time editing the book, and I was actually thankful that I didn't have to live through the same irritations with my own literary baby. Gradually, over time, whenever I thought about my neglected stepchild of a novel, it was with a wistful fondness. Though I still wrote down my thoughts, ideas, and dreams in my journal, I had no intention of writing a short story or a novel. Never again.

I experienced a series of losses: I tore my Achilles tendon playing basketball and had to have surgery, and shortly after, I had to have an abdominal operation. My dearest uncle had a heart attack and left this world. My mother fell ill and nearly died, and my best friend abandoned our friendship. As I went through such unsettling times, I wrote less and cried more. I was troubled by strange dreams. One night I stayed up late watching *The X-Files* and *Xena: Warrior Princess*, and, under the influence of the two shows, I dreamed of extraterrestrial women on horseback chasing shape-shifting criminals. When I woke up, it occurred to me that if Xena and Gabrielle lived in the present, they'd be cops or investigators, like Scully and Mulder. I found myself writing about that a lot in my journal, and I kept asking myself key questions: Why do I write? Why does anyone write, and why do I care about it, anyway? How do we choose what we write?



Victor Banis and Lori L. Lake at A Room of One's Own bookstore for the "Intergenerational Queer Storytellers" event. Photo by Scott Seyforth, Madison, Wisconsin, October 6, 2008.

Then I came across a quote by C.S. Lewis. “Whenever you are fed up with life, start writing: ink is the great cure for all human ills.” I wondered if Lewis had been on to something. Once again, I asked myself the same questions about writing. In my journal, I wrote:



“Why do I write? It’s not to be published or to worry about what other people say about my writing. I write to ask questions, to puzzle through things, to try to understand the crazy world where I live which is peopled with so many oddballs. I write to create some semblance of order. I think I’ve been trying to force myself into a mode that I thought I was supposed to be in, but I just cannot be that. Dylan said it best, ‘It ain’t me, babe.’ I have an informal, not-high-literature voice, which at times is sad or serious, but is also sometimes wacky or grief-struck or wild with anger. I need to put my thoughts and feelings on paper. I need to go ahead and write and not worry about publishing because writing is, simply, good for me. There is no reason not to trust that the act of writing will be enough.”

With that epiphany, I felt like I turned a corner against the wind, so I began to write a story about a year in the life of two St. Paul cops -- neither extraterrestrial -- but both of whom were lesbian. The story, the process, and everything about *Gun Shy* took on a life of its own. I felt like a locomotive roaring down the tracks. I couldn't put the story down, though, of course I had to, all the time. Real life constantly intruded, but

I wrote during every free moment with the words rushing out of me scene by scene, willy-nilly, without regard for continuity or proper order of events. I began the novel in October 1998, writing evenings and weekends, and eight months later I had 160,000 words and a manuscript totally unlike my first novel. Without much regard for convention, usage, or what my mother might think, an entire book had poured out of me. I was stunned at its scope and size. It was in no way perfect, but even in its first draft, it seemed superior to my first effort at a novel. My partner read it first and assured me that it was good. I showed it to others and was thrilled when my friends went wild over it.

I was asked, then, by a number of people how I wrote this giant novel. I didn't really know, but I sat down and tried to lay out the process I had gone through, and it was a surprise when my instructions came out looking like this:

How To Write A Novel

Start with a character or two or more....

Start writing a scene and slave away at that for a while. I actually wrote the very first scene first, but that isn't necessary.

Then keep writing more scenes willy-nilly all over . . . with no regard to where they might go, though you will want to know!

Pretty soon a sort of theme starts to emerge that you may not have expected.

Keep writing scenes.

Keep getting to know all the characters.

Start seeing connections and motivations and causality.

After about 150 pages, you will realize that everything you first thought the book was about is inaccurate.

Dream and think and talk about it and wonder and worry, and just go crazy because there’s not enough time to focus.

Keep writing scenes and getting to know the main characters, plus all the secondary ones that have suddenly started popping up.



Start noticing what other themes come up, and see how stuff connects together.

After about 200 pages, cut and paste all over the place, forming a giant mosaic in your mind (or your living room).

Suddenly it becomes clear where everything is going, and now you can see the transitions you have to write and the new scenes that will be needed in order to finish.

Write 150 more pages.

That's about it.

Ready to give it a go?

My friends laughed at this. They thought I was joking, and if I hadn't gone on to write three more novels using the above technique, perhaps I would have joined in their mirth. But that *is* the way I write. I don't compose well using a stiff and formal process, and I don't write in a linear fashion. I write like the work is one big jigsaw puzzle that must be painstakingly assembled from pieces that are given to me in random order. Sometimes I wish I could write in a linear fashion, but, "It ain't me, babe."

I edited and revised the novel, *Gun Shy*, and I lost none of my enthusiasm for it. I wasn't sure others would enjoy it, but I knew I liked it and that upon completion, I was satisfied. I wrote the novel for my partner and me only, never considering others' points of view. I wrote a long story that I felt I would have liked to have read when I was younger, a story that interested me, and only me -- at least that's what I thought. I didn't have to tell friends or work colleagues or anyone in my family if I didn't choose to. Sure, I had poured my heart and soul into it, but no one need know what parts of the characters or the narrative were about "Me."

I systematically posted the long story at an Internet site, 30 or 40 pages at a time over a two-month period. After posting the first segment, within 24 hours I was astounded to find 22 emails in response. Over the course of the next few months, I received over one thousand emails from most of the United States and from all over the world: Canada, Korea, France, Hungary, Germany, New Zealand, Australia, Spain, Czech Republic, and more. I was stunned even further to get a publication offer after the posting of part three.



Suddenly, my simple little cop story was being commented upon and analyzed, and other people were making assumptions about me based on the qualities and actions of the characters in the book. For quite some time I felt tremendously vulnerable, especially as I gradually discovered that the themes in the book -- themes of loss and trauma, rebirth, and gaining new love -- did indeed spring from the inner workings of my own psyche. As Kafka once said, "The book must be the axe for the frozen sea within us." I'd had no clue I'd even needed an axe. How embarrassing! How revealing! How in the world could I let others read something that felt like it stripped me bare and sent me wandering naked through city streets where everyone could stare? And why did all these people want to read this, anyway?

What a switch. Where once I had wanted to publish, now I was afraid. Friends chuckled at my chagrin, assuring me that I'd get over it. But the very act of creating something that spoke from the heart meant that I was revealing my heart; and somehow, it was ever so unsettling. It took me a number of months to become accustomed to the idea of it. Over time, I did adapt, and one of the things that made it easier was the realization that the very writing of the story made my own psychological process concrete and almost tangible. As Paul Theroux once said, "Fiction gives us a second chance that life denies us." The puzzle within me began to take a more recognizable shape. I examined the jagged jigsaw pieces, assembling them so that the whole gradually revealed itself. Once I understood some of the themes and issues, I could move on.

Filled with energy and excitement, I went back to my first novel, *Ricochet in Time*, and looked at it with a fresh eye.



I went through all of it, word by word, sentence by sentence, and focused on making it less stiff, less proper. I softened the characters, infusing them with life. I smoothed out the rough spots. After thorough revision, I submitted it to my publisher, and she accepted it. What a difference five years had made. Sadly, in the wake of publicity about high-profile hate crimes against people such as Brandon Teena, Matthew Shepard, Tyra Hunter, Billy Jack Gaither, Private Barry Winchell, and Jamie Nabozny, as well as the campaign of terror aimed at Camp Sister Spirit, suddenly nobody was saying, "I think you overdid the homophobia."

Over three decades have passed since I wrote my first story about the scuba diver, but when it comes to writing, I have finally returned to a state of childlike wonder and excitement. I no longer worry much about what others might think or what they might approve of, and I try not to think about what inner demons or faults I might be revealing. Instead, I focus on what plots make my heart sing, what narrative flow jazzes me up, and what characters wake me in the middle of the night, calling out that they need me to bring them to life.

I am an author.

I am a writer, a scribbler, and a thinker.

I create.

I am alive.

Laughter and tears are both responses to frustration and exhaustion. I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning up to do afterward.

--Kurt Vonnegut

Outsiders #128

By Wrai Ballard

[This was a publication for SAPS, October 15, 1990. It consisted of six photographs and captions, all taken at Frank and Gertrude Carr's house in Seattle, Washington. All six of the photographs are reprinted here. This was forwarded to me by Dian Crayne and then by me for Dian to Corflu Zed for their auction. —Earl Kemp]

Special thanks to Dian Crayne for help with this article.



Carol Ballard, G.M. Carr, Frank Carr, and Jerry Frahm. Someday I'll put a better picture of Carol in the mailing, even if it means reprinting one taken at the lake.



Bill Austin and G.M. Carr facing the camera, and featuring the rear views of Mark Manning and Rocky Willson.



Frank Carr setting up to take a picture. Jerry Frahm at the table and Rocky Willson and Mark Manning listening with enjoyment to someone. Gordon Eklund just squeezed into the lower right hand corner.



Wrai Ballard, F.M. Busby, Burnett Tosky, and Wally Weber at the top of the picture and Gordon Eklund and Otto Pfeifer below. Rocky Willson is hardly showing behind Gordon and Nancy Rapp is completely out of sight.



Wrai Ballard expounding to an attentive Mark Manning and Rocky Willson. Gordon Eklund is trying to remember how often he's heard that story.



Bill Austin again—he just had to circulate that smile. Nancy Rapp is sitting just 2,607 miles to the left of Bill, and out of the picture.

1492. The teachers told the children that this was when the continent was discovered by human beings. Actually, millions of human beings were already living full and imaginative lives on the continent in 1492. That was simply the year in which sea pirates began to cheat and rob and kill them.

-- Kurt Vonnegut, *Breakfast of Champions*

The Paradox of Lin Carter

By Gerald W. Page



Gerald W. Page. Photo by Rebecca Brayman at a convention in Chattanooga.

The first anthology I edited was *Nameless Places*, published in 1975 by Arkham House. August Derleth, the publishing company's guiding spirit, had become another sort of spirit in 1971, and the heirs and their advisors had decided to continue the operation of the company. Derleth, with Donald Wandrei, founded Arkham House back in 1939 for the purpose of publishing a collection of stories by H.P. Lovecraft; and, after Wandrei left, Derleth had single-handedly guided it into becoming the most successful small-press operation in science fiction and fantasy history. Because there were on hand at Derleth's death a number of unpublished short stories by various writers, it seemed best that they be used in some sort of collection. But story collections need editors, and they also need a few more stories than were actually in Derleth's files. Thus the hand of fate wiped the sweat from my brow at a time when the direction of my career as a fiction writer and editor was uncertain, and I was selected to become the first person to edit an anthology for Arkham House after August Derleth's death.

I was instructed to buy enough stories to fill the anthology out to an acceptable length, given a laughably small amount of money with which to pay for them, and handed the stories on hand.

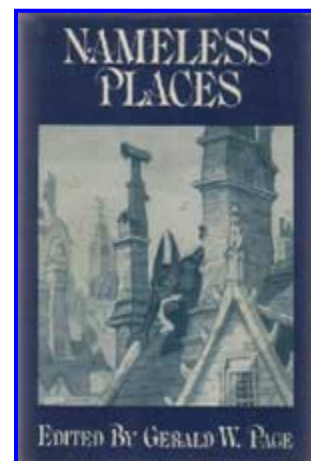
I read those stories at once. It was likely that Derleth had accepted most of them for publication in *The Arkham Collector*, the small magazine he occasionally issued, mainly as a means to alert Arkham House readers and collectors to what was going on with the company. It was his practice to include two or three generally very short stories in issues of the *Collector*, as well as several poems, notes, news, and occasional pieces of all sorts.

The stories were good, of course, but it was obvious to me that many were minor works Derleth probably had not felt warranted hardback publication. There were exceptions—such works as Brian Lumley's "What Dark Gods?" and Gary Myers "The Gods of Earth," to name only two, would grace any fantasy or horror collection on this planet. Perhaps Derleth figured they could be included in future hardback collections.

At the risk of repeating myself, let me repeat myself: there was nothing about these stories to embarrass either their authors or their editor. But, back then, hardback collections of original fiction were not commonplace and I had, perhaps, grandiose ideas about what was suitable for one. I wanted my first book to tip the scales as a heavyweight.

Two of the stories I was handed were by Lin Carter, "In the Vale of Pnath" and "Out of the Ages." They were Lovecraftian pastiches, of course, and quite workmanlike. Even so, I was anything but in love with them. I found both of them overlong, obvious, and a bit clumsy. Both stories were prefaced with long quotations from fictional Lovecraftian books, and my dissatisfaction seemed to focus on that. To begin with, this was a practice I felt was overused in the field, not only among the acolytes of H.P. L., but also among science fiction writers in general. The otherwise wonderful Jack Vance, for example, was forever kicking off the chapters of his novels with long quotes from fictional works that often made points that would have been better made in the context of the story's plot. The pages of *Analog* and its predecessor *Astounding* were weighed down with that sort of thing, usually done in an amateurish way. I felt Carter's passages added nothing to the stories.

I actually thought about cutting them out but I refrained because the stories had been accepted, I believed, by August Derleth. It seemed to me that part of my job was to preserve Derleth's choices as best I could. So I let the passages stand.



I found a sufficient number of additional stories for the book, prepared the manuscript, and sent it off to Sauk City, where Arkham House's offices had stood for over thirty years.

Presently I received a postcard telling me I was late returning the book's galleys to the publisher. I felt this was a tad unreasonable inasmuch as I hadn't received any galleys as yet and I fired off a letter to that effect. I've always felt that letter played a part in the fact that I never worked for Arkham House again, but possibly I flatter myself.

The galleys came the next day and I hunkered down to correct them. I found them to be in pretty good shape. But there was one really strange thing about them.

Those long, introductory quotations from fictitious works that led off Lin Carter's two stories were both missing. Neither had been set in type to judge from the galleys.

After the passage of another thirty years, I find myself asking if I remember these events correctly. I'm pretty sure that it happened the way I've described, and not that I just took a pencil and cut out the passages before shoving the manuscript into the envelope for Arkham. For one thing, I was reading the galleys against the manuscript in order to check things like that. The quotations had vanished and it wasn't my fault.

But...

But since I had already received Mr. Meng's angry note about how unprofessionally late I was being in getting the damned galleys back to the publisher; and since I knew that putting the quotes back in would involve an expenditure of both time and money that Arkham House would probably resent—well, I left them out.

The book went to press without them and no one ever asked me where they were. Not any critic, any reader, anyone at Arkham House, not even Lin Carter.

How did it happen? If I had to guess, I would guess one of two things. The first possibility is that the printer simply overlooked the passages, which is likely to happen once but not twice, unless it was done on purpose. To me it seems more reasonable that the passages were set in regular type and then someone noticed that they were supposed to be set in smaller type. They removed the type from the forms (this was back in those wonderful days when type was cast in metal, remember?) but never got around to putting the re-set lines back in place.

But a part of me recognizes that the disappearance of those lines was the answer to a prayer. Answered by God, perhaps?

Cthulhu, more likely.

#

Linwood Vrooman Carter was born June 9, 1930. He was active in science fiction fandom in the 1940s, and in the 1950s contributed a notable three-part article (completed in 1956) on the books of H.P. Lovecraft to Ron Smith's fanzine *Inside Science Fiction*, which is possibly where I first became aware of him. He had been in fandom a lot longer than I had and I would occasionally encounter his name in letter columns of the pulp magazines from the '40s that I was beginning to collect, and once even in an issue of *Planet Comics*, the greatest of all Golden Age comic books. His first professionally published work of fiction so far as I'm aware was a collaboration with Randall Garrett in the April 1957 issue of *The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction*. It was called "Masters of the Metropolis (abridged)," was quite short and satirized science fiction of the Gernsback era. In the 1960s he showed up in various magazines with articles, including a series on science fiction fandom in Fred Pohl's *If*.

In 1965 he published the first of many fantasy novels, *The Wizard of Lemuria*. It was issued as Ace single F-326 and dealt with the adventures of a barbarian warrior named Thongor who fights supernatural enemies with the aid of a sorcerer.

This period was at the height of the paperback revivals of both Edgar Rice Burroughs and Robert E. Howard, and Thongor, though primarily a Burroughs pastiche, featured plenty for the Howard fan. It was a rousing, old-

fashioned action fantasy that could have graced the pages of Farnsworth Wright's *Weird Tales* or Ray Palmer's *Fantastic Adventures*, and it was obvious that Carter had a lot of fun writing it. I had a lot of fun reading it, and I think I actually wrote Lin and said as much.



Inside 14, February 1956 contains Part 1 of Carter's HPL article and Part 3 has the best illustration of the three parts. *Inside* scans Courtesy Robert Lichtman Collection.

In addition to this period being the height of the Burroughs and Howard revivals, it was also the height of the traditional science fiction versus new wave debate and while I might have had fun reading *The Wizard of Lemuria*, there were others who didn't. They seemed to regard this throwback to the old school as a personal affront, to say nothing of an arrogant attempt at repudiating the sacred cows of the New Wave. Lin, of course, in common with his readers, probably just thought the book was a lot of fun. But fun was regarded as subversive in the serious oh-so-important literary field of science fiction and what the damned readers thought (to say nothing of poor Lin Carter) mattered not. The killer reviews began flowing like lava down the slope of Vesuvius. And one or two of them were quite vicious in their assessment not only of the book but also of Carter's talents and intentions and quite possibly some of his personal habits. I remember reading some of the reviews and finding their attacks nothing short of irrational.



If Carter cared (and I suspect he was sufficiently human to care a lot), he didn't show it, at least in any place where I could see it. New novels began to appear rapidly. He did a number of sequels to *The Wizard of Lemuria*, and wrote far more series of pastiches of various classic sf and fantasy authors than I cared to count, much less read. He also completed several fragments by Robert E. Howard and joined L. Sprague de Camp in continuing the Conan series.

As much as I enjoyed *The Wizard of Lemuria*, the sequels did nothing to maintain my interest. The subsequent books about Thongor showed little of the flair, imagination—or sheer fun—of *Wizard*. Carter wrote rapidly,

probably too rapidly, and quickly established himself as one of the most slapdash writers in the history of fantasy. Most of his subsequent attempts to imitate the work of this or that writer failed miserably. His Conan novel, *Conan of the Isles*, co-written with Sprague de Camp and published by Lancer in 1968, is a badly plotted and written story that in places reads like amateur pornography from the thirties; and not very good amateur pornography at that. It is certainly the most poorly written piece ever to have Sprague de Camp's name on it.

The sloppiness of Carter's writing became worse. His novel *Time War*, a Van Vogt pastiche, begins with a paragraph in which the same gun is described as both an automatic and a revolver. You won't find that in any weapon shop I've ever been to.

By the mid-seventies there were few writers in the field who didn't share the low regard for Carter's work that had been expressed in all those reviews that met the publication of his first novel. I remember sitting with two friends, both of them top fantasy and science fiction novelists, at a convention some time in the '70s. They were discussing Carter and the consensus seemed to be that his sales proved there were a lot of 15-year-old boys reading science fiction.

As an editor, Carter's reputation is much less sullied. His several fantasy anthologies are generally of higher than average quality. He also edited one of the monumental series of books in the history of paperback publishing: the Ballantine Adult Fantasy Series. Thanks to his efforts, the works of dozens of important fantasy writers were brought back into print, many of them at a period when the author was undergoing tremendous neglect. Among the authors he published were Lord Dunsany, William Beckford, Clark Ashton Smith, Joy Chant, William Morris, and Evangeline Walton, and that doesn't even begin to scratch the surface.



It was a monumental undertaking that could only have been pulled off by someone who loved and knew the fantasy field, and who had read voraciously. Carter's achievement with this series can't be overstated.

Carter accompanied most of these novels with introductions that were sometimes readable and informative, but often spent more time discussing the achievements of Lin Carter than those of the supposed subject. Moreover, his scholarship could be sloppy; and he would compound that failure by a refusal to correct mistakes when they were pointed out to him. For example, he published half a dozen books by James Branch Cabell without once getting correct the name of the series they belonged to. (Carter referred to it as "The Biography of Manuel," admittedly a common mistake. The actual title was "The Biography of the Life of Manuel," intended by Cabell to indicate that the "Life" had taken on a life of its own, which Manuel had nothing to do with. Nothing either noted Cabell fan James Blish or I could do would get him to correct that error.) He and I also disagreed on how many books there were in the series. When I wrote him pointing out what I regarded as his error, he wrote back stating his reasons and listing the books. It was obvious that he had a good argument, though he was ignoring certain assertions made by Cabell himself, and I still find his position incorrect.

The point of this is that it taught me Lin was a bibliographer and one who took bibliography seriously. But his readings could be superficial, and his interpretations limited. He definitely had the instincts of a scholar, but I think he often lacked the discipline.

He was also prone, when he hadn't done sufficient research, to "speculate." He sometimes seemed to think that his thoughts on a subject were more important than mere facts.

As much as his sloppiness, I think Carter's low reputation was a result of that sort of arrogance. I've been told by several people who knew him and worked with him (including Donald Wollheim who, as editor at both Ace and DAW Books probably published more of Carter's fiction than anyone else) that Lin was convinced he was one of the greatest fantasy writers of all time, on a par with the writers he imitated. It's hard to justify that point of view on the basis of anything Carter produced.

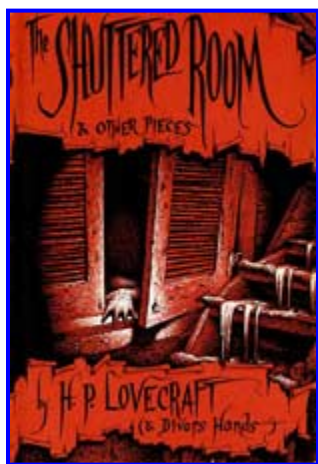
Which is not to say that Carter did not produce work of merit. The first Thongor novel, as I've said, was a lot of fun to read. His short novel *The Thief of Thoth*, published as part of a double book by Belmont in 1968, is a highly entertaining and very funny science fiction adventure. There was a sequel whose title I forget (*The Purloined*

Planet?), which was just as good. Another short novel for Belmont, *The Flame of Iridar* (1967) a Leigh Brackett pastiche, was pretty good. The King Kull stories he completed for the first Lancer Books collection in 1967 are among the best Howard completions ever, and probably account for him getting the job helping de Camp with the Conan novels. Some of his fantasy short stories, particularly those featuring Anton Zarnak, are enjoyable. But his Lovecraft pastiches are pretty up and down.

Pastiche is a limited area for any literary artist and only the best, such as Vincent Starrett, can achieve any sort of positive reputation writing it. Others achieve a strong reputation before they attempt pastiche. August Derleth is a good example. He seems to have limited his efforts at pastiche to series that are fundamentally idea fiction, such as Lovecraft's Cthulhu stories, and Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. Successful pastiche is easier to achieve when you play with another writer's ideas, than when you play with another writer's personality traits.

In the field of fantasy and science fiction, the master of pastiche was probably Henry Kuttner, a natural mimic whose takes on such diverse writers as A. Merritt, Stanley Weinbaum, Robert E. Howard, Thorn Smith, and, yes, H. P. Lovecraft, helped him achieve pretty good success as a prolific contributor to pulp magazines in the forties. But Kuttner was also a masterful technician and had a personal and highly readable style that overlay the attempts at imitation. Most of Kuttner's stories were more identifiable as Kuttner's works than as an impersonation of anyone else. The only reason you can say that a Carter story is more Carter than whoever he's impersonating is because too often his work fails to even reasonably approach the standards of the original.

Carter's reputation today is rather better than it was in the latter years of his life. Much of this is because of his exceptional contributions as the editor of the Ballantine Adult Fantasy series. But he enjoys a surprisingly good reputation among the modern readers of H.P. Lovecraft and the Cthulhu Mythos. I've even seen and heard him referred to as the founder of modern Cthulhuvian scholarship.



This rests, on his writing of "H.P. Lovecraft: The Books," for the fanzine *Inside Science Fiction*. He also did a piece called "H.P. Lovecraft: The Gods." "The Books" lists over half a hundred works mentioned in a significant fictional context by Lovecraft or other writers of Mythos fiction. Entries offer commentaries regarding where the books are mentioned, the history and background of the book as given in the story or stories; and something about the sources of the book, if other than the writer's imagination.

Foreshadowing, perhaps, the aggravating tendency in his introductions of so many of the novels in the Ballantine Adult Fantasy series, much of the research in the article is speculative. Carter offers his ideas as to whether specific books may have genuine counterparts, and sometimes ventures possible sources for ideas when no direct source can be spotted. In this case, Carter seems to have been careful to designate his speculation as such. Speculation becomes a problem only when it becomes so prevalent that it appears to substitute for more valid research methods, as it was with Carter later on. Both "The Books" and "The Gods" were included in the 1959 Arkham

House volume *The Shattered Room and Other Pieces*, edited by Derleth. In 1966 Arkham House included, in *The Dark Brotherhood*, "Lovecraft's Books: Some Addenda and Corrigena" by William Scott Home, which tracks down the actual editions of some books Carter had decided were fictitious.

Carter's efforts certainly deserve praise but he was by no means the founder of Lovecraftian scholarship. *The Shattered Room* for example, contains other pieces on the Mythos by T.G.L. Cockcroft and George T. Wetzel, two highly underrated students of Lovecraft's works (and imaginative literature in general). Moreover, between the fall of 1942 and spring 1946, the noted science fiction fan Francis Towner Laney published an amateur magazine called *The Acolyte*, devoted to Lovecraft. It saw 14 issues.

Lin Carter died in 1988. I was not a close friend of his and we never corresponded other than occasionally, nor was he someone I talked about much with mutual friends. But toward the end I began to hear rumors about him, and about the unfortunate way his life was turning. I never heard anything that wasn't gossip so I won't repeat it here.

In one of the paperback-sized *Weird Tales* that Lin edited, he ran a story by Robert E. Howard that I had completed. He failed to send out a check for it and finally Glenn Lord, agent for the Howard estate, deducted the fee for the story from a check the estate owed to Carter for one of his Conan books. Otherwise it is likely I wouldn't have gotten paid.

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From all this you might gather that I have fairly ambiguous feelings about Lin Carter, and you'd be right. But he will always be a hero to me, too, and I'll tell you why.

This happened at a World Fantasy Convention sometime in the late seventies, but don't ask me which one. I have never been a diarist and I didn't realize at the time that you'd care, so I neglected to keep the notes I should have kept.

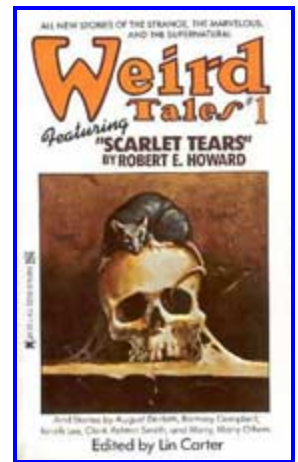
The toastmaster that year was a good friend of mine so I won't name him. He's a nice guy, and if you ever want to have a *good* conversation in the 18th century sense of the word, where conversation is an adventure, just sit down somewhere alone with this fellow and talk away. He'll keep you entertained and on your feet and be as interested in you as you are in him.

But despite that, it's truly dangerous to put this man in front of a crowd. He insists on being the center of attention as long as he can, and he can take a good five-minute story and drag it out for half an hour. I love him dearly but, God, can he sometimes get on my nerves.

At the banquet, because we shared the same publisher, Lin and I were sitting at the same table in the back of the room but almost directly in front of the toastmaster. The room was wider than it was deep so we weren't really that far from him. The man went on and on for much too long, and took great pleasure in recognizing almost everyone in the room, identifying them and giving the reason for their celebrity. He failed to name anyone at our table.

At long, long last he was finished and Lin, a wonderfully wicked light in his eyes, stood up and asked if he could say something. Lin was tall and slender, with a well-trimmed goatee and longish though well-styled hair and a presence about him—not to mention a voice—which could allow him to dominate a room when he wanted to. The toastmaster recognized him and Lin said that there was a young unknown writer at our table who had not been pointed out by our toastmaster, but whose work suggested that someday he might be one of the major writers in the field. Lin felt he deserved to be recognized, too. The toastmaster was agreeable to that.

So Lin pointed to the chair next to where he was sitting and introduced Fritz Leiber.



Lin Carter

The big trouble with dumb bastards is that they are too dumb to believe there is such a thing as being smart.
--Kurt Vonnegut, *Sirens of Titan*

Sex, Drugs, Rock N' Read

by Stephen J. Gertz

With its overt or covert suggestions of sexual abandon, perversion, and depravity while under their influence, drug-themed literature has always been suffused with the erotic. Yet while the pursuit and use of aphrodisiacs is common within erotic literature, the use of mind-altering drugs (other than alcohol) within erotic literature is a relatively recent phenomenon, rushing onto the scene of the 1960s as if a mainlined shot of meth.

It should come as no surprise to readers of this magazine that the wholesale introduction of mind-altering substances into sex-literature began with porn in paperback format. That is because the paperback was, upon its introduction through to the beginning of the Internet, the most democratic medium for information sharing and the leading disseminator of the written word; their cheap prices and broad retail distribution put books into the hands of the average person. During the 1960s, newspapers and magazines were heralding the emergence and evolution of the Counterculture and its concomitant use of drugs.



The long engagement of sex and drugs finally came to fruition as the Boomer Generation officially wedded the two, the complete consummation of the marriage occurring when pulp pornographers of the sixties, ever sensitive to and wholly dependent upon their readership to tell them what they wanted, began issuing a slew of porn novels with high (forgive me) drug content, most frequently featuring pot or LSD, a synthetic hallucinogen with (under the proper mind-set and physical setting) powerful erotic qualities.

Welcome to the world of Drug Porn. It begins with the hope that sexual hang-ups will be shattered and sexual frontiers extended. Drug literature, up until this time, had always been cautionary even while teasing readers with the infernal ecstasies of drug use. Now, from the early 1960s through the very early 1970s, drug use was routinely celebrated with sex and drugs touted as a means to powerful transcendent experience if not the ultimate party activity.

One of the noteworthy aspects of paperback drug porn is that, at its beginnings, the writers had little if any personal experience with drugs; they pretty much made everything up based on what they'd read in the newspapers. This resulted in some truly wacky titles, not the least of which was *Rubber Goddess* by Lana Preston (Paul Hugo Little), issued by Sturman's Corsair Books (Corsair 205, 1967). Paul Little will never be confused with a great (or even good) writer, and this book provides all the evidence one needs to support that thesis (but there are so many, many more by Little that qualify!).

At the other end of the spectrum, *Acid Temple Ball* by May Sativa (Sharon Rudahl), published in 1969 by Maurice Girodias when he transplanted Olympia Press from Paris to New York, is arguably the greatest work of psychedelic erotica yet written; a fine writer to begin with, it helped considerably that Rudahl knew what she was talking about. And there was John Eric Poling, a writer somewhere between those two poles and son of the great Linda Dubreuil, who wrote under the pseudonym, Eric Jay and, from all reports, knew a little too much about the subject. (I'll let Earl get into that!).

During the 1960s, pop-culture became habituated to drug use. There couldn't possibly be as many drug users as there were copies of sex and drug paperbacks in circulation; then, as now, more Americans loved reading about sex and drugs than actually engaged in their enjoyment. As the sixties ended, so did the hopes and dreams of the Hippie generation. The real world hit hard, and as the harsher realities and abuse of drugs became manifest, the character of drug porn began to change: desperate, strung-out, chicks (it is always the beautiful girls that become junkies and skanks soon thereafter) enslaved to heroin were not fun or sexually arousing.

The arc of paperback publishing during that decade provides us with the best record of contemporary American pop-culture's love affair with drugs. All love affairs evolve; now, sex and drug literature has returned to its roots as a medium of the taboo, the risky, the transgressive, and dangerous escape, safer to read about than to do for all but

the most adventurous.

I discuss drug porn as an emergent genre of literature in the introductory chapter to my new book, *Dope Menace: The Sensational World of Drug Paperbacks 1900-1975*. Later in the book, an entire section is devoted to paperback drug porn. (Greenleaf is, no surprise, well-represented). I hope you enjoy reading (and seeing – it's visually arresting) it as much as I did researching and writing it.

Oh, those wonderful 1960s. Fred and Linda DuBreuil, with Linda's two children from a previous marriage, John Eric Poling and Carolyn Poling, lived in the sprawling Bishop's Estate in the Guadalajara suburb of Zapopan and...like real royalty...they entertained lavishly...whole roasted pig in a pit. Linda was the world's greatest one-hand perfect joint roller and Johnny was a superb recreational drug experimenter. In fact, Johnny was the only person I knew who kept meticulous notes on all of his trips: what he had taken, how much, his reactions, his evaluation on a scale of from one to ten, etc. It was always such a delight to visit with them and to participate in their trips. Johnny and I moved heavily into peyote (you could buy it in the greengrocer section of *Mercado Libertad* by the kilo scoopful) and was it divine...once you could get it past your gag reflexes and down to where it could start doing its thing. For more about those heavenly days, read "H.R.H. The Queen of Pornography" in [eH2, February 2004](#).

---Earl Kemp

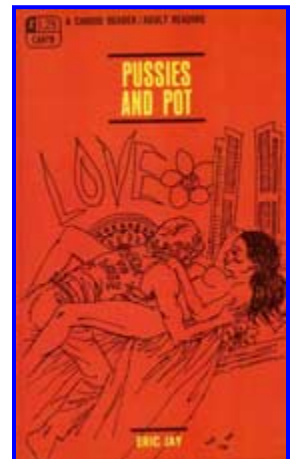
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Every writer wants to kick themselves when new information or corrections become known after a book of theirs is published; you make peace with the-after-the-fact stuff or go crazy. Here are a few from *Dope Menace*, kindly pointed out by Earl, and exclusive to this forum:

Lawrence Bloch wrote *Jazz Sinner* by Andrew Shaw, Leisure Books LB1143 (1966).

Pussies and Pot (Candid Reader 978, 1969) by Eric Jay was written by John Eric Poling. I knew this but my head was not screwed on the day I captioned this book.

Cover to *Marijuana Girl* by "N.R. DeMexico" (Beacon 328, 1960, reprint of Uni Book 19) is not by Al Rossi. Again, I knew this (it's pretty obvious) but somehow Rossi's name got attached to the book and as many times as I proofed the text my eyes just rolled right over this glaring error.



Speaking of the pseudonymous N.R. DeMexico, Gary Lovisi, in *The Sexy Digests*, attributes authorship of *Marijuana Girl* to Dallas McCord Reynolds or Lawrence Taylor Shaw and I follow his lead. Yet this is iffy and if anyone had solid attribution information, please let me know.

New knowledge is the most valuable commodity on Earth. The more truth we have to work with, the richer we become.

-- Kurt Vonnegut Jr., *Breakfast of Champions*

The Anthem Series Part III

by Earl Terry Kemp

This is the third installment in the Anthem Series project. The first part, Fantasy Press, appeared in [eI27 \(August 2006\)](#) and [eI28 \(October 2006\)](#). The third part, including: Prime Press, Avalon Company, and Chamberlain Press, appears here in [eI42](#). The fourth part, including: Shasta Publishers and Gorgon Press, appeared in [eI33 \(August 2007\)](#).

By Way of a Foreword:

Here you will meet time travelers, bug-eyed monsters, telepaths, and sorcerers. Among the pages of the following volumes is some of the very best science fiction and fantasy ever written, whether by the Grand Master Robert A. Heinlein, or by the greatest editor of all time, John W. Campbell, Jr., accompanied by the artwork of the greatest fantasy illustrator of all time, Hannes Bok.

Without a doubt, in a small number of books, the reader can explore the breadth and depth of man's mind and the universe of his imagination. Some of these stories have passed on, forgotten gems, treasure them again as you explore the wealth they contain. Some have passed on into the canon containing the seminal works of science fiction. But none of these stories can be passed without reading, and enjoying.

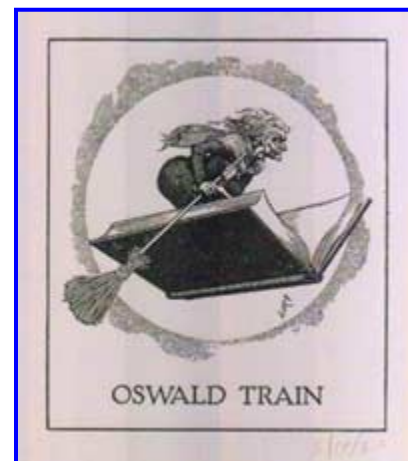
So, find a comfortable chair and strap yourself into it. Get ready for a treat, you are about to enter...

PRIME PRESS, INC. 1946—1951

PRIME PRESS was formed in December 1946 by Oswald Train, Alfred C. Prime, Armand E. Waldo, and James A. Williams. It collapsed with the latter's death. The four principals each kicked in \$500 seed money. Of the four, Williams was the salesman and Train was a collector with the most extensive knowledge of the field. Thirteen of the eighteen books published by them were by writers living in or near Philadelphia or associated with the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society.

Prime Press was the only one of the larger pioneer science fiction specialist book publishers to grow out of a fan club. Robert A. Madle was also approached but declined. Later he and Jack Agnew, another member of the club, formed New Era Publishers (which see).

In 1948 Train and Williams bought out the other partners. A subsequent downturn in their business operations brought about the demise of their imprint. The unbound but printed sheets of *Lost Continents*, by L. Sprague de Camp, their last book, were eventually bound by Gnome Press in 1954.



Oswald Train Bookplate

Prime Press was the first book publisher to issue the work of Lester del Rey, Theodore Sturgeon, and George O. Smith. Among the many publishing errors experienced, the most note-worthy was concerning the jacket art for *Lest Darkness Fall*. L. Robert Tschirsky was assigned to draw the jacket art. Through a misunderstanding the assignment was simultaneously given to Hannes Bok. Tschirsky's art was placed on the cover and Bok's work was used as a cut for the title page. Much later, 500 jackets were produced by Julius Unger, using the Bok artwork, when he acquired stock from the then out-of-business Prime Press. This created the book collectors delight, another much sought after rare variant.

Shortly before the demise of Prime Press, and before the 1953 World Science Fiction Convention, Williams once again made a major contribution to the field when he suggested they call the new award they had decided to give "Hugos," after Hugo Gernsback. Williams died suddenly in March 1953. Train, shouldering the entire operation

now, discovered the sad state of finances kept by Williams. Prime Press was insolvent. The imprint terminated its short existence with a list of books advertised but never published. Chief among these was *Alien Flesh*, by Seabury Quinn, which was finally published by Train when he started another company, Oswald Train, Publisher, many years later.

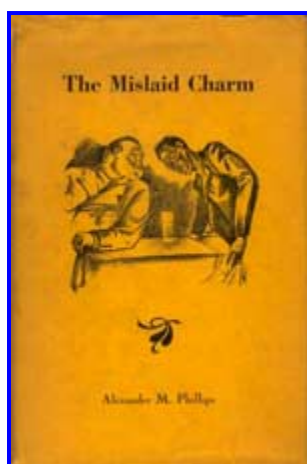
However, lest Williams and his fiscal irresponsibility be cited as the chief cause of this imprints failure; the obvious cause can be found in the selection of various titles of little, or no, interest to the reader, such as *Equality* and *Three Hundred Years Hence*. Due to the lack of sales for these titles, as well as several of the pulp reprints, *The Torch* and *Lords of Creation*, Prime Press found itself making that fatal decision which spelled its doom.

The first David H. Keller book, *The Homunculus*, was possibly the publisher's idea, and a very bad one. The other two, *The Eternal Conflict* and *The Lady Decides*, were suggested and completely financed by Keller. Though they are handsome books physically, printed on excellent paper, numbered, autographed, and boxed, they were vanity publishing and served to weaken the Prime Press line, and hasten its inevitable collapse. These two books should never, ever, have been published. But Keller had made a practice of bailing out the various struggling specialty imprints, by virtue of financing several of his works, which never would have been printed otherwise.

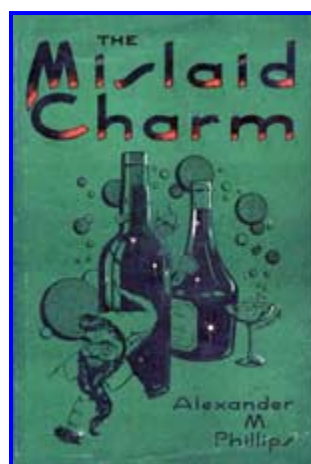
Grasping at straws, falling into the trap of publishing two of the very worst books in the entire field, Prime Press had shown an incredible lack of judgment. Readers demonstrated their wisdom, sales fell, bills went unpaid, and Prime Press closed its doors forever.

Prime's next book was to be *Lost Continents*, by L. Sprague de Camp, and the book had been printed but not bound when the collapse came. Gnome Press later bound and released it in 1954.

Prime Press: Titles



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection. 1st state dust jacket



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection. 2nd state dust jacket

1. **Phillips, Alexander M[ooore]**
The Mislaid Charm
Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia, Pa. 1947 91 \$1.75
2,000 copies printed with yellow jacket.
3,000 copies printed with green jacket.
Both were bound and printed at the same time.
Jacket and interior illustrations by Herschel Levitt.

Fantasy novel. ***From: (*Unknown*, Vol. 4, No. 5; No. 23, February 1941). ***Henry A. Pickett is a "little" man, perpetually confused by the incomprehensible nature of the world. Out for a drink after selling a manuscript, he runs headlong into the

creature most dreaded by the timid man—a magnificent and commanding female. Every inch of Dorothy Guilford (and she stands five feet eleven inches, and weighs 150 pounds) is vibrant with self-confidence and strength. She swoops down on poor Henry like the fate that she is (or vision of doom). Pickett encounters the supernatural in the shape of a tribe of violently opinionated gnomes from upstate Pennsylvania, and becomes the unwitting repository of their tribal charm, when he has a stolen pixie charm “planted” upon him. He then becomes the object of a city-wide search on the part of the Miner Imps’ Little Mob. Free of the control of its gnome-tribe, the suddenly emancipated charm reveals a personality of its own—unhappily a somewhat half-witted one—and begins experimenting with its powers, experiments which convince not only Pickett but a considerable part of the adjacent population as well that all laws of logic are at least temporarily suspended. The charm fulfills all his wishes. Pickett, who had never, previously, indulged in intoxicating liquors, gathers a package the like of which had never before been seen. The charm, refusing to lose its hour of liberty, keeps him from sinking beneath the rising tides of alcohol, but it can’t keep him from getting completely plastered. Roaring drunk, he wishes for monkeys in a nightclub, and stirs up a wonderful riot. Finally the charm is recaptured by the Pennsylvania Dutch pixie who owns it, and Pickett and his girl outwit the fairies. ***In the Thorne Smith pattern, but perhaps better than anything Smith wrote because of restraint and conciseness. A whacky fantasy that once read will make you want to buy a copy to give away.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry
Kemp Collection. 1st state
dust jacket



Scan courtesy Earl Terry
Kemp Collection.
2nd state dust jacket

2.

Smith, George O[liver]
Venus Equilateral

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia, Pa. 1947 455 \$3.00

1st edition 2,000 copies printed, 1,000 at a time, with jacket by George O. Smith.

2nd edition 2,000 copies printed with jacket by Robert Tschirsky, 1949.

Illustrated by Ira Levin.

Science fiction novel. ***From: *Astounding Science Fiction*. ***A series of short stories of the near future, based mostly upon radio-electronics. Ten long novelettes about the problems of interplanetary communications. ***Venus Equilateral is a remodeled asteroid which serves the three inhabited planets as a relay station around the sun when planets are at opposite conjunction. It is operated and controlled by a group of engineers, of whom Don Channing is the chief character. The earlier stories concern the development of scientific aids, the later stories, a feud between Venus Equilateral and Kingman, an unscrupulous lawyer, controller of Terran Electric, a rival organization. ***[a] “QRM-Interplanetary.” (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 143, October 1942). A clash between the business end and the technical end of Venus Equilateral. The technicians win when the business manager inadvertently destroys the air supply. [b] “Calling the Empress.” (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 151, June 1943). Channing and associates devise a new means of communication in space. [c] “Recoil.” (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 156, November 1943). A space-pirate tries to capture Venus Equilateral, but is beaten by electronic weapons. [d] “Off the Beam.” (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 159, February 1944). Channing, on board a ship that has been deflected from its course, finds means to show his position. [e] “The Long Way.” (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 161, April 1944). A Martian power tube is discovered, and Venus Equilateral outwits the shyster, Kingman, and makes a deadly enemy of him. [f] “Beam Pirate.” (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 167, October 1944). Kingman tries to destroy Venus Equilateral by stockmarket manipulation. [g] “Firing Line.” *Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 169, December 1944). Kingman and a space-pirate consolidate against Venus Equilateral, and start piracy with a beam weapon. [h] “Special Delivery.” (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 172, March 1945). Venus Equilateral invents a matter transmitter. Kingman tries

to steal the invention on a legal technicality, but is beaten. [i] "Pandora's Millions." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 175, June 1945). The matter transmitter, which is also a matter duplicator, causes economy to go mad when everything can be duplicated. A non-duplicable substance is invented to save economy. Kingman again. [j] "Mad Holiday." (Written for the book. This is the first appearance of this short story. No magazine appearances before or since.) Kingman tries to sabotage the space station, and uses legal trickery to obtain Venus Equilateral's transmission license. As a reward, he gets the license, but cannot go to any of the three worlds for fear of legal proceedings, hence actually is sentenced to 5 years solitary confinement on the asteroid. ***There is an introduction by John W. Campbell, Jr. ***This book is a science fiction novel stressing the technical side. There are long passages so technical that only a radio technologist could understand them. This reader was often bored, although the novel contains human people in believable situations, and appears scientifically sound and possible, as it is written by an electronics expert and radio engineer.

3.

Anonymous [Lithgow, John]

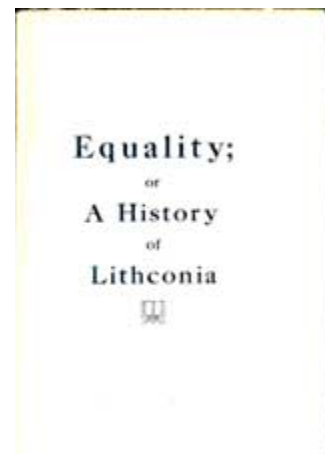
Equality; or, A History of Lithconia

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia, Pa. 1947 86 \$2.50

American Utopian Novel No. 1

500 copies printed.

Jacket is simple lettering.



Science fiction novel. ***The first volume in this series. ***Serialized in eight parts in the free-thought newspaper *The Temple of Reason*, nos. 17–23 (May 22–July 3, 1802).

***Reprinted in book form as *Equality; or, A History of Lithconia*. Philadelphia: Liberal Union, 1827; and Boston: Published by J.P. Mendum, 1863. ***This is the first American work on Utopia. It has a unique quality for the genre: it is readable. Also contains a history of the story, photocopy of original title page, original anonymous author's introduction, and an introduction signed only "A.C.P." (Alfred Prime) for the PRIME PRESS edition. ***The first full American utopia, *EQUALITY*, is a detailed exposition of a communal economy.

There is no money, all land is held in common, and everyone must work until age fifty, at which time they can become part of the government. *EQUALITY* is also interesting in that it includes an ambivalence toward both urban and rural life that is a major secondary theme throughout the nineteenth century; in Lithconia the problem is solved by having houses spread equally over the entire country with no concentration that would constitute an urban area but without the isolation of rural life either. The "woman question," is also treated in *EQUALITY*. Every individual over fifteen has a separate apartment that they keep after marriage in order to remain independent. *EQUALITY* is rarely approached in its advocacy of women's rights until well into the twentieth century. ***Dated, but overall recommended despite its genre limitations.

4.

Griffith, Mary

Three Hundred Years Hence

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia, Pa. 1947 131 \$2.50

American Utopian Novel No. 2

300 copies printed.

Jacket brown paper without lettering.



Science fiction novel. ***An early American utopia, first published as a component of *Camperdown, or, News From Our Neighborhood: Being Sketches*, Pp. 9–92, by the author of "Our Neighborhood" [pseudo.]. Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1836. ***The present reprinting has an excellent introduction by Nelson F. Adkins. ***Edgar Hastings, in 1835, is trapped in the ruins of his house by ice and a landslide, and sleeps for 300 years. His descendants clear away the rubbish and find him. The future world is then described. These are its characteristics: complete emancipation of women; emancipation of negroes, and their deportation to Liberia and other colonies; outlawry of war; continued restrained capitalism, with an income tax; nationalization of railroads; improved morality—no tobacco or alcohol. Technological advances include self-propelled vehicles motivated by a new force; self-propelled plows and bulldozers; fireproofing etc. But Mrs. Griffith apparently did not like dogs, for she almost exterminated them, and they are no longer popular. It all turns out to be a dream. ***Curious and entertaining. Unlike most utopias it is short and precise, and is therefore much less boring than more ambitious works of the later 19th century. Recommended, with period and genre limitations. ***This is the second volume in a series reprinting early American utopias.

Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.

5.

del Rey, Lester [i.e., Ramón Felipe San Juan Mario Silvio Enrico Smith Heathcourt-Brace Sierra y Alvarez-del Rey y de Los Uerdes (likely born Leonard Knapp)]

...And Some Were Human

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1948 331 \$3.00

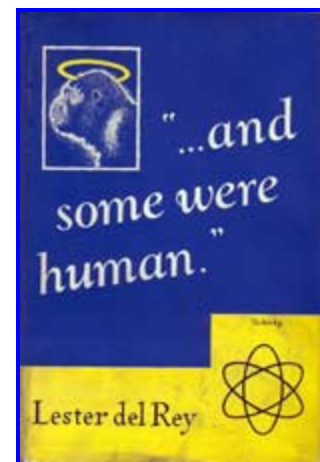
2,000 copies printed. 50 signed, slipcased with no jacket (\$5.00).

Two title pages, one dated 1947, the other 1948.

Jacket by L. Robert Tschirsky.

Illustrated by Ira Levin.

Science fiction and fantasy short stories. ***A collection of 12 stories by one of the most popular of all authors to appear in *Astounding Science Fiction*. *****[a]** "Hereafter, Inc." (*Unknown*, Vol. 5, No. 4; No. 28, December 1941). Potts, a Fundamentalist, awakens in a heaven that is much like Earth, but is Hell for him. **[b]** "The Day is Done." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 102, May 1939). The last Neanderthal man lives as a parasite upon more successful Cro-Magnon men, and finally dies of loss of self-respect. ***A novel twist to an old theme, even though somewhat sentimental. **[c]** "Forsaking All Others." (*Unknown*, Vol. 1, No. 6; No. 6, August 1939). A dryad falls in love with a mortal. **[d]** "The Coppersmith." (*Unknown*, Vol. 2, No. 1; No. 7, September 1939). One of the Little People awakens and has much difficulty in adjusting himself to modern life. He finally decides to aid the machine age to use up its resources, so that the rest of his people can awaken. **[e]** "The Luck of Ignatz" (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 105, August 1939). A Venusian zloah, a snail-lizard, is good luck in the swamps, but bad luck elsewhere. **[f]** "The Faithful." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 89, April 1938). Mankind is almost extinct and intelligent dogs remodel apes to form a new race of men. **[g]** "Dark Mission." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 116, July 1940). A Martian comes to Earth to warn about a Martian plague. **[h]** "Helen O'Loy." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 97, December 1938). Helen, a fabulously beautiful, love-lorn, female robot, with which two men fall in love. **[i]** "The Stars Look Down." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 117, August 1940). Rival rocket experiments sabotage each other's project, but must cooperate when there is only one rocket and one pilot left. **[j]** "The Renegade." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 152, July 1943 as by Marion Henry). Harvey Land, a worthless renegade, becomes a great teacher to a race of intelligent gorillas. **[k]** "The Wings of Night." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 136, March 1942). Space prospectors stumble upon the last refuge of lunar plant-men, and save the race by leaving behind some necessary copper. **[l]** "Nerves." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 142, September 1942). A long story of disaster at an atomic plant in the near future, told with excellent detail, from the point of view of the company doctor. *****[k]** and **[l]** are recommended as among the best short stories which appeared in the magazines of the period. One or two others are excellent.



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Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.

6.

Sturgeon, Theodore [Pseudo. of Waldo, Edward Hamilton]

It

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1948 29 \$1.00

50 paper copies printed. Printed on rectos only, self wrappers, stapled, 12mo (6" x 7.5"). Produced from the *Without Sorcery* plates for the 1948 World Science Fiction Convention in Toronto (TORCON). Issued in advance to the books release as a promotion.

Fantastic short story. ***From: (*Unknown*, Vol. 3, No. 6; No. 18, August 1940).***A horrible regionalistic story of a decaying corpse that attains a new form of life. ***Alton Drew goes looking for his lost dog, Kimbo. Of all creatures in the world he loves his dog, probably more than his sister-in-law, Clissa, and her young daughter, Babe. His love for the two family members is a well-known secret, and his brother, Cory, keeps a strangle-hold on his brother, making him work as an un-paid laborer, by virtue of his reluctance to leave and strike out on his own. Alton finds Kimbo, torn limb from limb, and determines to hunt down the killer. When he doesn't return the next day, his brother is furious and goes looking, angry that his brother isn't doing his chores. He encounters an out-of-place businessman wandering around the woods, looking for something. Babe, who loves her uncle, also goes looking for him. Cory is the first to tumble over the torn-apart corpse of his brother, and then of the businessman. Babe is the first to survive an encounter with the thing. "It" is a man-like creature, formed over bones out of moss and decaying organic material, possessed of the ability to think and reason, it has no memory. Experimentally it has ripped about all living things, trying to find a connection between life and its own decaying, death-like state. It chases Babe to a cave and almost kills her too. But Babe escapes, darting across the stream. It follows, falling into the water and dissolves. Later, after the screaming child has calmed down enough, the men of the village find the bones, and a newspaper article left in the businessman's briefcase. It seems that "It," or the skeletal remains are the long sought after bones of a relative of a peculiar family that lived in the region. A huge reward has been offered for the bones, so that they can be buried with the rest of the family. The Drew family receives the reward. The bones appeared to have taken on a second life, seeking a return to the family graveyard. Only Babe continues to suffer from the encounter, haunted by nightmares. ***A rare item to find in the separate edition.

7.

Sturgeon, Theodore [Pseudo. of Waldo, Edward Hamilton]

Without Sorcery, Thirteen Tales

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1948 355 \$3.00

2,750 copies printed. 80-100 copies in a special, numbered, boxed, autographed edition.

Jacket and interior illustrations by L. Robert Tschirsky.

Science fiction short stories. ***An introduction by Ray Bradbury. ***[a] "The Ultimate Egoist." (*Unknown*, Vol. 4, No. 5; No. 23, February 1941 as by E. Hunter Waldo). Woodie discovers that the world is his illusion, and gets rid of part of it; but he discovers that he, too, is part of his illusion. [b] "It." (*Unknown*, Vol. 3, No. 6; No. 18, August 1940). A horrible regionalistic story of a decaying corpse that attains a new form of life. (See above synopsis.) [c] "Poker Face." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 124, March 1941). People from another culture, 30,000 years in the future, like the modern era. [d] "Shottle Bop." (*Unknown*, Vol. 4, No. 5; No. 23, February 1941). A bottle shop, where the hero is sold a drink that opens new powers for him: the ability to see into the world of the dead without being seen, until he misuses his power. [e] "Artnan Process." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 127, June 1941). Martian domination. A biological production of U-235 in another system. [f] "Memorial." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 185, April 1946). A scientist, who tried to frighten people away from war, instead frightened them into it. [g] "Ether Breather." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 106, September 1939). A humorous tale of etheric beings who interfere with color television for amusement. [h] "Butyl and the Breather." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 119, October 1940). A sequel to the preceding. [i] "Brat." (*Unknown*, Vol. 5, No. 4; No. 28, December 1941) A changeling baby, an old pixy, becomes human when loved. [j] "Two Percent Inspiration." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 131, October 1941). Humor, about Martians, interplanetary warfare, and a super-scientist. In part a parody of lower levels of science-fiction. [k] "Cargo." (*Unknown*, Vol. 4, No. 3; No. 21, November 1940). An old tramp ship brings the Little People over from the Old World, in exchange for war immunity and a mermaid for the captain. [l] "Maturity." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 195, February 1947). Robin English is a new mutation, a super-genius, but shockingly childish. Gland extract matures him, but maturity means death for Robin. [m] "Microcosmic God." (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 125, April 1941). A scientist creates and evolves life in his laboratory, and keeps a microcosmic world to do his bidding. He finally saves himself by the super-science of the little world. ***[g], [h], and [j] could well have been omitted, but the other stories include some of the very best material ever published in modern American science fiction.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.

8.

Bechdolt, Jack ([John Ernest])

The Torch

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1948 229 \$2.50

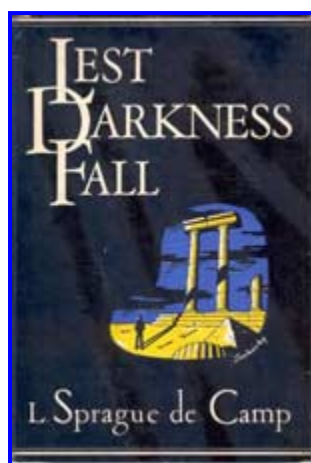
2,000 copies printed.

Jacket and interior illustrations by Robert Tschirsky.

Science fiction novel. ***From: (5-part series beginning with: *Argosy*, January 24, 1920). Also: (*Fantastic Novels*, No. 24, April 1951). ***In an America of the not-too-far future civilization has almost entirely disappeared, after the great wars of 1985, but man is building up again. Around New York City a small pocket of culture still survives, but it is a dictatorship by an aristocracy, which lives upon the labor of thousands of oppressed workers who live in the subway tunnels. ***Beginning in 3010 A.D., when the brief flame of atomic energy has flickered and gone out, it tells of the life amid the ruins that remain of New York. It is a brutal and savage life that is shown; but it is also a life of raw courage with a flaming drive toward the ending of the dark ignorance and superstition that have extinguished the Torch. The Towermen—so called because they live in the few remaining skyscrapers—rule with an iron hand. Fortune, a captain in the army of the Tower ruling class, is captured by the underground, called the people of the Torch who live on the Island of the Statue. He manages to escape, betrays the underground, but finally comes to see that his lot is with them. Fortune, who shall rule according to the prophecy until the Torch flames bright again, rides from the outskirts into the city to claim that rule. And he plunges at once into the intrigues and counter-intrigues of that final great struggle, against the strife-filled background of new barbarism. He fights his way to power and to love. But the call of the Torch, in the person of Mary of the Isle, proves stronger than his lust for power. The Statue of Liberty is the symbol of the forces fighting for freedom, and when the statue's light is once again kindled, despite adversities, the Tower ruling class is defeated. ***Reprinted from magazines of a few generations ago, 1920, but still readable, and enjoyable as an example of a capable pre-modern adventure thriller. It is one of the finest pieces of prophecy written at that time, and it is one of the finest stories ever written of man's everlasting fight for the liberty he prizes most when he has it least.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection. 1st state dust jacket



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection. FFF variant dust jacket

9.

de Camp, L[yon] Sprague

Lest Darkness Fall

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1949 233 \$3.00

2,000 copies printed, second book edition. (1st edition *Holt; New York*; 1941).

1st jacket by Robert Tschirsky (black) and interior illustrations by Hannes Bok.

2nd jacket by Hannes Bok (yellow), for FFF imprint (500 copies).

Fantastic novel. ***A historical thriller with a fantastic premise. ***From: (*Unknown*, Vol. 2, No. 4; No. 10, December 1939) & (*Galaxy Novel*, No. 24, 1955). ***Martin Padway, a classical archeologist, was a smart enough young man, with a scientific

education, but no universal genius. He has the misfortune to be dropped back suddenly into a former time, and a very alarming time at that—to Gothic Rome, sixth-century Rome, when the Goths, under the king Thiudahad, ruled Italy and civilization in the West was collapsing. He appears just before the collapse of the Western Roman Empire beneath the armies of Belisarius. Since he has a good knowledge of Roman history, a remarkable acquaintance with the history of invention and plenty of brashness and resourcefulness, Padway soon rises to the top. He determines to revolutionize arts and sciences, so that he can stave off the downfall of civilization. Padway attempts to introduce the printing press and telegraph to Rome until he runs afoul of Thiudahad, temporarily. He is free in time to save a Gothic army from defeat at the hands of the Eastern legions of Justinian. Belisarius, the leader of the invaders, joins forces with him. When Thiudahad goes insane, the American sponsors the new king, Urias. Another invasion launched by Justinian is halted until Belisarius—now his ally—can sweep the field. The Gothic empire scales new heights under Urias. Eventually he controls the government, and after beating off internal and external attacks, sets up a new empire, with Belisarius as right hand man, and is fairly sure that no dark ages will follow. Prudently resolving to steer clear of women, war and politics, Padway soon finds himself up to his neck in all three. Despite every effort to stay in his proper sphere of technology he becomes more involved in desperate adventures. Never having used a sword in his life, he has to fight a duel with a redoubtable Gothic warrior to save the life of a worthless king whom he despises but whom he has to preserve in order to use. Then he has to placate a beautiful but bloodthirsty Gothic princess who wants to marry him and poison everybody else. ***Well worked out logically, and told in an amusing debunking fashion, but if it is compared with other works in the genre of the historical novel, i.e., *I, Claudius* or *Count Belisarius*, it seems rather thin.

10.

Keller, David H[enry] M.D.

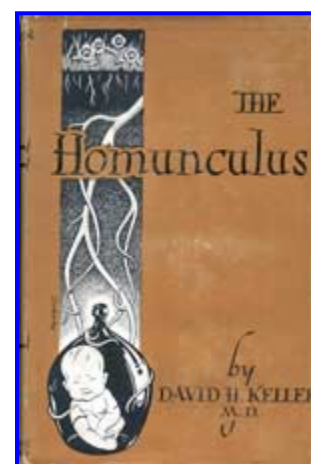
The Homunculus

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1949 160 \$3.00

2,000 copies printed, including a special, numbered, boxed, autographed edition of 112 copies (\$5.00).

Jacket by L. Robert Tschirky.

Fantastic novel. ***From: (*Amazing Stories*, Vol. 4, No. 11, February 1930 as “A Twentieth Century Homunculus”).***A whimsical novel based upon ancient magic and modern folklore. ***Colonel Horatio Bumble, a retired Army medical officer and imaginative liar, retreats to his ancestral home in the little town of Posert anticipating a tranquil old age in the company of his charming wife, Helen, and Pekingese dog, Lady. He finds civilization complicated by the high cost of living and his inability to secure labor at any price. Being the last male Bumble he deeply regrets his childlessness and intensely longs for a son who will perpetuate the family name. In the short space of a year all of his problems are solved through the assistance of Pete and Sarah, at first very unusual servants and later delightful houseguests. With their assistance he decides to make a homunculus (an artificial baby), according to the recipe of Paracelsus. As he starts the experiment of masculine parthenogenesis, the two strange but charming persons, Pete and Sarah, at first act as though they are merely perfect servants, but later they reveal themselves to be gods, Sarah being Lilith. The situation is that Lilith cannot have a baby by normal means, but only through a homunculus experiment, and yet cannot suggest the experiment to men. ***It is not unfair to reveal this motif, for the story is charming and enjoyable, despite some mannerisms, and so is recommended to the reader.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.

11.

Binder, Eando [Pseudo. of Binder, Otto Oscar and Earl Andrew]

Lords of Creation

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1949 232 \$3.00

2,000 copies printed, including a special, numbered, boxed, autographed edition of 112 copies (\$5.00).

Jacket by S. Levin.

Science fiction novel. ***A science fiction thriller from *Argosy Magazine*; 6-part series beginning September 23, 1939. ***Homer Ellory, buried in suspended animation in a time crypt from 1950, is awakened in the year 5000. He learns that a new stone age has overtaken man. Wars, disease, exhaustion of natural resources have combined to reduce most of the world to primitive life, although a new feudal, slave-holding civilization has arisen in now-temperate Antarctica. It rules the world with flying machines and flame-throwers. Ellory quickly aligns himself against the arrogant Lords of Antarkan, as champion of the downtrodden tribal states. Ellory determines to strike for freedom, showing the natives how to obtain metals from the ruins of New York, and defies the Antarkans. His first rebellion is a failure, and he is captured and



taken to the Antarkan city of Lillamra, but he is lucky enough to find a cache of 30th century guns with which he conquers Antarka and marries the Lady Ermaine, the ruler of the land, and becomes king, or its equivalent. ***A dated action story, often naive narrative, and now almost juvenescent. ***Not recommended.

12.

Bond, Nelson (S[lade])

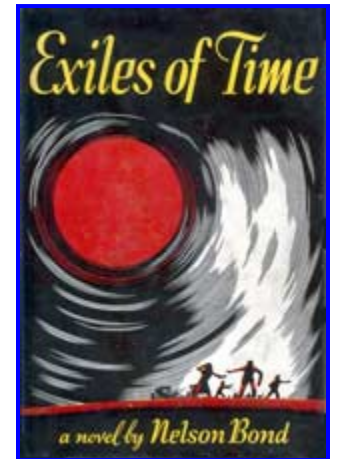
Exiles of Time

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1949 183 \$3.00

2,000 copies printed, including a special, numbered, boxed, autographed edition of 112 copies (\$5.00).

Jacket by James Gibson.

Science fiction novel. ***From *Blue Book Magazine*, Vol. 71, No. 1, May 1940. ***Gimmick about the circular theory of time. ***When he discovered in an Arabian tomb thousands of years old a sinister bloodstone amulet made of metal known to man only in the last century, Lance Vidor, archeologist, knew he had stumbled upon a great mystery. The expedition's native employee's look upon the amulet with superstition, and when the archeologists fail to leave, they attack. Lance gains refuge in the tomb, where he is cast into another period in the time period of the Earth. Not until later did he learn he had been drawn into a web of romance and adventure which was to hurl him backward through time thousands of years to a younger Earth, an earlier civilization, there to be eyewitness to a cataclysm passed down in legend as the Day of Ragnarok—the Twilight of the Gods. Vidor and the beautiful Vale Marlowe join a little band of time-exiled companions that have been summoned to this remote age in a desperate attempt to save an ancient culture from the destruction threatened by a runaway comet. They have adventures in Lemuria, and fight side-by-side with the heroes of Norse fables, as they travel from the rose cliffs of Petra to the wastes of the Bifrost Bridge. The land's great scientist, Cal-Thor, is furnished with data that should enable him to save the Earth. But certain elements led by an American gangster, Lucky (the Norse Loki) Costarno, kill Cal-Thor. Vidor can only deflect the comet so that it grazes the Earth (Ragnarok), and only a few survive. ***A compelling fantasy, deftly told, well worth finding a copy and reading.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry
Kemp Collection.

13.

Keller, David H[enry] M.D.

The Eternal Conflict

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1949 191 \$3.50

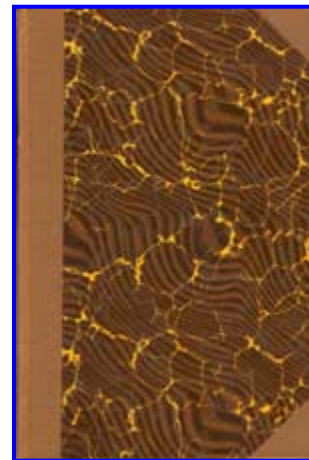
400 copies printed, all special, numbered, boxed, and autographed.

Pages bound uncut as per Keller's instructions.

Jacketless.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry
Kemp Collection.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry
Kemp Collection.

Fantastic novel. ***First appeared serialized prewar in the French periodical *Les Primaires*. Six parts were published beginning in July 1939, in the magazine which an ardent follower, Professor Régis Messac, helped to found. This magazine

began to serialize *The Eternal Conflict*, but the war intervened before it was completed. ***Philosophical battle of the sexes. ***A wish-fulfillment novel in which librarian Henry Cecil (a thinly veiled Keller) is carried back in time to act as librarian of a dream library. It contains all the mythical books of legend, folklore, and literature, including the books that writers planned to write but never completed. ***The Woman, immortal and all powerful, and among other things, the unfathered daughter of The Woman, is unsatisfied. She is unsatisfied by everything, everything she has, and everything she can create (which is everything and anything). Surrounded by talking animals, the Cat, the Elephant, the Dragon, and the Unicorn, primarily, she seeks her satisfaction. Failing she calls on her mother for help, which is cryptic, and the daughter summons the Librarian, Henry Cecil, to research all knowledge for her in order to find the key to her satisfaction. She tries on a man, but kills the first one that strives to meet her. The second she traps in her Tower, ordering him to find that something which has always eluded her, her satisfaction. She lies to him, telling him that she will free him, devours him, and then in another act of creation, uses his death to create a baby boy out of a bubble. She tries to believe that she will find complete satisfaction with the true love of her child. But when he is grown, he leaves her to find his love in the arms of another woman, who will have children for him. The Eternal Woman, eternally unsatisfied, kills herself, thinking in the end that her satisfaction can only be accomplished by non-existence. After all is said and done, the Eternal Woman has failed to find satisfaction with her mythical, talking creatures, with her own Eternal Mother, with potential lovers, with a specific man, with her own child, and finally in self love. ***Typical Keller fare. Of reading interest only as a genre piece. It does seem, however, that Keller sees women, in general and specifically, as terrible creatures, and even his idealized ones are barely receptacles for men, and mirrors for their existence. ***Publication was subsidized by Keller. ***Solely for the Keller completist.

14.

de Camp, L[yon] Sprague and Pratt, [Murray] Fletcher

The Incomplete Enchanter

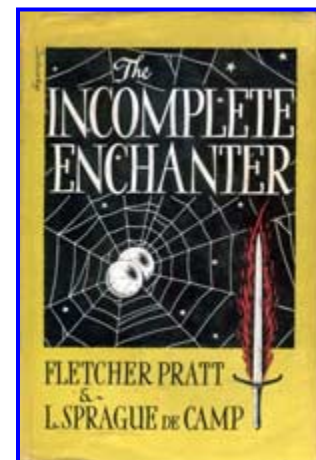
Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1950 326 \$2.50

2,000 copies printed, second edition. 50 paper.

(First edition *Holt; New York* 1941.)

Jacket by L. Robert Tschirsky.

Fantastic novel. ***Two short novels from *Unknown*. (*Unknown*, Vol. 3, No. 3; No. 15, May 1940 as "The Roaring Trumpet"). ***Harold Shea worked for the Garaden Institute in Ohio, under the psychologist Reed Chalmers. Reed Chalmers has a theory that there are an infinite number of parallel universes within the reach of man's mentality and works out the logical equations, the study of which transports one to another world. The theoretical basis for this is a solipsism resembling in some respects Fichte's theory of the universe. Chalmers theory is that there is an infinite variety of possible universes, and that you can travel from one to another by the mental manipulation of logical symbols. ***In the first adventure, Harold Shea, a brash young man, wanted to try it and also to escape the attention of one of his colleagues: Miss Gertrude Mugler. So Harold goes seeking to enter the world of Irish heroic romance. Unfortunately he made a mistake in the formula, and is precipitated instead into the world of Norse mythology, a much colder and less hospitable world. He arrives during the Fimbulwinter, which is immediately before Ragnarok, the Norse Armageddon, the final conflict of the gods and giants. At first he has difficulties, but he discovers that the universe is magical in basis, instead of scientific, as ours, and learns to control magic, and aids the gods to recover one of their stolen great weapons. With Ragnarok about to break, he returns to Earth. Escaping from that world, partly by good management but more by good luck, he reported back to Chalmers. ***The second story concerns the adventures of Shea and Reed Chalmers in the world of Spenser's *Fairie Queene*. (*Unknown*, Vol. 3, No. 6; No. 18, August 1940 as "The Mathematics of Magic"). Chalmers, a middle-aged man, wants some excitement out of life, so he undertakes to go with Harold on their next journey. Under Chalmers' expert guidance they make their transition without mishap, and soon are up to their necks in complications. Shea falls in love with the Dianesque, Belphebe, a virgin huntress. Chalmers falls for Florimel, the snow-girl, while he attempts to learn all the principles of magic so that he can turn the girl made of stone into a human being. There are adventures among monsters, knights, and black magicians, all of whom are finally overcome. There is an amusing parody of a scientific congress in terms of witchcraft, the subversive Enchanters' Chapter. ***Capable thrillers.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.

15.

Smith, George O[liver]

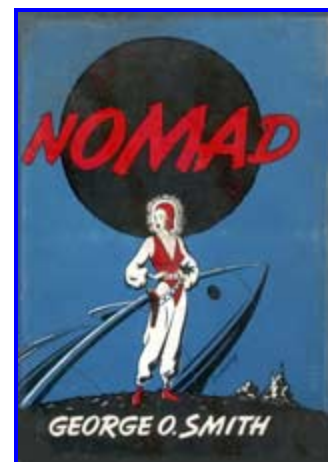
Nomad

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1950 286 \$3.00

2,000 copies printed.

Jacket by L. Robert Tschirsky.

Science fiction novel. ***From: (*Astounding Science Fiction*, No. 169, 170, & 171, November 1944, January 1945 & February 1945 as by Wesley Long). ***Science-fiction adventure of the future, when space-travel between the planets is easily accomplished. A story of a man hounded from world to world with loyalties divided between his native Earth and the wandering enemy planet Ertene, to which he owes his life and future. ***Guy Maynard, a minor officer in the space navy, is kidnapped by Martians. The Martians, in turn, are attacked by Earth forces, so that their damaged ship, out of control, leaves the solar system, and is picked up by observers from a planet in outer space. This planet, Ertene, inhabited by humans, is traveling across space, and is equipped with gadgets that render it undetectable. The people are peaceful, as opposed to the violently imperialistic Earthmen and Martians, but are "stagnant." Maynard is permitted to return to Earth, upon a pledge of secrecy, and is given various scientific secrets that will enable him to rise rapidly in the navy. He is ambitious and unthinking, and when the Ertene inventions reveal a tenth planet, inhabited by a peaceful civilization, he attacks it, destroys it completely, and is only beginning to feel pangs of remorse. He returns to Ertene, which is still near, and in disguise works his way to a high position, and is confused in identity with the ruler of the planet. Then he discovers that he has been the tool of the war party in Ertene. In a confusing mixture of plots and counterplots he utilizes a thought-controlling machine to overcome hostile fleets from Earth, Mars, and Ertene, and sets himself up as emperor of the Solar System. He then discovers that this, too, has been the Ertene plan. ***Too much in too little space, with incredible motivations and situations.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.

16.

Dumas, Alexandre, Pére [translated and edited by L. Sprague de Camp]

The Wolf Leader

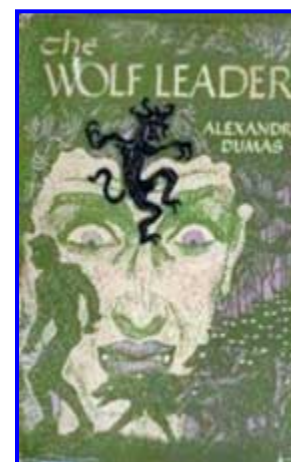
Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1950 235 \$3.50

1,500 copies printed, second edition.

(First edition *Methuen; London* 1904.)

Jacket and illustrations by Mahlon Blaine.

Fantastic novel. ***Translated from the French translation of Alfred Allinson by L. Sprague de Camp. ***From: (*Weird Tales*, August 1931, September 1931, October 1931, November 1931, December 1931, January 1932, February 1932 & March 1932). ***A French supernatural thriller by Dumas Pére, not fils, as was stated in a magazine reprinting. ***Thibault, a peasant sabot-maker (shoemaker), has ideas beyond his station, and casts envious eyes at the game on the lands of the Baron of Vey. And when he is badly treated by the irascible baron, he vows revenge, unwittingly calling upon the devil for aid. To him comes a black wolf, which is able to talk, and persuades Thibault to accept a bond: all Thibault's wishes shall be fulfilled, with only this provision, that for each wish that does not profit Thibault, first one, then two, then four and so on, of Thibault's hairs shall become the Wolf's property. Thibault consents, and makes many wishes, but nothing but pain and discomfort are his lot, and his whole head of hair soon has the appearance of flame. Then, when he learns that he is pretty nearly damned, he makes another bargain: to become a true werewolf himself, in exchange for near immortality and invulnerability. Only on one day each year shall he be vulnerable, the first day, and its anniversaries. But his misfortune continues, and on the very first day he is chased by the dog-pack of his enemy the Baron. While he is being hunted, he passes the bier of his dead sweetheart, and in a moment of redemptive goodness, wishes that he might sacrifice himself to bring her to life again. He is redeemed, and only a wolf's skin is found. ***Obviously hastily written hackwork, but readable, and the combination of grim humor and supernatural horror is rather unusual. ***Dumas started his career as a clerk in Paris in 1823, but soon turned to literature. He is most noted for his D'Artagnan romances, which began with *The Three Musketeers*.



17.

Keller, David H[enry] M.D.

The Lady Decides

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1950 139 \$3.50

400 copies printed, all special, numbered, boxed, and autographed.

Pages bound uncut as per Keller's instructions.

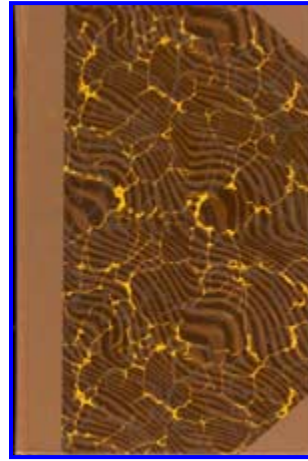
Jacketless.

Fantastic novel. ***Allegory set in Spain. ***Also subsidized by Keller. ***Solely for the Keller completist. ***Henry Cecil (who appears to be a wish-fulfillment character for Keller), from Georgia, gives up the family fortune to pursue his muse. He becomes a wandering lute playing troubadour, traveling around a bucolic Spain that appears to never have existed. During his journey he learns how to play the lute from practically the very first person he meets. Desiring romantic, Arthurian

adventures, he has them. Seeking his Sleeping Lady in the Tower, he finds her, but then he settles for a practical marriage, to his apparent second choice, who cryptically tells him that she has decided. After spending most all of his life with her, selling olives for the family business, raising children, she finally dies, but he decides she has gone to Avalon to wait for him. He then returns to his first Sleeping Lady, who has been waiting for him for her entire life in the same patio garden where they met, where she “decided” that they would eventually be together. The End. ***Painful to read. Not recommended at all. This reader hopes that it cost a pretty penny to publish this dreadful waste of paper. Of which, the uncut pages make it extremely difficult to read without destroying the book.



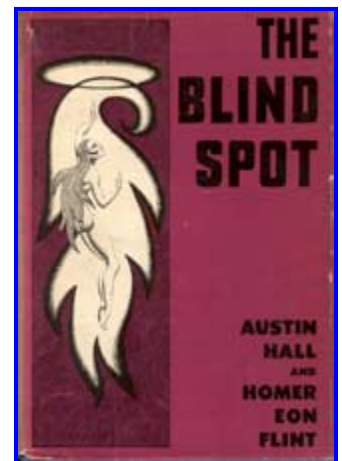
Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.

18.
Hall, Austin and Flint, Homer Eon
The Blind Spot
 Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia 1951 293 \$3.00
 1,500 copies printed, only about 800 bound.
 Jacket and interior illustrations by Hannes Bok.
 The illustrations and jacket were sold along with those he did for the never published *The Spot of Life* as separate sets (150 sets, selling 125 at \$1.00).

Science fantasy novel. ***A novel from 1921 magazines. It is difficult to say whether it is fantastic in the smaller sense, or science fiction. ***From: (6-part series beginning with *Argosy*, May 14, 1921). Also: (*Fantastic Novels*, No. 1, July 1940) & (*Famous Fantastic Mysteries*, Vol. 1, No. 6; Vol. 2, No. 1, & 2, March 1940, April 1940, May-June 1940; incomplete series). ***Some time before the opening of the main story, Professor Holcomb of the University of California announced that he had factual evidence of a discovery of supernal importance, the Blind Spot. He gave no details. At the same time, a mysterious stranger, the Rhamda Avec, appears in San Francisco, marvels at the sun and the utopian splendor of San Francisco, and meets Dr. Holcomb who promptly disappears forever. Occasionally the Rhamda is seen around San Francisco, but is so like a ghost that none can seize him. ***The modern section of the story comes when a pair of friends, Hobart Fenton and Harry Wendel chance upon the mystery of the Blind Spot. Motives include a mysterious lady, the Nervina, who corresponds in a way to the Rhamda; a strange ring, which saps the life of males who wear it, and contains a stone lighter than air; a house in San Francisco, which seems to be a natural gateway into the world of the Blind Spot; a natural dilation of the gateway occasionally, so that persons tumble through it and disappear, and so on. Eventually, after much detail and mystification, the friends penetrate to the world of the Blind Spot, which is not explained, but is somehow parallel to our own world, somehow a mirror image, and somehow connected with the mystery of life and death. Various hints are not coordinated, so the mystery is heightened. But life in the Blind Spot world marches along like life in any other lost-race area, and adventures and plots are a mild continuation of the thrilling if lengthy mysterious problems of the first portion of the story. ****The Blind Spot* has long been a legendary story among older followers of science fiction, and to a certain extent it deserves its reputation. It has bad faults—it was obviously very hastily plotted and written, and not checked, for it abounds with false leads and loose ends; it is hopelessly overlong and



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.

padded; it slumps disastrously in mood in the later portions; and the writing and presentation is obviously slightly superior pulp of World War I mixing. Yet, *The Blind Spot* does carry a queer conviction of its own. It succeeds in investing drabness with a weird color reminiscent of Machen's London, and has very interesting concepts and insights. The first portion is a good mystery story. ***Most readers will be disappointed with *The Blind Spot* on first reading, but will find that despite all its faults, it will "grow upon" them, as a memorable adventure tale. ***Oswald Train believed that it was Damon Knight's critical review of this title that killed book sales for it, as well as for Prime Press.

19.

Bok, Hannes [Pseudo. of Woodard, Wayne]

Illustration Proof Set:

For: *The Blind Spot* and *The Spot of Life*

Prime Press, Inc.; Philadelphia nd 10 \$1.00

5.75" x 9.5"; black & white

150 sets printed, only 125 were for sale at \$1.00.

Illustrations and jacket for both *The Blind Spot* and the as yet never published *The Spot of Life* were sold as separate sets, unbound in a brown paper envelope. ***Some sets had plates signed by Hannes Bok. ***An extremely rare set of beautiful artwork. This reader has only seen one set...once, as a part of his fathers' extensive collection, now long gone.

Prime Press, Inc. had *Alien Flesh*, a very good novel by Seabury Quinn, actually set up in type, and including the jacket. But Williams died a few weeks before printing, creating another tragedy for fantasy literature.

Prime Press also distributed:

**AVALON COMPANY
1947—1948**

The **Avalon Company** was formed in 1947 by Sam Moskowitz and Will Sykora, and published only one book. Their ads seem terribly naive today, and possibly their business practices as well, since Avalon didn't last. If either or both had undertaken a return to publishing again in 1966, with (particularly on Moskowitz' part) the tremendous post-Avalon experience, it would certainly be a different story.

At the time of its inception, in 1947, Sykora was working as a teacher in a printing school, with access to equipment for a nominal charge. Sykora was to set type, and print. Moskowitz was to do everything else. Moskowitz had always admired the writing of David H. Keller, M.D. In the 1930's he had been voted the most popular science fiction writer of the day by a *Wonder Stories* survey. In a few short decades he was a forgotten name from the past. Moskowitz decided to print a collection of Keller for the first Avalon book.

It was clear that the major reason was highly practical. Keller waived royalties for the receipt of 35 copies of the completed book. In addition, he advanced \$200 toward production costs, fully indulging his vanity—as he did a number of times in the years that followed with other specialty publishers.

Included were two stories never before in print. Moskowitz wrote a 5,000-word biographical introduction to the volume. This was the first to carry Keller's name as editor, or author, a figure that was to grow to 54 in little more than three decades, mostly due to Keller's financial assistance.

Even though Keller started writing at the age of 14, he did not sell his first story until he was 47. But by that time he had quite a stock of unprinted material, which he spent a considerable amount of money financing the publication.

Finally, after selling 506 copies, the two partners were approaching a point of profit. They argued over this. Sykora did not want to profit from the publication, and had done it for the sake of art. The two disbanded the company in June 1949, dividing the remaining copies, 300 each. Apparently, Sykora's copies were almost all destroyed in a basement flood. Moskowitz sold many of copies at a 50% discount; finally he sold the remaining copies to Prime Press, which listed this title as one of its own on at least one of their dust jackets, causing collector's confusion.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry Kemp Collection.

Although Avalon produced only one title, they had whetted Keller's vanity, and he would proceed to finance his way into publication by helping out the sagging industry.

With every copy went a bibliography of Keller in separate pamphlet form by A. Langley Searles, reprinted from his *Fantasy Commentator*. Completists please note.

1.

Keller, David H[enry] M.D.

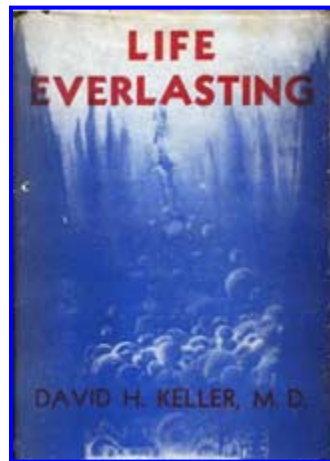
***Life Everlasting*,**

and other tales of science, fantasy and horror

Avalon Co.; Newark 1947 394 \$3.50

1,200 numbered copies. 300 destroyed by the printer. 240 signed by Keller.

Jacket by Russell Swanson.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry
Kemp Collection.



Scan courtesy Earl Terry
Kemp Collection.

Science fiction and fantasy short stories. ***Contents: Introduction by Sam Moskowitz, who was the editor, along with Will Sykora, for this volume. [a] *Life Everlasting*. (*Amazing Stories*, Vol. 9, No. 3 & 4, July & August 1934). Harry Ackerman has invented a wonderful serum that cures everything from organic illness to madness, criminality, and stupidity. The world enthusiastically receives the discovery, until it is learned that the serum creates sterility. A decision must be made between parental love and perfection. Love wins. [b] *The Boneless Horror*. (*Science Wonder Stories*, No. 2, July 1929) & (*Startling Stories*, Vol. 6, No. 3, November 1941). ***A fantasy euhemerizing Greek mythology and modern occult teaching about lost continents. ***In the remote past there were three great empires on Earth: Atlantis, Mo, and Gobi. Each plans to destroy the others. Atlantis is blown up, and the other two are also destroyed. The story title comes from the fate of the sadistic rulers of Mo, who are fed a serum of immortality, which also destroys their bones. They still survive on mountaintops. [c] *Unto us a Child is Born*. (*Amazing Stories*, Vol. 8, No. 4, July 1933). In the future only superior people are allowed to have children. Hubler, a genius, has a child who is a super-genius. But it is inhuman. [d] *No More Tomorrows*. (*Amazing Stories*, Vol. 7, No. 9, December 1932). A drug destroys the ability to plan for the future. [e] *The Thing in the Cellar*. (*Weird Tales*, March 1932) & (*Avon Fantasy Reader*, No. 6, 1948). An excellent short horror story. ***A child senses something horrible in the cellar, something that will burst forth and kill him. His parents scoff, for there is nothing in the cellar. They are wrong. [f] *The Dead Woman*. (*Fantasy Magazine*, April 1934) & (*Strange Stories*, April 1934). [g] *Heredity*. (*Vortex*, No. 2, 1947) A vampire wife and a werewolf son soon destroy a businessman. [h] *The Face in the Mirror*. (Previously unpublished. This is the first appearance. No magazine appearances before or since.) Dissociated personality and schizophrenia. The face in the mirror talks. [i] *THE cerebral Library*. (*Amazing Stories*, Vol. 6, No. 2, May 1931). Taine of San Francisco, a private detective, foils a plot to use 500 human brains, linked electrically, as a research library. [j] *A Piece of Linoleum*. (*10 Story Book*, December 1933 as by Amy Worth). [k] *The Thirty and One*. (*Marvel*, No. 2, November 1938). Fantasy, set in ancient Cornwall, based on private "folklore." ***A giant holds the trail, and will permit no one to pass. The Sage and the Homunculus advise that 30 men be sent as one, by placing their essences inside a princess, who is to beguile the giant. ***The other stories are *contes cruels*. ***There is also an excellent introduction by Samuel Moskowitz. ***Although Keller's name is not as well known as those of many of his pulp-writing colleagues (such as Ray Bradbury, Philip K. Dick, Robert Bloch, and a host of other science fiction luminaries), he was, in his day, a major figure in the world of speculative fiction. Indeed, Hugo Gernsback, the electrical-engineer-turned-publisher of such magazines as *Amazing Stories* and *Science Wonder Stories*, was so impressed by Keller's contributions to his publications that he coined the term "Kelleryarns" to describe stories that

attained the sort of psychological depth and insight that were the hallmarks of Keller's tales. Keller is sometimes credited with pushing science fiction in a new direction, one that championed interiority and emotion over mere gadgetry and predictions.

CHAMBERLAIN PRESS

1952—1959

Chamberlain Press was formed in late 1952, to fill the void left by the demise of Prime Press, Inc. (which see). It has the distinction of being the most forgotten specialty publisher. It was begun by Fred C. Smith and Alan E. Nourse in Jenkintown, Pennsylvania. The Chamberlain Press published only one book, the first book by an author later to become well known.

As members of the Philadelphia Science Fantasy Society they knew Prime Press was having financial difficulties. Nourse entered into a dialogue with Williams to become a limited partner. When Prime Press failed shortly after discussions began, the plan shifted to acquiring the back stock. However, the Prime Press creditors insisted on full payment, eventually receiving five cents on the dollar. This effectively eliminated Chamberlain's acquiring the remains of Prime Press.

A new plan was formulated. Nourse had begun to sell his own science fiction. He shared an agent with Richard Matheson, both had begun their writing careers at about the same time. The agent talked Matheson into letting Chamberlain put out a collection, including two unpublished tales. Mel Hunter did the jacket design for \$50. Tony Boucher gave it a rave review.

Four thousand copies were printed, and 2,000 bound. About 150 review copies were sent out and over the course of time approximately 500 copies were sold. The stored bound copies were destroyed by a flood; the unbound copies were destroyed by a fire. Only the reprint sale to Bantam Books (*Third from the Sun*, 1955, 35¢) offset their incredible financial losses.

Nourse briefly considered a second title, *The Broken Sword*, by Poul Anderson. But by then, Nourse was beginning to make enough money selling his own writing, the time and lack of profit in publishing made the decision easy. Chamberlain Press was disbanded, dying of apathy after the end of 1958.

1.

Matheson, Richard ([Burton])

Born of Man and Woman

Chamberlain Press; Pennsylvania 1954 252 \$3.00

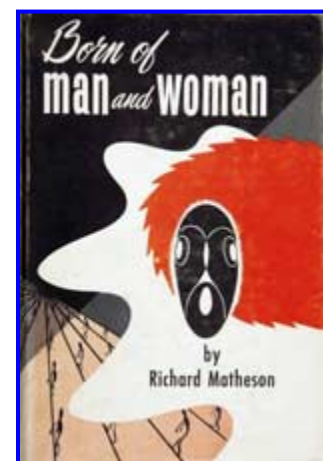
650 copies distributed.

Jacket by Mel Hunter.

Science fiction and fantasy short stories. ***Contents: [a] "The Art of Richard Matheson," by Robert Bloch. [b] "Born of Man and Woman." (*Fantasy & Science Fiction*, No. 3, Summer 1950).*** A very short but exceedingly gruesome science fiction story about mutations, told from the point of view of the young mutant. ***The story opens with a child apparently recounting the day's events in his diary. This simplicity of a child's mind is revealed in the way the day is indicated not by date but simply by "X." On this first day, the child was called a wretch by his mother (spelled by the child as "retch.") He wonders what a "retch" is. It is a rainy day and he describes it in his own words as "This day had water falling from upstairs." He indicates that he watched the rain from the little window, and he further indicates his lack of knowledge and understanding in the way that he describes the accumulation of rain. ("The ground it sucked up the water like thirsty lips. It drank too much and it got sick and runny brown.") The first indication that this child is not "normal" comes when he talks about his mother. She "is a pretty one," he says, and goes on to compare her face to those in a book of movie stars that he has. His father has told him before that "mother so pretty and me decent enough. Look at you..." After saying this on some occasion, the father shook and pulled away from the child. Then the real ringer comes when the child reveals: "Today mother let me off the chain a little so I could look out the little window. Thats [sic] how I saw the water falling from upstairs." That's right! These parents keep their eight-year-old child chained to the wall in the basement because they are so ashamed that he is a "monster." The second day is indicated by "XX." It is a sunny day and is apparently Sunday, because the family goes to church. ("I think this was church. They leave the upstairs. The big machine swallows them and rolls out past and is gone.") We then find out that the child has pulled the chain out of the wall so



CHAMBERLAIN PRESS logo



he can move around freely and look out the window. Later that evening people visit the house. The child hears laughter coming from upstairs and sneaks up the staircase to listen. Then he opens the door and goes in to the “upstairs.” When his mother finds him she knocks him down to the floor. Then she calls his father and he hits the child, causing him to bleed. (“I spilled some of the drip from one arm on the floor... I made ugly green on the floor.”) After this the father ties up the child’s arms and legs and leaves him in the cellar, leaving with the words “Oh god... and only eight.” The next day is indicated by “XXX.” It is in this way that we know the child, who knows nothing of days of the week, is recounting consecutive days. In the morning of this day the father hits the chain in to the wall again, and warns the child to never come upstairs again of he will beat him hard. “That hurts,” adds the child. The rest of the day is spent sleeping. “XXXX.” The chain has been pulled out of the wall again. Looking out the window, the child sees lots of boys and girls, who he refers to as “little mothers and fathers.” He mentions that “they are pretty.” His mother has told him that “all right people look like they do.” He is spotted by one of the kids and quickly returns to his bed and hits the chain in to the wall. His mother storms down to the cellar, scolds him, and hits him with a stick. (“The drip ran all over the bed.”) She leaves saying, “Oh mygod mygod... why have you done this to me?” “XXXXX.” “This day it had water again.” The child describes the rain in his own colorful way. On this day the “little mother” (his sister) comes down to the cellar and the child hides, afraid he will be beaten by his parents if the girl sees him. He is discovered by her cat, however, and he grabs the animal when it jumps on him. “I didn’t want to hurt it,” he says. But he squeezes the animal to death. (“I grabbed the live thing tight. It made sounds I never heard. I pushed it all together. It was all lumpy and red...”) He then hears his mother, hides the dead animal under his pillow, and hits the chain back into the wall. “X.” “This is another times.” We are informed that the sequence of days has been broken by a reversion to a single “X.” On this day the father has chained the child tight and beaten him. This time the child rebels and fights back. The father is frightened and runs back upstairs, locking the door. The child then sums up his feelings: “I am not so glad. All day it is cold in here. The chain comes slow out of the wall. I have a bad anger with mother and father... If they try to beat me again I’ll hurt them. I will.” ***One of the best science fiction short stories ever written. [c] “Third From the Sun.” (*Galaxy*, No. 1, October 1950). A family and their neighbors escape from a regimented world in a stolen spaceship on the eve of total war, to a new planet in a new solar system, a small greenish planet with a single large moon, third from the Sun. [d] “Through Channels.” (*Fantasy & Science Fiction*, No. 7, April 1951). Police question a boy about a mysterious event that is revealed throughout the story. ***Fifteen-year-old Leo Vogel, who often seems more like an eight year old, is relentless questioned by Sergeant Louis Ferazzio and Detective James Taylor, who are recording the interview. In fact, the story is written as though verbatim, the script of the interview. As the story unfolds it is revealed that Leo’s parents and neighbors regularly watch television together. Leo, upon returning from a night at the movies, has stumbled upon a grotesque tableau. His parents and neighbors have been gruesomely devoured by some type of monster who has visited this doom on them through the television set they have been watching. It seems that the television had been asking the family to “feed” them for some time. Now, satisfied, the television flickers with another message, “fed.” ***Another good shock ending. [e] “Lover, When You’re Near Me.” (*Galaxy*, No. 20, May 1952). Mental horror from an erotically compelling horrible telepathic monstrosity. An ugly alien female with ESP powers forces her love on a terrorized Earthman. [f] “SRL Ad.” (*Fantasy & Science Fiction*, No. 13, April 1952). What begins as a normal series of personal ads in the newspaper between the lovelorn, turns out to be a bizarre fit, when the “Lonesome Venus Gal” turns up...from Venus. [g] “Mad House.” (*Fantastic*, January-February 1953). A failed writer, turned into a pathetic teacher, is filled with a terrible anger that drives his wife away and infects his house, creating a house at odds. The house comes alive, fighting with and then killing him. [h] “F--.” (*Thrilling Wonder Stories*, April 1952 as “The Foodlegger”). A time traveler arrives in a possible future where food is bootlegged. The word “food” is obscene, and viewing photographs of food is pornographic. [i] “Dear Diary.” A series of diary entries which are all the almost the same but involve different people and are made millennia apart. Each entry reflects the writers’ dissatisfaction with his current world. Matheson makes a philosophical point that no matter when it is, how much time passes, things tend to remain the same for the individual. [j] “To Fit the Crime.” (*Fantastic*, November-December 1952). A poet, an intellectual, rails bitterly against the smallness of everyone else when he dies. He arrives in the afterlife condemned to a Hell of smallness, surrounded by other denizens repeating trite clichés for all eternity. [k] “Witch War.” (*Startling Stories*, Vol. 23, No. 3, July 1951). Seven little “wild-talented” girls win a war. [l] “Return.” (*Thrilling Wonder Stories*, October 1951) [m] “Dress of White Silk.” (*Fantasy & Science Fiction*, No. 10, October 1951). A tale of a little girl and a ghost as told from the point of view of the child. The dress appears to have vampiric qualities. [n] “Full Circle.” (*Fantastic Universe*, August-September 1953). Martian marionettes. [o] “Disappearing Act.” (*Fantasy & Science Fiction*, No. 22, March 1953). A failed writer fights with his wife, and gives up his mistress. He begins to rekindle the affair only to find his ex-girlfriend has disappeared, and soon several other friends have disappeared as well. Next his wife, his life, and his house, finally followed by the failed writer. [p] “The Wedding.” (*Beyond*, No. 1, July 1953). A superstitious man marries. He has an endless list of superstitious requirements he needs to perform in order to safely marry, all annoy his intended. He misses one, marries and carries his new wife across the threshold, only to die as he feared. [q] “Shipshape Home.” (*Galaxy*, No. 22, July 1952). A newly married couple gets a tremendous bargain on a new apartment. They soon develop suspicions that the janitor is more than human. They compare notes with other dwellers, and then they all seek to escape the building, believing it to be a spaceship about to take off. It turns out they were all right, but too late, the entire block takes off. [r] “The Traveller.” (Previously unpublished. This is the first appearance. Subsequently reprinted in the following as first magazine appearance, *Fantasy & Science Fiction*, Vol. 22, No. 2, #129, February 1962.) A time traveler visits the crucifixion and gains a faith based not on physical miracles, but on Jesus’ willingness to die for his beliefs. ***An excellent collection of short stories, of which [b], the title story, is but one of the very best.

Afterword:

This is the third installment in the Anthem Series project. The first part, Fantasy Press, appeared in *eI27* (August 2006) and *eI28* (October 2006). The third part, including: Prime Press, Avalon Company, and Chamberlain Press, appears here in *eI42*. The fourth part, including: Shasta Publishers, and Gorgon Press, appeared in *eI33* (August 2007).

As with this segment, and with all segments in this project, any and all corrections, enhancements, and additions, are greatly appreciated and solicited. In particular, the receipt of any and all anecdotal material pertaining to the various specialty presses and to the multitude of fine writers and their encounters with these publishers would be much more than greatly appreciated, it is dearly sought after.

Any such communication can be made directly to me at: tkempxsh@citlink.net

Thank you, fans and readers, for your appreciation and your contributions.

George Bush is so dumb, it wouldn't surprise me if he thought Peter Pan was a washbasin in a whorehouse.
--Kurt Vonnegut

Prime Press, Inc.: Checklist

Prime Press, Inc.

Regular Edition Dust Jacket Variants

- | | | | |
|---|---|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • | • | 1. The Mislaid Charm | Phillips, Alexander M. |
| • | • | 2. Venus Equilateral | Smith, George O. |
| • | | 3. Equality | Anonymous |
| • | | 4. Three Hundred Years Hence | Griffith, Mary |
| • | | 5. ...And Some Were Human | del Rey, Lester |
| • | | 6. It | Sturgeon, Theodore |
| • | | 7. Without Sorcery | Sturgeon, Theodore |
| • | | 8. The Torch | Bechdolt, Jack |
| • | • | 9. Lest Darkness Fall | de Camp, L. Sprague |
| • | | 10. The Homunculus | Keller, David H. |
| • | | 11. Lords of Creation | Binder, Eando |
| • | | 12. Exiles of Time | Bond, Nelson |
| • | | 13. The Eternal Conflict | Keller, David H. |
| • | | 14. The Incomplete Enchanter | de Camp, L. Sprague |
| • | | 15. Nomad | Smith, George O. |
| • | | 16. The Wolf Leader | Dumas, Alexandre |
| • | | 17. The Lady Decides | Keller, David H. |
| • | | 18. The Blind Spot | Hall, Austin & Flint, Homer Eon |
| • | | 19. Illustration Proof Set | Bok, Hannes |

Avalon Company

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|---|--|---------------------|------------------|
| • | | 1. Life Everlasting | Keller, David H. |
|---|--|---------------------|------------------|

Chamberlain Press

- | | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|-------------------|
| • | | 1. Born of Man and Woman | Matheson, Richard |
|---|--|--------------------------|-------------------|



"The Past Martian Invasion," by Ditmar