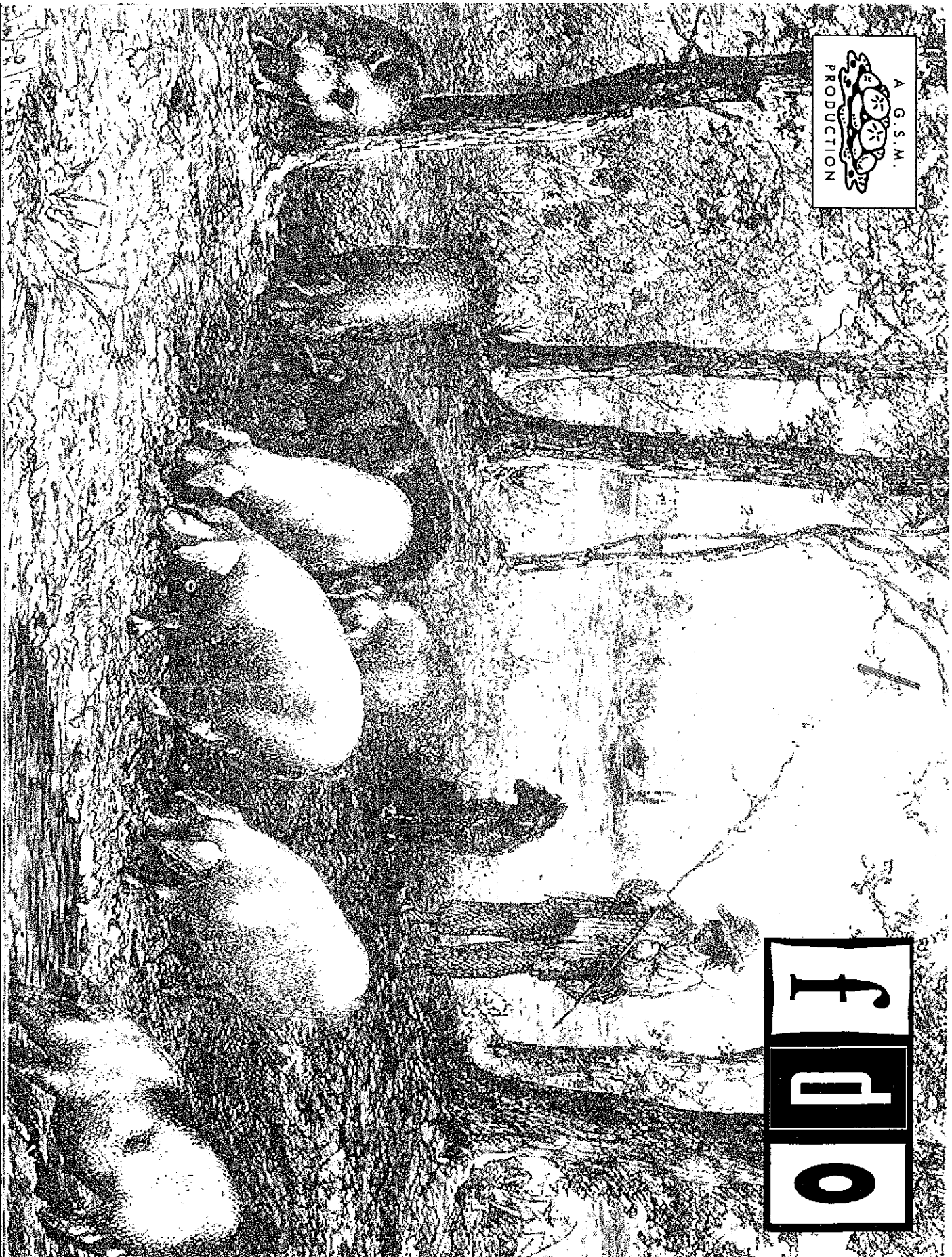


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The "Beyond Lies the Wub" Issue

Number 5

For Dickheads Only

For Dickheads Only, No. 5

GSM
Publisher



DAVE HYDE
Editor

SCOTT POHLENZ ~ Design & Production

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FOR DICKHEADS ONLY

0. Introduction

Welcome to this special fifth issue of FDO. It has been a long time coming because sometimes the world doesn't want to stop and let you take care of the important things: you have to hassle with a job and the like -- and moving -- and organizing Post Office boxes, of which we now have two. The PO Box 112, New Haven, IN 46774 address is still good and will be so for another six months or so, but our new address is:

Ganymedean Slime Mold Productions
Post Office Box 611
Kokomo, IN 46903

Please address all correspondence to this address from now on. And it might be a good idea to write to us as GSM, or Ganymedean Slime Mold Prods, or Dave Hyde and *not* FOR DICKHEADS ONLY. I don't mind but the postal services of several countries (including the USA) take it upon themselves to rip open any letter addressed such. And we don't require any age statements for this zine. Checks, of course, write out to me, your friendly editor, Dave Hyde.

Subscriptions to FDO are still \$5 for 4 issues but next issue we will have to raise that to \$10 if we don't start getting some money in ... So... Actually our goal is to save up enough in the GSM account to buy an inkjet printer and a DTP program for this (now obsolete) Amiga computer. That way we'll be able to speed up the whole publishing process and produce this zine more often. But as it stands with \$93 in the bank account, that will be in the distant future.

This issue of FDO is the main result of dedicated Dickhead Scott Pohlenz who volunteered to take care of all that difficult publishing biz for us. Thanks Scott!

I'd also like to thank all the contributors to this issue and everyone who wrote us letters and sent us stuff for our files.

Also, a special mention to the following for their aid and support: David Keller, Kenny Vogel, Steve Sneyd, Simon Russell, G. W. Thomas, Sam Umland, Perry Kirman, Andy Watson, Geoff Nodkin, David Jackson, Dan Sutherland, John Billings, Dale Woolery, John Roca (sorry about the Tribe), Chris Drumm, J. R. McHome, Kara Liebeck, D.J. Pass, Robert Dupree, Markus Schurr, Andy Sawyer, Arthur Hlaway, Roger Reuss, Shirley Cohen, Dan Bailey, Robert Lichtman, Jim Steel and Erick Zann, King Crab, C.J. Wilson, Jim Thain, Jonathan Tweet, Nick Buchanan, Gerry Kleier, Greg Lee, Joel Maygott, and Organ at Bakball Pubs in Sweden.

Of course I forgot to mention someone but include yourself in my appreciation whoever you are. If anyone is interested we now have over 400 subscribers to FDO! That, as Perry said, is "a heap of Dickheads." Course if you all subscribed like you're supposed to, GSM would now be the proud owners of a new inkjet printer.

But we're not complete money-grubbers. We like to receive letters and stuff in the mail for trade, too. And we're always looking for essays on PKD and his work and also illustrations, cartoons, news items, etc. We try and write to all who write us letters but we're a bit behind on that, so just because you haven't heard from me in a while doesn't mean I didn't write you a letter and forgot to mail it a month ago.

Next issue will be our regular one on EYE IN THE SKY.

We do have some bad news to impart. One of our own has passed away. Founding member of GSM Prods with Barb and I, the Rev, Dr. X, has died as the result of a heart attack during a seizure. In a sense he was murdered as the seizures only occurred after he was clubbed in the head in Washington D.C. in 1987. The Rev. Dr. X -- dead at 37. This issue is dedicated to his memory. ~ Dave Hyde

For Dickheads Only is published by Ganymedean Slime Mold Productions

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1. Selected Letters

Dear FDO,

I've been a devoted fan of Phil's writings since the Sixties, and one of my most treasured memories was an encounter with Phil in the late Seventies, in Berkeley. I was going to Cal and working evenings at Jack Ryan's recently opened SF bookstore, Dark Carnival. I came in one evening and Jack said that I had just missed Phil Dick. Crestfallen, I took my place behind the counter as Jack and his partner, Lisa Goldstein left. Sighing at the missed opportunity, I cracked a copy of OUR MUTUAL FRIEND and began my studying. The sun set on Telegraph Avenue, and the traffic-thinned as shoppers disappeared for the dinner hour. A stack of the limited paperback edition of CONFESSIONS OF A CRAP ARTIST toppled over to the floor. Ripping down the Dickens, I scooped to right the stack. Just then the door opened and a large, barrel-chested man entered.

"Is Lisa Goldstein here?"

I took me a minute to realise that Phil had returned, no doubt in search of a moment alone with Lisa (a slight, dark-haired woman if there ever was one).

"No, sorry, she left."

He noted the fact that I was reading Dickens in an SF shop, then walked over to the shelf of his books. Selecting three copies of the Panther edition of CLANS OF THE ALPHANE MOON, he apologetically explained that he was buying them for friends. Respecting his shyness, I refrained from lavishing praise on him, though he noticed my hands were shaking as I scribbled the receipt. He knew that I knew who he was, and I could tell he appreciated my discretion. Smiling, he left. I returned to OUR MUTUAL FRIEND, but my thoughts were elsewhere.

Now, 15 years later, I'm helping Tim Underwood by coordinating the key-stroking and proofreading volunteers on the PKD Letters volumes. I feel privileged to be able to give back something to Phil for all of those happy hours spent in his world. I sometimes kick myself for not getting him to sign a copy of CRAP ARTIST while I had the chance, but then again, I'm glad I played it cool and didn't embarrass him.

Allan Kausch, CA

Dear FDO,

In reading all four issues of FDO, I've finally figured out what bothers me about Barbara Mourning Child's essays. While I find her insights stimulating and often on the mark, it is one thing to say that certain things in Dick's novels – or any other literary work – for that matter – reflect or parallel Qabalah, Marxist social theory, etc. It is quite another to say that they are based on one or more of these things. If these novels, or again any other literary works, exist primarily to impart this sort of information, then one wonders whether it might not be better to get this information directly. But I don't believe this is the case, and it is naive to expect or desire this from literature. Of course arguments like this have been going on for millennia, so I would hardly expect it to be resolved here.

Alan Hecht, MD

Dear FDO,

Thanks for #4 of FDO which looks great! The new format is a great improvement (I'll write to tell Geoff Notkin he's done a great job). Your original idea of providing a platform to discuss each book in turn is a good one, it's very illuminating to find that others have gotten so much from works that you thought more "lowly". In some cases I feel that some fans may be overvesting rather more meaning that was there intentionally by the great Dick himself, but then I am humbled by William Golding's adage that "What is in a book is what the reader gets out of it, not what the author may have thought he was putting into it." Either way, FDO is a stimulating read!

Nick Buchanan, England

Dear FDO,

After much thought I have changed my view about A.E. Van Vogt. The man is as close to PKD as any writer in the field. My complete turnaround is the result of reading the chapter about him in THE WORLD BEYOND THE HILL by Alexi and Cory Panthum. They spend about 70 or 80 pages talking about his work and beliefs. The book itself is about Science Fiction and the quest for transcendence. Wonderful stuff! Anyway, it gave me new insight and I ended up reading four novels and two short story collections. It gave me pause. I wondered if a writer could "mold" a reader's mind. I don't mean shape it in thoughts. To change a person's thinking. What I mean is really mold it, like clay. Maybe to make it able to think in an entirely different way. Just a thought. The fact is that I have changed my thinking about him and his works. I now like and enjoy reading A.E. Van Vogt. I guess you're never too old to change your mind about something. Like PKD after reading Van Vogt I feel like someone just bent the hell out of me. It's an exhausting feeling, but I love it. To me this is what good fiction should do to a reader.

David Jackson, California

Dear FDO,

The new FDO look is highly impressive. I also found the content fascinating (& the Dickian "Peasants" is a gem). I loved SOLAR LOTTERY and agree that it is underrated Dick, despite the loose-ends air of much of it (easier to understand now you've explained the various last-minute dropping done.) I do think it is an oversimplification to describe the Fosterites as merely a parody of a Marxist group. The Utopian/nullarian aims are of much wider application (and a Marxist group would probably also have been much more dispirited – and more infested with police informers, come to that). It's a book, also, that hasn't dated – if anything the leak-back into thought generally of occult/supernatural elements is even clearer now, entering physics for example via chaos theory, quantum physics, 'Big Bang bootstrapping' and other models with mystic affinities.

I also think it's an oversimplification to say marxism is dead. That begs an enormous number of definitional points. Yes, the majority of the vulgar Marxist state capitalisms of Eastern Europe etc. have collapsed under the gap between 'reality' and 'illusion', the blatant greed of the rulers, and the way, in trying in a most non-Marxist way to arrest the dialectic and refuse to recognise 'new classes' arising, they had entered the trap that 'intellect without opposition stagnates'.

But Marxism as a tool of analysis of social functioning, as distinct from a bogus utopian religion or excuse for power and domination, is still useable. Indeed, its traces are everywhere – post-modernism/deconstructionism are Marxist/Hegelian; the kind of analysis of the process of commodification and atomisation of individuals predicted in *Die Grundrisse* that is clearly underway (the bogus 'Heritage Industry' is a perfect instance) – 'destruction of all instruments of 'collective action', unions, clubs, families even, has been so successfully carried out, as Marx predicted, that our own government is now desperately trying, with hypocritical bogosity, to reimpose family obligations on the very people Magayst techniques of manipulation had isolated as either better consumer targets or helpless, because un-linked, "underclass" members (the black-on-black undeclared civil war in the inner cities illustrates this further).

Anyway, enough oversimplified rant. But I do think the "Marxism is dead" post-ColdWar triumphalism is deceptive because it muddles so many different things into one word...

One more bit of pedantry – without full context, it's not quite clear to me how sweeping Dick's claim was to be the only SF writer utilising Marxist ideas as a tool, but there certainly were other SF writers with a background in the field. Black Reynolds's father had been a Presidential candidate in the 30s for a Trotskyist party and all the Futurian writers (or the core ones anyhow) had a period of involvement in what they called Nickelsm (after Friedrich 'nearly man' John Machel) which was a combination of basic Marxism and science-fictional concepts about social change. So Wollheim, Pohl, Kornbluth, Silverberg, and Knight as least had the background, though I haven't the energy and time at the minute to look for any clear traces in their work, though THE SPACE MERCHANTS and GLADIATOR-AT-LAW certainly have elements of social critique, but of a kind which could equally well have come from plenty of non-Marxists.

Steve Sneyd, England

FOR DICKHEADS ONLY

Dear FDO,

Thanks for not worrying about the concept of PKD's "minor" works. (FDO#4 response to Scott Polner's letter)

Imagine B is in love with G.

Imagine C saying to B, "You shouldn't love G for reasons 1, 2, and 3."

Wrong. C is clueless. He is trying to help, but misses the point.

As Pauline Kael was confounded by Andrew Sarris' appreciation of Orson Welles' "minor" works, she and traditional critics don't realize that we are talking about a relationship between a reader and an author's vision.

WARNING: This is not devotion without standards.

It is a connection made at some point between PKD (or Welles or David Byrne) and the reader/viewer/listener at which point the flow begins and continues regardless of objective literary merit. Some works may not click for some readers, but some days may not click for B and G -- their relationship still gives richness and meaning to their lives.

Which is why I thank you for the FDO approach. Start digging at any point in the PKD opus and you will find value, provocation, light, doorways, recognition -- all of which are what literature is for.

Ralph Ashbrook, Pennsylvania

2. Favorite PKD Book Horse Race

Lots of entries for this issue, starting with a pocket sent in by Paul Rydeen which he rounded up from a computer bulletin board specializing in PKD. Without further ado, here they are:

Tom Fitzgerald, MA

THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDritch

A SCANNER DARKLY

UBIK

Honorable mentions to: CRAP ARTIST, TIME OUT OF JOINT, CLANS and THE UNTELEPORTED MAN

David Anonymous, CA

A SCANNER DARKLY. For me, probably the best example of Dick's black humor, and con-

cerns with the reality/unreality of different "humans". As a pediatrician, I have recommended given my copy of this book to several teenagers who are interested in SF. They appear to be deeply moved by it, and relate to it from their own (i.e. drug difficulties in modern society) perspective.

THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER

ELDRITCH. Truly a masterpiece of confusion, paranoia, unreality, and drug-induced psychosis. I first read it when I was about twenty (shortly after it came out), and I was deeply moved by it, as it related to the drug culture of the 60s.

DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP? Just what is it that makes a true human? I think he hit it right on the nail -- empathy, or compassion, as the Buddhists would have it.

By the way, although you didn't ask, and I suspect this will get me in trouble -- for the life of me, I can't see what people get out of VALIS. Am I the only one?

Bryan Case, MI

THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDritch

THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE

Peter Fanell, NY

FLOW MY TEARS THE POLICEMAN SAID. Quite simply the ultimate expression of everything PKD's genre novels were about: identity, paranoia, redemption, shifting worlds...

CONFESSIONS OF A CRAP ARTIST. The best of the 'mainstream' PKD, and in many ways the strangest.

VALIS. In terms of sheer audacity of concept, and bravado of execution, it can't be beaten.

Joe Zitt, NJ

THE DIVINE INVASION

UBIK

THE TRANSMIGRATION OF TIMOTHY ARCHER

Michael Field, Manitoba

SOLAR LOTTERY. So much to life, happiness ending; prefigures use of I Ching and Chance in such later works as MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE.

MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE. Deservedly prize-winning; much stronger than that other, better received what-if-er, SS-GB, by Ian Deighton.

CLANS OF THE ALPHANE MOON. I give it to all my (many) mad friends, usually when visiting them during their first institutionalization. Funny as all get out, and hopeful -- like "firewater", it endows the mad with wonderful powers.

FOR DICKHEADS ONLY

Paul Elliot, CA

VALIS

A SCANNER DARKLY

THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER

ELDRITCH

(Ouch! It is very painful to cut off the rest of my list)

Steve Wolfe, WA

VALIS. One of the most important books written in the English language in the 20th century.

THE TRANSMIGRATION OF TIMOTHY ARCHER. A beautifully, elegiac, an philosophically sophisticated piece of work. It encapsulates the sarcastic cynicism blended with utter yearning for belief and meaning that makes PKD's work so fascinating and moving.

GALACTIC POT HEALER. A strange and engaging meditation on the meaning of community and humankind's need for it.

Thanks, Paul, for generating those responses. Now for some more from our regular mail. Huh! The first envelope I grab from the pile is Paul Rydeen's!

Paul Rydeen, AL

VALIS. No contest here, VALIS is the one I keep going back to. It wasn't the first one I read, but it was one of the first. I keep going over it in my head all the time, and have read it 6 or 8 times at least -- more than any other PKD book. It's unique and incredible. My choice for first place.

UBIK. Second place is a little tougher. It surely has to go to one of the classic reality-

banders of the 60s, either UBIK OF THREE STIGMATA. As you can see, I've gone against the grain and chosen the format. The characters are better developed, the plot is more personal, and the conclusions are applicable to the real world. Even without the Twilight Zone ending it would be a great book. ELDritch is full of great ideas too, but I pick UBIK.

TIME OUT OF JOINT. Third place is hard-est of all -- why couldn't you have said top five? If you had said pick the three best, I would have put HIGH CASTLE here, but you said three favorite. JOINT was one I read early on, and it was the first on that made sense. It made a big impression on me. It was so normal, so 50s, and then -- wham! -- the killer ending. Despite certain critics, I do not find the ending contrived or hokey. It's just what the book needed to show how unnatural and artificial the Milk & Honey fifties really were. I wrote a letter to PKDS about this one (excepted in their 5th newsletter) and received a lengthy reply from

Bob Stewart. So there you have it.

Ronald Thomas, MI

EYE IN THE SKY

TIME OUT OF JOINT

3 STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDritch

Ronald also lists too many other novels to mention, but one point each for: UBIK, GALACTIC POTHEALER, MAZE OF DEATH, FLOW MY TEARS, SCANNER, VALIS, RADIO FREE ALBANY.

David Keller, CA

A MAZE OF DEATH. Can't really describe why even when not trying to be brief but the ending is a major reason it is my favorite.

A SCANNER DARKLY. His best... The local settings add to my interest but SCANNER is simply his best novel in my opinion. Needs at least four readings to pick up on a lot of connections and symbols and whatnot. Much more complex than it first appears to be and is unusually coherent without sacrificing deep questioning/ambiguity about the nature of reality.

Can't pick a third favorite -- about six books are just too close to decide on. Tends to vary depending on what I've read most recently.

Greg Lee, CA

My top three (what a tough one!) No particular order:

VALIS. Hilarious and amazing. Dick tackles the big questions and if books like this are the result, then life must have meaning -- even if we are just star dust.

MARTIAN TIME SLIP. I think this is the closest Dick came to melding his SF sensibility with his growing "mainstream" (whatever that means. I hate the word) skills. Real people with real problems; the exploitation theme is highly relevant to today's age.

MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE. If it happened -- if the Axis really won -- this is what it must be like.

There is not fair. I didn't mention FLOW MY TEARS, or the first collection I read, THE VARIABLE MAN.

You should ask people: "Do you remember your first PKD?" Mine was "Faith Of Our Fathers" -- one story that merits the label "mind blower." I was never the same after that one.

Jurgen Thumann, Germany

I must confess that I'm a little bit surprised about what novels lead the chart according to FDO

#3. I have a more "traditional" opinion about what are Dick's best works:

THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE. Without any doubt this is Dick's best book. It has a deep internal moral. A book which is not easy to access and understand in its deeper meaning. Therefore it has been named by several friends of mine as "dull."

It may be that it is indeed -- as John Brunner mentioned in Dusseldorf as guest of honour at a Con there -- one of three books you can give someone who hasn't read SF and should be won for that genre. But I won't give it to a fan in hand who hasn't read Dick; yet, there have been some awful comments on it.

The SF aspect isn't so dominating in this book, even if it is there, the book is in a way a perfect meld of mainstream and SF. Impressive is Dick's ability to show us "normal" people confronted with severe problems and their ways to cope with them. Mr. Tagomi is a character who is one of my favorite in the whole of SF. He is growing in strength and kills a person against his confession. The scene in which he is transferred to a parallel world is a piece of very strong writing.

UBIK. Like THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDITCH it tells a story of mindboggling uncertainty. But as PALMER ELDITCH is a horror novel with a story-line that is a little too much for a really 'good' novel, UBIK has a portion of black humor that I like.

UBIK -- the stuff that can fix everything, even your altered mind. Great! Until the last page you can't say what is real, who is in cryonic half-life and who controls whom? I don't know!

MARTIAN TIME SLIP. Just as good as UBIK for me is MARTIAN TIME SLIP. Like in THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE it has its qualities of showing us credible characters. All in all his most homogenous novel.

I have a little problem to express my opinion about this book in just a few sentences. Still, I gave it to a friend of mine who hasn't much time to read books and has, therefore, high standards so as not to waste his time. He was enthusiastic about it!

I want to mention a few more novels which could have been named above: VALIS, TIMOTHY ARCHER, ANDROIDS, FLOW MY TEARS, SCANNER and DR. BLOODMONEY.

Room to jam a few more short ones in.

Chris Ward, Japan

Just off the top of my head -- a flat surface, thus excellent for retrieving handy information -- I would say that my three favorite PKD novels are: UBIK, THREE STIGMATA, and MARTIAN

TIME SLIP. The second tier, any of which might easily dislodge one of these first three choices, would consist of MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE, CLANS OF THE ALPHANE MOON, SCANNER, VALIS, FLOW MY TEARS, and DO ANDROIDS DREAM. I would place most of the rest of Dick's work at a fairly distant remove from these jewels.

Don Lee, AR

My vote for the best three Dick novels goes to: NOW WAIT FOR LAST YEAR, CLANS OF THE ALPHANE MOON, and A SCANNER DARKLY. I love the ones that are the 'classics' -- UBIK and HIGH CASTLE and 3 STIGMATA, but those other three are the ones I keep coming back to.

So let's see how this exciting horse race stands as we go into the first straightaway!

- UBIK 35
- THREE STIGMATA 35
- A SCANNER DARKLY 34
- VALIS 34
- HIGH CASTLE 23
- CLANS 22
- CRAP ARTIST 21
- FLOW MY TEARS 19
- TIME OUT OF JOINT 15
- MARTIAN TIME SLIP 13
- WE CAN BUILD YOU 12
- TIMOTHY ARCHER 12
- BROKEN BUBBLE 11
- A MAZE OF DEATH 11
- SOLAR LOTTERY 10
- DO ANDROIDS DREAM 10
- DIYNE INVASION 10
- EYE IN THE SKY 10
- NOW WAIT FOR LAST YEAR 10
- MARY AND THE GIANT 10
- GALACTIC POT HEALER 9
- A CRACK IN SPACE 7
- THE UNTELEPORTED MAN 7
- RADIO FREE ALBEMUTH 7
- THE VARIABLE MAN 7
- FIELD - 6
- SLAM (Lewis Shiner) 1

Going down the straight the pre-race favorites are surging to the fore, with UBIK and 3 STIGMATA nose-to-nose at the front but with VALIS and A SCANNER DARKLY right on their ass! The rest of the field is outdistanced by these four, with HIGH CASTLE moving up at a tremendous pace on the inside and nudging CLANS and CRAP ARTIST aside while FLOW MY TEARS pulls away

from TIME OUT OF JOINT and the rest of the field. Dark horses in the crush are MARTIAN TIME SLIP and TIMOTHY ARCHER while WE CAN BUILD YOU loses its early pace.

The big question is, can HIGH CASTLE shake off CLANS and CRAP ARTIST and catch the leaders? And how about that matchup between UBIK and 3 STIGMATA? Can they hold their lead as we lengthen stride down the first straightaway, or will one of them falter? And what happened to RADIO FREE ALBEMUTH, an early favorite with punters on the East Coast? O yes, this is definitely the race of the century! And with the first hurdles approaching rapidly it looks like more surprises are in store. Stay tuned to this space for exciting updates in future issues of FDO!

In our next issue we have a big surprise! In addition to our regular horse race we will also have one on the least favorite PKD novel. Early returns are already in on this alternate race but send in your selection tomorrow for most disliked PKD novel.

3. Notes

In this section I just jam all the tidbits of PKD info that I can find and that will fit.

The Summer, 1994 issue of GNOSIS magazine (#32) has an article called "Science Fiction and the Mythic Future" by Tim Maroney in which PKD is mentioned in connection with extra-terrestrial gnosticism.

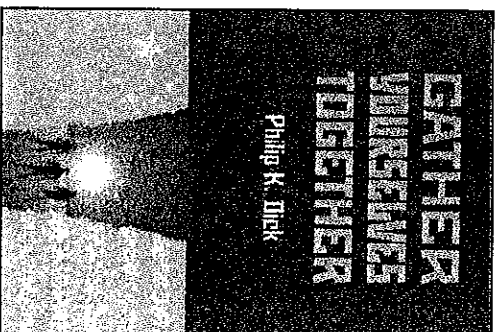
In addition to the two-issue Marvel Comics adaptation of BLADERUNNER mentioned in FDO #4, there is "A MARVEL SUPER SPECIAL" #22 (\$2.50) single-volume edition of BLADERUNNER.

G. W. Rudolph, who sent us this info, says this super special edition is superior to the two-volume edition in that it is printed on much better paper, features three pages of color pictures of BLADERUNNER Cast Credits, and six-page photo section of scenes from the film. Pages 34 and 35 of the Super Special are printed out of sequence, a flaw not found in issue 2 of the regular edition. In the Super Special Roy Batty kills Eldon

Tyrell on page 34 and is talking to him on page 35. The Vintage Books edition of WE CAN BUILD YOU is out (June 1994). \$10/\$13.50 Can. Here is the text of the brief review of SOLAR LOTTERY in Science Fiction Studies #10, Vol. 3, Part 3, Nov. 1976 by R. D. Mullin. Thanks to Arthur B. Evans for letting us reprint this and also to Patrick Clark who sent us another copy of it: #31. Philip K. Dick. "SOLAR LOTTERY" (page ix) as WORLD OF CHANCE, 1956). Introduction by Thomas M. Disch. Gregg Press, xvi + 188, \$10.00. Dick's first novel, not one of his best, but still a novel by one of the most intensely admired of SF novelists. In one of the best introductory essays in this series, Mr. Disch (than whom among non-subscribers of SFS I admire no one more) asks why it is that "so many SF writers who are clearly his inferiors" have been "so much more successful...in attracting the attention of academics...?" How he could ask such a question six months or a year after the publication of the special issue of SFS on Dick (included in #49 below), I do not understand.

And don't forget to send off for your copy of "ON PKD: 40 Articles From Science Fiction Studies", which is still available from SFS, C/O. A. B. Evans, SF-TH Inc. East College, DePauw University, Greencastle, IN 46135-0037. It's \$16.45 postpaid (CAN \$20.25) for the paperback or \$26.95 (CAN \$31.75) for the hardback.

And while we're on the subject of PKD books, you must, simply must, send away \$40 for the latest of the earliest PKD mainstream novels to be published, GATHER YOURSELVES TOGETHER. Write to eyeball Books, c/o Science Fiction Eye, P.O. Box 18539, Asheville, NC 28814 for more information. I'm halfway through this book now and despite my expectations of something awful I find it's damn good to read. This is no apprentice work, there are no exasperating fumbles here. I'd stack PKD at 20 against William Stryon and all them guys



The new PKD book published by WSC Books and available from eyeball Books.

any day.

Dickheads with lots of money might want to contact Ken Lopez, Bookseller at 51 Huntington Rd., Hadley, MA 01035. Tel. (413) 584-4827, for

some choice signed, inscribed, limited-edition type PKD rarities. Dig deep.

The Permanent Press, P.O. Box 700305, San Jose, CA 95170 is no longer publishing D. Scott Apel's book *THE DREAM CONNECTION*. It's out of print with no republishing plans. Let's all write to publisher B. Wright Baque and urge him on this.

Another good source for PKD books and other SF books, reasonably priced, is: David Jackson, 450 S. Normandie #102, Los Angeles, CA 90020. I must recommend him for stuff you wouldn't think about but then must suddenly have. Send a \$1 for his catalog.

Anyone interested in SF poetry might want to contact Dickhead Steve

Sneyd at Hilltop Press, 4 Novell Place, Almondbury, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD5 8PB, England. Steve, as well as being a font of obscure Dickiana, has recently published "Bad News From The Stars" (L3/S7.00) and has lots of other stuff. Here's a couple of samples of Steve's input to this column: A tribute poem to PKD appeared in issue #2 of SANDOR by Noel K. Hannah (1982): Dirac Pubs., 24 Aldersey Rd., Crewe CW2 8NR, England. And in *CRYSTAL SHIP* #5, Jan 1982, address unknown, there is a poem called "Filling" with Dick by Iain Ewing all about VALIS. And in *TERRIBLE WORK* #1, Spring 1993, Plymouth, Devon, is Steve's article "Is The Eye In The Sky The Author's: An Examination OF PKD's RADIO FREE ALBEMUTH".

In *ALTERNATE WORLD'S* #1, Jan 1994 (lost the address, somewhere in the UK) is Brian Stabelford's "Introduction to Alternate Worlds" in which he talks of PKD's alternate worlds in a brief entry.

The comic artist Peter Milligan is apparently a big Dickhead (according to John Billings of *NEW IMPROVED MUSHROOMS* (2843 Calumet Ave. #103, Valparaiso, IN 46383) himself a big Dickhead). John has sent us a xerox of a page of Milligan's comic *ENIGMA*, on which the characters talk of PKD.

CRITICAL WAVE has a USA Distributor:

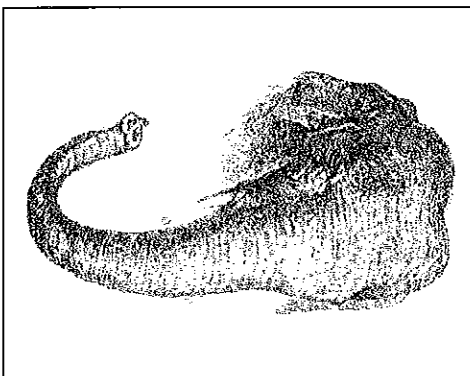
Mary Burns, 23 Kensington Court, Hampstead, NY 11550.

Paul Williams is still publishing *CRAWDADY*. Subscribe at: Box 611, Glen Ellen, CA 95442. \$12/4 issues.

SUBMINIMAL TAHOOS, published by Robert Dupree, 9604 S.E. 5th St., Vancouver, WA 98664, has just issued its first issue. This is a wondrous-looking mag that includes a PKD-inspired pict outline by yers truly as well as great articles and illustrations (including the infamous "Disney memorial Orey" poster that first appeared in *THE REALIST*).

And while I'm tooting my horn, in *TERRITORIES*, a 'slipstream' SF magazine from Glasgow, can be found a short article of mine on the publishing afterlife of PKD.

TERRITORIES also includes interviews, short stories, rants, incisive essays on all manner of things SF-al. All in all this is one of the best SF mags that has come our way in quite some time. Cheap too. Write to: Erich Zann, Publisher, *TERRITORIES*, C/O. McNair, 65 Niddie Rd., Strathbungo, Glasgow, Scotland G42 8PT. Subscriptions are £6.00 or \$18.00. Send US cash.



Indian Elephant

Another fine zine from the US is the established and growing *CRASH COLLUSION*, edited by our friendly Dickhead

friend Paul Rydeen and published by Wes Nations. Billed as a "Quarterly Guide to the Fringe", *CRASH COLLUSION* is a must read if you want to know what's going on in the world of weirdness beyond your own horizon. Send \$5 for a copy of their issue #5 and read Paul's stimulating article: "Philip K. Dick: The Other Side." *CRASH COLLUSION*, P.O. Box 49233, Austin, TX 78765.

What else? What else? Surrounded by piles of stuff...

Ah, here's *MINDBURGER*, no I've misplaced it... somewhere around here...

Brent Kresovich at Riga Business School, Riga Technical University, Skolas 11, LV-1010, Riga, Latvia, is a PKD fan who is looking for any zines, SF or otherwise for giving away in Northern Europe. So send him all the ones your done with. ICE: The Monthly CD Newsletter, #87, June

1994, P.O. Box 3043, Santa Monica, CA 90408 (\$30/12 issues) has an article on the coming out of the *BLADERUNNER* soundtrack (featuring a score by Vangelis), that has finally been released after difficulties with Ridley Scott and Vangelis have been resolved. (I guess Scott didn't like the soundtrack). *BLADERUNNER* will appear on Atlantic in the USA and Atlantic's EastWest subsidiary label throughout the rest of the world.

The Canadian journal of Political and Social Theory, is the post-modern anthology edited by Marioise and Arthur Kroker (featured in *Mondo 2000*). In an issue circa 1990 they have an article by Norman Fischer entitled: *BLADE RUNNER and DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?*. An Ecological Critique of Human-Centered Value Systems. Sorry but I don't have an address for this journal but the issue was titled "Crash Theory."

Does anyone know where I can get a copy of "Critical Survey", Vol. 3, #3, 1991? With the article by Nigel Wheeler: "Recognizing a 'Human-Thing': Cyborgs, Robots and Replicants in Philip K. Dick's *DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?* and Ridley Scott's *BLADE RUNNER*."

Aha! We have one conscientious Dickhead (you know who you are). Dozens of you sent me copies of the *NEW REPUBLIC* article on PKD by Alexander Starr but only one person sent me the follow-up letter by Mark Stauffer of Maryland in the January 3rd issue of *NEW REPUBLIC*. In his letter Mr. Stauffer considers PKD as "a more sophisticated artistic heir of pulp gothic horror artists such as H. P. Lovecraft."

Two new books have been published recently in France about PKD, they are:

Je suis vivant et vous êtes morts - Philip K. Dick, 1928-1982. By Emmanuel Carrère. Published by Seuil, September 1993. Paris, trade paperback, ISBN 2-020020173-9, 368pp. This book is a mixture of biographical elements of PKD's life and personal adaptations by Carrère. Cover price was 120FF.

Regards sur Philip K. Dick -- Le kaleidoscope by Helene Collon, published by Encreage, December 1992. Amiens, hardcover, ISBN 2-906889-40-4, 226pp, 200FF. This one is various essays about PKD written in English and translated into French.

Joel Mangro, who sent us this news, will be happy to provide these books to any interested reader. Write to him at *ADDER'S CHOICE BOOKS*, Perron-55, CH-1196, Gland, Switzerland. Joel also says that *THE BROKEN BUBBLE*, IN *MULTI LUNACY TERRITORY*, and *PUTTERING*



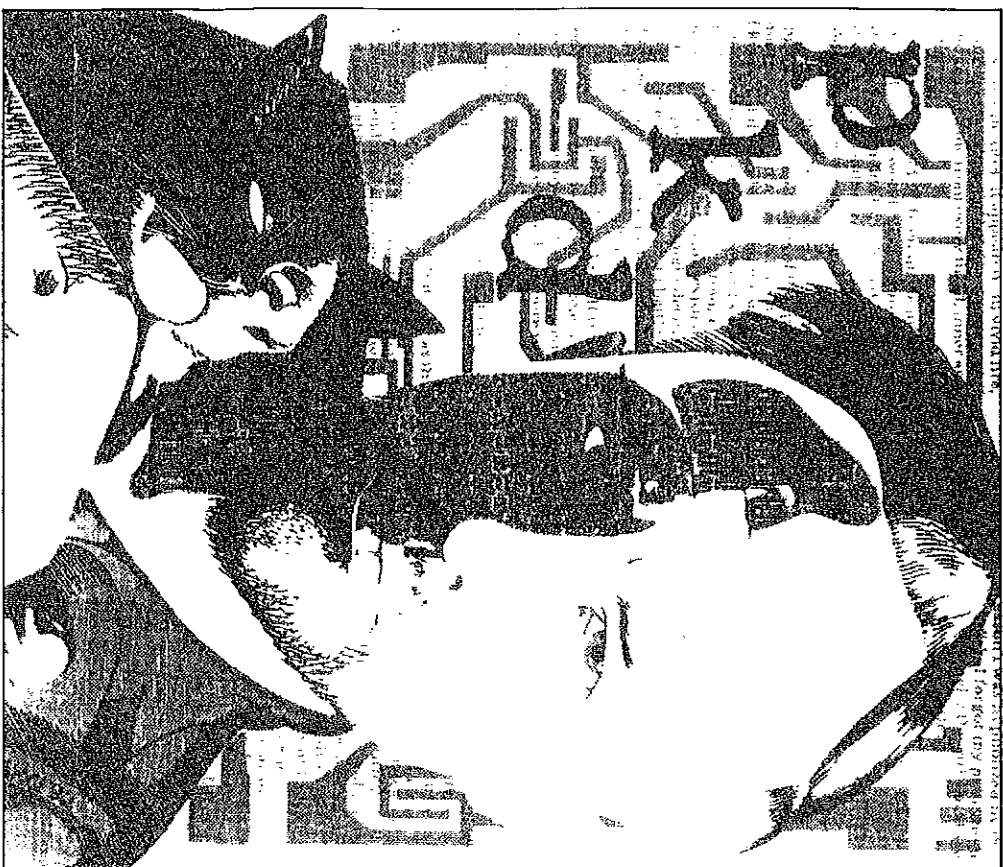
The Swedish Edition of COUNTER-CLOCK WORLD

ABOUT IN A SMALL LAND have just been printed in a pocket sized collection named 10/18. That leaves, perhaps, only *MARY AND THE GIANT* unpublished in France.

And in Sweden, Bakhal publishers (C/O Ojan Gertsdasson, Box 1114, 221-04 Lund, Sweden) are the Swedish publishers of PKD. They have already ... well, here's Ojan's letter in part:

"We have published *COUNTER-CLOCK WORLD* and *UBIK* and in March we will be publishing *DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?* We have sent you copies of the first two books already, just for fun (as we guess you don't read Swedish). But maybe you or someone else in the PKD Society collects foreign P.K. Dick books... The very best wishes and a happy new year to you and to all PKD friends in the US."

I'd like to add that if any Dickheads ever get to Sweden, Bakhal has recently opened a bookstore and cafe combination in which there is a special PKD section, stocked with Swedish and other language PKD books, with pictures and articles pinned on the walls! Wish I could go... So, send Ojan all your spare PKD stuff for inclusion in this shrine, he's particularly looking for PKD books in whatever language (English is popular), and no doubt he'd be glad to give you a good deal on his next



PKD tee-shirt/print hand-screened by James Michael Quillin and available from JMQ Screen Design

Swedish editions. (C'mon, don't you want to own a book that starts out: "Klockan halv fyra på morgonen den femte juni 1992 följ solsystemets framsta telepat ned från kartan i rantelet. Accosias kontor i New York...")

A couple more items from G. W. Rudolph: "The Indefatigable Frog" by P. K. Dick (an introduction to his short story of that name) can be found in "THE ASCENT OF WONDER: The Evolution of Hard SF" edited by David Hartwell and Kathryn Cramer, Tor Books, 990pp, \$35.

And: DO ANDROIDS DREAM is on cassette tape! From Time-Warner Books, 2 cassettes, approx. 3 hours, \$17. Presented by Matthew

Modine and Calista Flockhart. Just the thing for those long drives to work. Should be able to find this at Walden Books, or somewhere like that.

Ah here's the MINDBURGER! (actually the MINDBURGER is packed but Patton McGinley, publisher's, letter is at hand), music, book, comics, zine reviews and the occasional rant by the editor. This issue #1 has some five stickers in the back too! (I've got the "Stupid Am Good!" on in the back window of my car). This is a great inaugural effort and only \$2 from: Patton McGinley, P.O. Box 2099, Decatur, GA 30031. E-Mail: PATM101@AOL.COM.

JMQ Screen Design, 6 A Downey, San Fran-

cisco, CA 94117 have produced a PKD tee-shirt, hand-screened by James Michael Quillin, the artist, in black, phosphores green and oranges! Available in cotton t-shirts for \$20 and signed/numbered prints for \$45 each. We haven't actually been able to scrape up the bucks for the three of these we need but the picture looks pretty good. These are in a very limited quality so don't delay... get yours before the artist's arm gets wore out. JMQ also have t-shirts for people like H. P. Lovecraft, Carl Jung and Albert Hoffman.

John Hudak, Bookseller, 184 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201. (E-Mail: 74032.21@CompuServe.Com), Phone: (718) 624-0657, has sent us a nice catalog #2 devoted to PKD books he has for sale. So if you're still looking for that SIMULACRA, John has an ACE 76701 (1976) pb in VG- condition for \$4, or the ACE F301, 1st ed. in VG+ for \$28. And LOTS more.

A review of IN PURSUIT OF VALIS: SELECTIONS FROM THE EXEGESIS (ed. L. Sutin) by Michael J. Tolley, can be found in the October 1993 issue of SF Commentary.

STEAMSHOVEL PRESS, #8, 1993, has an article: "PKD and the Illuminati" by Jay Katz. This is extracted from his forthcoming book SAUCERS OF THE ILLUMINATI, from IllumiNet Press, P.O. Box 2808, Lithum, GA 30226.

The TOTAL RECALL boot dagger may still be available. Last time I saw a knife catalog it was on discount, a sure sign they'll drop it soon, so order today!

Now I've got to put this baby to bed. *

4. Texas Time-Slip

by Paul Rydeen

This is a true story. This really happened. Let me tell you about the godawfullest philatelic thing that ever occurred. I was staying in downtown San Antonio on business with my wife and three-year-old son. We were lodged way above the Riverwalk on the miserably high-numbered twenty-third floor of the Marriott Hotel. After depositing our bags in our room, we decided to walk off the day-long drive by strolling over to the Riverwalk for a bite to eat. Twilight was falling, and the day's heat had begun to subside. Had I known what was about to occur, I would have ordered room service.

The Riverwalk is a shopping mall built on the San Antonio River in downtown San Antonio, Texas. It features an assortment of shops on several levels, indoor and outdoor dining, and a wonderful view of the water. It's also quite convenient

when one is staying at the Marriott. As we mounted that bridge and crossed the river, little did I know that I was crossing over into an Other World - a world right out of a Philip K. Dick nightmare.

We had our meal and took a peaceful stroll along the river, looking at a myriad of stars from above reflected back in the dark water below our feet. Time passed quickly, and before we knew it we found ourselves back at the hotel. It seemed a different way from the one we had taken. We must have circled back on ourselves, I thought. The shortcut was appreciated, all we needed now was to take a short elevator ride to our room and jump into bed for a good night's rest.

Sleeping onto the twenty-third floor, I took the key out of my pocket and checked the number. Room 2319, it said. The sign on the wall opposite the elevator said rooms 2301 through 2341 were down the hall to the left, so we set off in that direction. The room numbers went up by fours on the odd-numbered side of the hall, at last from 2317 to 2321 - there was no 2319! Perplexed, I checked my key again. 2319 was indeed the room number shown thereon. I looked up and down the hall in both directions. Maybe at the other end, I thought. A frantic check showed I was wrong, as did an even more frantic second look at the original location.

Being the family patriarch, I took it upon myself to formulate a plan of action. I decided there must be two towers in the hotel, or at least two different twenty-third floors served by different banks of elevators. Perhaps they were separated by a fire wall or something. All we would have to do is return to ground level and take an elevator from the other side back up to the top. Going down, I scanned the spacious lobby and saw no other elevators save the ones directly across from us. I decided to try those, but found the same problem on the twenty-third floor. We descended once again - myself in near hysteria - and actually left the building to verify it was in fact the Marriott. It was so we returned to try our luck once more. Riding all the way to the top made the situation only worse, as I once again confirmed the lack of 2319 in the hotel.

I didn't know what to do. My wife actually found it amusing, but I was approaching a nervous breakdown. Her nonchalant attitude made matters worse, as if she were somehow in on this cosmic joke. I imagined her playing along, robo-like, until my world finally broke down completely and I was left alone in a black, infinite void, the sound of the cold, empty wind blowing through the nothingness. Since I obviously didn't belong in the hotel, all I could do was leave the building and return to the mall. My most paranoid fantasies came back to me now. I was living in an alternate universe - the

real one, obviously - and I didn't belong. Had I not been accompanied by two members of my family (were they even real, or mere simulacra?) I would have either curled up catatonically in the lobby or else run amok until somebody restrained me. As it was, I left with my family in tow, palms cold and clammy, nervous sweat on my brow, and horrible feelings in my head, stomach and knees. I leaned on my wife for support, slowly dragging myself out the door into god-knows-what kind of fate. At least she was real - she seemed to be, at any rate - the one link from my former existence into this one. If only she would read appropriately to our dire situation. What was so funny about this, anyway? Hesitantly, I decided to trust her. The prospect of spending eternity with her - demon or robot or whatever seemed better than spending it alone. I pressed on.

I don't know how long we meandered through the mall that night, or what horrible paranoid thoughts filled my dark brain. All I know is that we eventually found ourselves standing at the foot of a familiar-looking bridge. All alone in the Riverwalk, we crossed back over and soon found ourselves at the Marriott Hotel. Walking through the lobby toward the elevators I led me with déjà-vu, but against all hopes there was in fact a room 2319. What had happened? Where had our room - indeed, our whole universe - gone, and why had it now come back? How come none of this ever bothered my wife? Even now she was grinning at the evening's events, as if nothing out-of-the-ordinary had ever occurred.

The next morning I felt a lot better. I guess I wasn't too surprised to learn there was another Marriott just across the river from this one. Just why they had built two hotels so closely together is a mystery to me, but the reason for not duplicating

numbers between the two is obvious. There was a rational explanation after all, but for a few brief hours I did indeed come under the influence of an evil demiurge - call him Palmer Eldritch if you want. It wasn't a pleasant place to be, this Other World of Phil Dick's making.

I carefully avoided that other Marriott for the rest of the trip.

SPECIAL WUB SECTION

5. Something Rich and Strange: P.K. Dick's "Beyond Lies the Wub"

by Frank C. Bertrand

Sartre has written that "A fictional technique always relates back to the novelist's metaphysics. The critic's task is to define the latter before evaluating the former." (*Literary and Philosophical Essays*, NY: Collier Books, 1962, p. 84) But, as A.W. Levi aptly points out, "The metaphysics cannot be defined before the technique is evaluated, because for the novel the definition of the metaphysics can be only an inference from the technique." (*Literature Philosophy & The Imagination*, Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1962, p. 167)

The verity of this proposition is exemplified by the stories and novels of Philip K. Dick. Norman Spinrad has stated that Dick is "a metaphysical novelist in a new sense" who "entertains a wide range

of metaphysical systems" and "confronts ultimate metaphysical questions with the multiplex speculative viewpoint of the true science fiction writer." (*Introduction*, "Dr. Bloodmoney", Boston: Gregg Press, 1977, p. xiii) This assessment stems from the premise that "the central subject of speculative thought in Dick's work is the possible nature of new realities, and, by a kind of shifting mosaic of a multitude of these realities, the possible overall shape of metaphysical reality itself." (*Ibid.*, pp. xii-xiii) That is, Dick is chiefly concerned with explaining the *why* and *how* of reality, its metaphysical meanings and concomitant psychological effects. This latter aspect is a fundamental clue and means to explicating Dick's fictional technique and inferring therefrom his metaphysics for, it is primarily via the psychological effects of his characters' various encounters with reality that Dick manifests his concept of metaphysical reality.

Initial evidence for such a manifestation can be found in P.K. Dick's first published short story, "Beyond Lies the Wub" (*Planet Stories*, July, 1952). It is a precursory

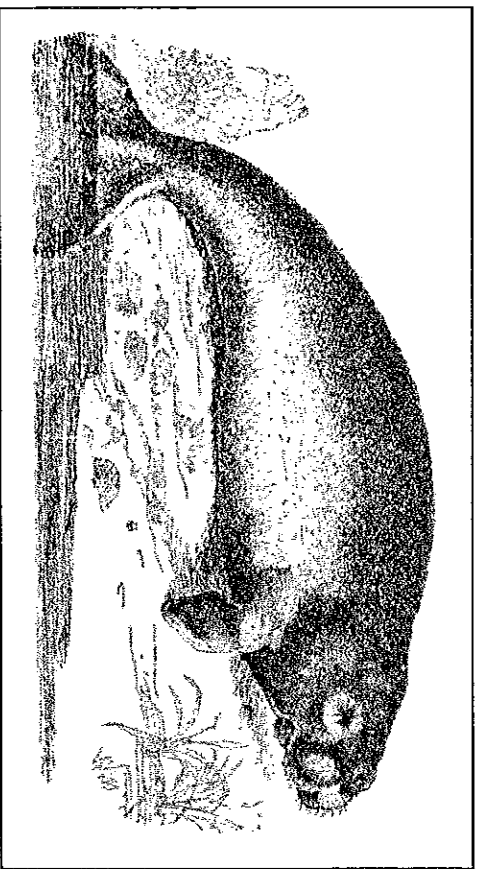
microcosm of the wide range of metaphysical systems and ultimate philosophical questions Dick subsequently confronts and depicts in 115 stories and 35 SF novels. From it can be gleaned some of Dick's framework of metaphysical ideas and, more importantly, the manner in which literary concepts are often related to and frequently deduced from hidden but nonetheless controlling philosophical hypotheses. As S.P. Rosebaum indicates, "The discursive context of a philosophical idea may also illuminate its imaginative transmutation into something rich and strange in literature and even suggest related ideas that have less recognizably accompanied the change." (*Introduction*, "English Literature and Philosophy", Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1971, p. 5)

Something rich and strange is indeed what Dick's "Beyond Lies the Wub" turns into when one explores beyond its apparent story. What at first reading appears to be a tale about exploitation, anthropocentrism and "exocamibialism" becomes upon closer scrutiny a intricately woven fabric of philosophical ideas depicting issues from the meaning of human-ness to free will vs. determinism. While most of these are implicitly embedded within the story a few are explicitly available for consideration.

"Is it form or content that makes one a Wub or a Man?"

The most obvious occurs during a conversation between the Wub and Peterson. In discussing myth symbols mutual to the Wub and Man, the Wub finds "Odysseus a figure common to the mythology of most self-conscious races. As I interpret it, Odysseus wanders as an individual aware of himself as such. This is the idea of separation, of separation from family and country. The process of individuation." (*Beyond Lies the Wub*, "The Preserving Machine", NY: Ace, 1969, p. 131) It's important to note that this is *not* said by a human character in the story but by a Martian "creature" that is described early on, by a human character, as "A huge pig. It must weigh four hundred pounds." (*Ibid.*, p. 127) This "huge dirty pig," though, is very respected by the Martian natives, is telepathic, and can speak English by having examined the "semanitic warehouse" of one of the humans it comes in contact with. Furthermore, it characterizes itself as "Tolerant, eclectic, catholic. We live and let live. That's how we've gotten along." (*Ibid.*, p. 130) Why, then, does the Wub talk about the "process of individuation"?

To answer this consider that the process rather than the principle of individuation is mentioned. We are, therefore, not directly concerned with the *principle* of individuation of Medieval Scholastic Philosophy, the principle by which an individual is constituted or comes into being. Just what "process" is being alluded to is indicated by something Dick says in a 1977 interview, "My idea of a fantasy was where the archetypal elements become objectified and you have an exteriorization of what are inner contents. And I remember, I had a term I used, *Inner Projection Stories*. Stories where internal psychological contents were projected onto the outer world and became three-dimensional and real and concrete....I've read some interesting material on that - Jung was a major influence on me." (Richard A. Lupoff, "Introduction," *A Handful of Darkness*, Boston: Gregg Press, 1978, p. xiii) In a 1979 interview Dick states that "I was interested in Jung's idea of projection - what we experience as external to us may really be projected from our unconscious....I began a series of stories in which people experienced worlds which were a projection of their own psyches. My first published story was a perfect example of this." (Charles Platt, *Dream Makers*, NY: Berkley, 1980, pp. 147-148) The rea-



son I quote Dick somewhat at length here is to contrast it with an "author's introduction," he wrote for a 1981 reprinting of *"Beyond Lies the Wub."* Therein he writes that "The idea I wanted to get down on paper had to do with the definition of 'human'." (*"Author's Introduction," "First Voyages,"* NY: Avon, 1981, p. 321.)

That *"Beyond Lies the Wub"* has to do with the definition of "human" is more obvious than its having to do with Jung's concept of projection. But, there is another Jungian idea that exerts influence upon and is salient to this story, the process of individuation. Jung describes this process as "in effect, the spontaneous realization of the whole man.... But since everything living strives for wholeness, the inevitable oneness of our conscious life is continually being corrected and compensated by the universal human being in us, whose goal is the ultimate integration of conscious and unconscious, or better, the assimilation of the ego to a wider personality." (*"On The Nature Of Dreams," Dreams,* Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1974, p. 78.) This would seem to be what the Wub causes via its mental powers, the absorption of its ego into another (different species) personality, that of Captain Franco's. And this urge to individuation, Jung writes, "gathers together what is scattered and multifarious, and exalts it to the original form of the One, the Primordial Man. In this way our existence as separate beings, our former ego nature, is abolished, the circle of consciousness is widened...." (Martin Bickman, *The Unsounded Centre*, Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1980, p. 43)

The Wub's explanation for this is different from Jung's. In talking about Odysseus as a mythical figure common to most self-conscious races, the Wub says that "Odysseus wanders as an individual aware of himself as such. This is the idea of separation, of separation from family and country. The process of individuation.... The moment of separation is a temporary period, a brief journey of the soul. It begins, it ends. The wanderer returns to land and home...." (*"Beyond Lies The Wub," ibid.*, p. 131) But now is the Wub going to return to its land and race after transmigrating into Captain Franco's body? The Wub will now indeed be separated from family and country. As it says of its former self, "it is only organic matter, now.... The life essence is gone." (*ibid.*, p. 133)

Two words in this, "matter" and "essence," hint at another aspect of the problem of human-ness, that of form vs. content. Throughout *"Beyond Lies the Wub"* the actions and words of the Wub are more "human" than those of Captain Franco. Franco is depicted as an unfeeling, harsh, pragmatic individual whereas the Wub would rather discuss ques-

tions of philosophy and the Arts and is addicted to various forms of relaxation. But the Wub's form is that of a "huge dirty pig." In transferring its "life essence" does the Wub lose its "wub-ness" and acquire "human-ness"? Is it form or content that makes one a Wub or a Man? In that "essence" is usually associated, philosophically, with universal accidents, and form, whereas "content" is associated with existence, particular, and substance, the Wub's actions help indicate Dick's metaphysics. As the title of another Dick story, *"Not By The Cover"* (Famous SF, Summer 1968), in which the Wub significantly figures, suggests one can "not by its form" solely judge a human, Wub, or a Phil Dick short story.

6. BEYOND LIES THE WUB

by Dave Hyde

Philip K. Dick's first published short story, *"Beyond Lies The Wub"* (PLANET STORIES, July 1952), is typical in one regard at least to most of his work: it lends itself to various interpretations and much analysis.

Yet you wouldn't think at first that *"Beyond Lies The Wub"* would be worthy of much interpretation. It seems a straightforward enough item in the alien encounter mode: Captain Franco and his crew land on Mars and while taking on provisions huck into the 400-pound pig-like wub. Something good to eat for the long voyage back to Earth — or so the selfish Capt. Franco thinks. Nor is he persuaded otherwise when the wub speaks to him in cultured tones of philosophy and the Arts while job-betting all over the floor of the spaceship. And indeed the wub is fine eating for the Captain at the end of the tale, even though Franco is the only one showing down as he speaks airily between waves of his enlivening of the myth of Odysseus....

A fine tale. An amusing tale. But one which is easily passed over in the wealth of Dick stories that we have to look back upon today. But thanks to the editors of the 1981 Avon book, FIRST VOYAGES, an anthology of twenty famous SF writers' first published stories, and to the homepape RADIO FREE PKD for reprinting it, we have Philip K. Dick's own interpretation of this short story.

In his brief introduction to this anthology, "The Wub Lives!" (1981), Dick sees the wub as exhibiting "the deeper traits that I associate with humanity: not a biped with an enlarged cortex — a forked radish that thinks, to paraphrase the old saying — but an organism that is human in terms of its soul."

.. It has to do with empathy, or, as it was called in earlier times, caritas or agape." For PKD the wub was his idea of a higher lifeform.

Then Frank C. Bertrand in his recent essay, "Something Rich And Strange: PKD's *Beyond Lies The Wub*" (1993), sees in *"Wub"* "an intricately woven fabric of philosophical ideas depicting issues from the meaning of human-ness to free will vs. determinism." The result of Bertrand's subsequent depression is that you cannot solely judge a human by its form. Essentially this is in agreement with PKD's view of the story.

However I saw this story differently. I had written a very short essay on "Wub" which briefly set out my view for the program of the Philip K. Dick Convention in Boston last year (1993). I had written this before I read PKD's interpretation in RFPKD#3. Then when I did read that piece in RFPKD, I shocked myself at how my view was so different. For I saw "Beyond Lies The Wub" in complete disagreement with PKD, as the ultimate horror story!

Let me explain. What struck me with the wub was how possibly devious this alien creature was. For starters it doesn't seem to belong there on Mars... and that ability to inhabit other creatures: surely it wouldn't live in some slovenly pig-like body, rolling around in the dirt and eating all the time so that it suffers from perpetual indigestion unless it had to, it had no choice! Perhaps nothing else on the planet was worth taking over. The pig was the most advanced lifeform until Capt. Franco and his boys showed up, that is. Then, of course, it's only a matter of time before the wub has taken over Capt. Franco, the leader of the expedition, and he's on a goddamn rocket ship heading for Earth! Now doesn't that make your hair stand on end? It does mine. Makes me want to cover down in my bed, huddled away from everything out there. I mean, good God, to me PKD's first published short story is the ultimate cautionary science fiction tale. It evokes in those given to what the psychologists call a paranoid bent an awful realization that we don't know what is out there in outer space. It might be something we cannot deal with. Something so smooth, so fucking clever as the wub who not only reads minds but has assimilated every nuance of human psychology in an instant's attention! Didn't take that wub long to take over everything, did it?

It reminds me of Clifford Simak's novel, TIME IS THE SIMPLEST THING (1971) in which Simak deals with this same question of "alienness" but in another way. In Simak's story the Government organization, "Fishhook", uses humans with telepathic abilities to comb the stars for intelligent and alien knowledge, this being humanity's

response to being unable to design a light-speed drive and thus to be closed off physically from the stars. The hero of the story, Shepherd Blaine, has happen to him exactly what the Fishhook authorities fear: he is invaded by an alien mind and brings it back to Earth when his fishing expedition is done. The danger, for Fishhook, is the danger to humanity: perhaps the mind-invading alien — the "Pinkness" in Blaine's case — does have a space drive and lots of relatives just waiting to move in on poor unsuspecting Earth. Fortunately, in Simak's tale, as in most of his stories, the Pinkness is more of a pussy cat than a predator red in telepathic tooth and claw and no harm is done.

But the similarities between Dick's and Simak's approach are notable: Simak also deals in empathy. But in the case of these two stories, at least, Simak seems aware of the double-edged nature of the space alien. As he builds the tension of his story we are never sure until well in the story that the pinkness is indeed benign. But on the other pseudopodium Dick's wub is sympathetically portrayed, mainly by contrast with Captain Franco, from the very first. But, of course, one is a novel, one a short story... We do know Dick was not slouch when it came to paranoia!

So my response to "Beyond Lies The Wub", I decided, needed some investigation. Why did I see things so differently? Am I merely 'paranoid'?

Well, not inordinately so! But... PKD says he wished to portray empathy in the wub. Whereas I came up with fear. PKD empathised with what was internal in the wub, its soul, while I put myself in the place of Capt. Franco — the human, the man being taken over, all unsuspecting, simply by eating what was to him a "dirty razorback hog." I was fooled by Dick into accepting what is 'human' at face value. But the dilemma is acute! The wub is sympathetic but alien, while Franco is repugnant but human. Naturally, I feel, one would side with the putative human and thus experience fear in response to this tale, as I did. If, as Bertrand and Dick point out, you can't judge a human by its form then — turn it into a question — what is Captain Franco? If he's not human? Somehow it never occurred to me to think of him as anything else, therefore my response to what I perceived as the slyness of the wub. Fear.

What is human? Dick is saying that it has nothing to do with appearances, it has to do with something inside a lifeform: as absence of brutality, or cruelty, or ruthlessness, a presence of humility, of civility, of gentleness.

The wub and Capt. Franco. Dick presents us with a nasty switch: empathise with the wub and what is human? Empathise with Franco and live in

feet.

Now surely there must be some fine line here somewhere between empathy/fear. Perhaps a razor's edge separates the two? I'd guess so. And from the evidence of Philip K. Dick's life and work overall I'd say he walked that razor's edge bleeding all the way -- as do all humans.

Dave Hyde, *Ganymede* Slime Mold, 0394 [thanks to Bernie Kling, Dave Keller, F.C. Bernard, Greg Lee]

7. A Response

I sent an early draft of the above *WUB* essay to Bernie Kling, wondering if was okay to differ in one's interpretation of a story from the author. Bernie replied in part:

I have to say that I am much closer to your interpretation of "The Wub" than to PKD's. And I feel that disagreeing with an author as to what is in his work as printed is entirely valid. From my own fictional efforts I know well that what comes out on paper may be very far from what you started out to say, and when you read it many years later it either doesn't say what you thought it said right after you wrote it, or you read into it what you would want it to say if you wrote it today. This is certainly something to consider when weighing PKD's 1981 comments -- thirty years later -- on a story written in 1951. As late as his 1976 "Afterthoughts" to THE BEST OF PHILIP K. DICK, PKD's only remark about "The Wub" (pg. 446) recalls how proud and

battered he was to admit that he not only read a pulp magazine as lurid as *Planet Stories*, but he wrote for it also. Nothing about the wub as a model of empathy or as being essentially human because it possesses a soul. By 1982, of course, PKD's head was in an entirely different place.

Though, in all fairness, there is "Not By It's Cover" -- submitted to PKD's agent in 1965, published in 1968 -- to consider, as Sutin points out in *DIVINE INVASIONS* (Pg. 77). In the story, the contents of books bound in "gold-stamped marian wub-fur" change to indicate the truth and desirability of Man's deepest desire, eternal life. The story is full of hilariously quotable one-liners such as: "We're not just dealing with an opinionated local life-form; we're dealing with an organism that has already done what we're still in doubt about." (See THE COLLECTED STORIES OF PHILIP K. DICK, Vol. 5, Pg. 179) While the story is certainly a very testimonial to the wub's awesome ability to survive, its survivability has nothing to do with the qualities of empathy and soulfulness that PKD reads

into the wub in 1981. It just has skin that refuses to die.

Back to the wub. I agree with you, the wub is a sly, manipulative, ultimately terrifying creature. While I can't speculate on how he ended up marooned in his pig-form rather than as an *Optus* -- an alien life-form about which we are told next to nothing -- the wub, which wants off-planet in the worst way, arranges to have the natives sell it to the humans "for fifty cents." The wub's virtually unlimited power of telepathy -- which is not the same as empathy -- allows it to know from the very start that Captain Franco will view it only as food. While it debates the rights and wrongs of whether or not it should be eaten -- in between leisurely discussions of *Odyssseus*, "a figure common to the mythology of most self-conscious races" -- it knows all along that it will be eaten. Its telepathy is so profound as to amount to precognition. Yet deep down it remains strangely unconcerned about its physical fate. As well it may. As soon as Captain Franco kills the wub, he becomes the wub. The former wub pigs out (no pun intended) on his recently vacated body with great gusto while heading toward Earth -- for who knows what sinister purpose. "And what rough beast, its hour come round at last, slouches toward Bethlehem to be born?"

8. John W. Campbell, Jr. and PKD by Scott Pohlman

"Only in this creature, the cell-nuclei can control those cells at will. It digested Charnak, and as it digested, studied every cell of his tissue, and shaped its own cells to imitate them exactly. Parts of it -- parts that had time to finish changing -- are dog cells. But they don't have dog-cell nuclei." Blair lifted a fraction of the tarpaulin. A torn dog's leg with stiff gray fur protruded. "That, for instance, isn't dog at all; it's imitation. Some parts I'm uncertain about; the nucleus was hiding itself, covering up with dog-cell imitation nucleus. In time, not even a microscope would have shown the difference.

"Suppose," asked Norris bitterly, "it had had lots of time?"

"Then it would have been a dog. The other dogs would have accepted it. We would have accepted it. I don't think anything would have distinguished it, not microscope, nor X-ray, nor any other means. This a member of a supremely intelligent race, a race that has learned the deepest secrets of biology, and turned them to its use."

"What was it planning to do?" Barclay looked at the humped tarpaulin.

Blair grimed unpleasantly. The wavering halo of thin hair round his bald pate wavered in the stir of air. "Take over the world, I imagine." "Take over the world? Just it, all by itself?" Connant gasped. "Set itself up as a lone dictator?"

"No," Blair shook his head. The scalp he had been fumbling in his bony fingers dropped; he bent to pick it up so that his face was hidden as he spoke. "It would become the population of the world."

— excerpt from chapter six of "Who Goes There?" by John W. Campbell, Jr., (1938) hours after the Arctic expedition's first contact with the creature

In his ground breaking novella of terror "Who Goes There?" John W. Campbell, Jr. depicts a stark world in which the main characters are being stalked and absorbed by a 20 million year old alien life bent on world domination. Not a scheme to be taken lightly. Especially if you're on the absorbee end of the picture.

In my way of thinking Campbell's "thing" is a logical precursor to Phil Dick's "wub" in his 1953 short story "Beyond Lies the Wub". For I see Dick's wub as I see Campbell's creature: malicious, patient and quite ruthless.

Campbell's thing's attack is four fold. First, it surprises prey. Second and third (for they go hand in hand) it injects its prey and absorbs it. Finally, the creature reconfigures its own cells on a molecular level to take on the appearance of that which it has absorbed. In essence, becoming the prey. This is a violent rape of the human condition at its most base level.

In my opinion, Dick's wub seeks this same end. However, the wub is not portrayed as the violent type. Quite the contrary, the wub would rather lure its unsuspecting prey with discussions of philosophy and culture rather than pounce outright. Admittedly, what would be the fun of alarming your prey? Have it flee? Risk injuring itself? Much better to attack from the inside out. Say after being injected? The coast is clear. White blood cells are no match. Perhaps they are even the first to go. There is no defense. The unsuspecting body could be taken over in moments and at will, and without missing a beat continue discussing *Odyssseus*.

I read Dick's story the same way I read Campbell's -- as a tale of absorption and terror. Cultured or not I believe the wub is a menace, and just taking a breather in its pig-like body.



Ed note: Well this BEYOND LIES THE WUB thing -- like the slovenly wub itself -- refuses to die. It just occurred to me what may have been PKD's intention with the figure of the Optus. He's introduced at the very beginning of the story as, "Outside stood the Optus, his arms folded, his face sunk in gloom." And further description brings to mind the stereotypical sympathetic picture of the American Indian, stoic in his appreciation of the doom that has befallen his people at the hands of the pioneers. Perhaps, then, the Optus foists the wub -- for fifty cents as Bernie mentioned above -- on the humans as a sort of figurative revenge... But, too many interpretations. The wub lives and that's all we really know about it.]

9. Tumultuous Wayfarer:

A Review of On Philip K. Dick: 40 Articles from Science-Fiction Studies, eds. R.D. Mullen, Istra Catesary-Romay, Jr., Arthur B. Evans, Veronica Hollinger, Terre Haute & Greencastle, SF-TH, Inc., 1992, 290 pgs., pap., \$16.45, ISBN 0-9633169-1-5. Reviewed by Frank C. Bertrand

Several months ago I finally purchased a softcover edition of *On Philip K. Dick: 40 Articles from Science-Fiction Studies* (hereinafter *On PKD*). And comotatively the subtitle of this book really says a lot. We must be realistic, and not dis-



PHILIP KENDRED DICK 1928-1982

"THE HEAD APOLLO IS ABOUT TO RETURN. ST. SOPHIA IS GOING TO BE BORN AGAIN; SHE WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE BEFORE. THE BUDDHA IS IN THE PARK..."

HIS EARLY NOVELS ARE LESS BIZARRE BUT CERTAINLY MORE OF TIMISTIC.

YES, IT REALLY CHANGES WITH THE MAN IN A HIGH CASTLE.

CAN I WUB YOUR WUB?

WUB.

BEYOND LIES THE WUB.

FOSTER, YOU'RE DEAD!

BUY PERKY PAT

MERCELSM ISN'T DEAD - JUST YOU!

THERE ARE FOUR BOOKS.

COLONIZE MARS - TODAY!

THIS HAS BEEN A TYREL CORP. PRESENTATION SPONSORED BY Gary THOMAS

"THE EMPIRE NEVER ENDED."

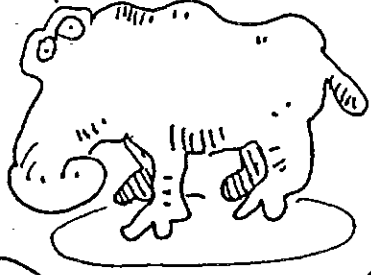
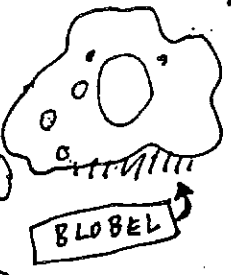
BUT IS THE VALIS TRILOGY REALLY SF?

DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?

IT'S TOO BAA-AAD IF THEY DO.

I WONDER WHAT OWL IN DAYLIGHT WOULD HAVE BEEN LIKE?

CHEW-Z, CHEW-Z



ingenious, about the fact that *On PKD* is a anthology of reprinted essays that originally appeared in the academic journal *Science-Fiction Studies* (some of the essays have been previously reprinted in other anthologies). Furthermore, these essays are not meant for the average Philip K. Dick fan/reader! They were written by scholars for other scholars to accrete "publish-or-perish" points. This is a serious fact-of-life in the ivy-covered halls of Academia that shouldn't be made light of (some intriguing insights about it, however, can be gleaned from articles in the journal *Lingua Franca*). I also should note that I was genuinely surprised to find my name on page xxviii where my 1981 article, "Encounters with Reality: P.K. Dick's A Scanner Darkly," is listed in a "Secondary Bibliography." This was surprising because I do not have any esoteric initials after my name.

Nonetheless, there is one new essay in *On PKD* that warrants our critical contemplation, the introductory piece, "Pilgrims in Pandemonium: Philip K. Dick and the Critics" (pp. v-xxviii) by Professor Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, Jr. He teaches in the English Department at De Pauw University, Greencastle, Indiana and is currently co-editor of *Science-Fiction Studies*.

Aside from the catchy and suggestive alliterative title (*Pandemonium* is the capital of Hell in Milton's *Paradise Lost*), Professor Csicsery-Ronay, Jr. delineates in his essay what he perceives to be a tripartite division of the critical intent driving or influencing the essays about PKD in *Science-Fiction Studies*. These phases or stages he labels *beatification*, *disputation*, and *diffusion*. In the first one

"...critics set out to justify why they consider him to be an important writer." (p. viii) The second involves disputes "...about the relative validity and strength of certain readings over others." (p. ix) And the third phase "...refers to the current period of the 'Dick-cism' where "...Dick's reputation and the 'Dick-text' have extended far beyond the generic boundaries of SF and literature." (p. ix) Yes, his essay, as are the others in *On PKD*, is liberally sprinkled with "metalanguage" code words and phrases; you can simplify and demystify them with a college dictionary and/or thesaurus.

The efficacy of such an approach is perhaps best answered by Professor Csicsery-Ronay, Jr. himself:

"...should academic standards of scholarly rigor and authority be required so that SF can become part of the historical project of literary study, thereby influencing and being influenced by scholar-ship? Or should it be allowed to develop *en sauvage*, free from the pedantic restrictions that would inevitably vitiate it?" (p. xiii)

If you think about it for any length of time this, apart from the quaint French phrase (besides wild or uncultivated, this can also mean a shy or unsociable person), is loaded with assumptions. WHO says SF wants to become "part of the historical project of literary study"? WHO says SF wants to influence or be "influenced by scholar-ship"? WHAT empirical evidence is there that "pedantic restrictions...would inevitably vitiate it"? (*pedantic* as in narrow or unimaginative; *vitiate* as in to make ineffective or weak)

As for "academic standards of scholarly rigor," carefully consider this assertion: "The phase of disputation comprises roughly the fifteen years from 1980 to 1988, the year of the second special Dick issue." (p. ix) Also curious is that such scholarly rigor cannot find any worthy Philip K. Dick works to explicate prior to 1960 (six novels, two short story collections), the justification apparently being that "Before the mid-1960s, SF works were considered, with a few exceptions, diversions, not vehicles for profound visions into the nature of things." (p. v) Yes, you certainly should be asking WHO considers SF before the mid-1960s diversions. WHY the mid-1960s is a cut-off, and WHAT "profound visions" are. The latter might have something to do with a statement near the end of Professor Csicsery-Ronay, Jr.'s essay, that "SF's relationship to religion has always been close." (p. xviii) Always? According to Philip K. Dick, "Religion ought never to show up in s-f except from a sociological standpoint, as in *Gather, Darkness*. God per se, as a character, runs a good s-f story; and this is as true of my own stuff as anyone else's." ("Will The Atomic Bomb Ever Be Perfected, And If So, What Becomes Of Robert Heinlein?", *LightHouse*, No. 14, October 1966, p. 4)

You might think this cogent and common sense advice by PKD. Then again Professor Csicsery-Ronay, Jr. asserts that because of a transformation in SF "...Dick was transformed from an exemplary satirical visionary into the oracular *schlemihl* of the postmodern condition." (p. viii) WHAT could it possibly mean to characterize anyone as "the oracular *schlemihl* of the postmodern condition"?

First of all a *schlemihl* (also "schlemiel") is "an awkward and unlucky person for whom things never turn out right." Oracular has to do with "giving forth utterances or decisions as if by special inspiration or authority." Does this perhaps mean that Philip K. Dick is a awkward and unlucky prophet whose prophecies about the "postmodern condition" never turn out right? Yes, you should ask WHAT prophecies, "postmodern," by the way, is a quintessential "metalanguage" code word used by "postmodern" academic scholars to label everything from poetry to architecture. Pop art to music, videos to contemporary novels that they perceive as not fitting in with, or being reactions against, established forms of "high modernism." Todd Gitlin, a professor of Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley perceptively notes that postmodern "...self-consciously splices genres, attitudes, styles. It relishes the blurring or juxtaposition of forms (fiction-non-fiction), stances (straight-ironic), moods (violent-comic), cultural levels (high-low). It dis-

plays originality and fancies copies, repetition, the recombination of hand-me-down scraps." ("Postmodernism defined, at last!", *Utne Reader*, July/August 1989, p. 52)

With respect to novels of the 1950s, however, Irving Howe, in a 1959 essay simply writes that "in their distance from fixed social categories and their concern with the metaphysical implications of that distance, these novels constitute what I would call postmodern fiction." ("Mass Society and Postmodern Fiction," *The Decline of the New*, 1970, p. 203) This is a far more apt and suggestive description of PKD's novels, in particular the phrase "metaphysical implications," than anything in Professor Csicsery-Ronay, Jr.'s essay, or the essays in *On PKD*. And it is done without squinting at ideas through oblique words.

As that dozen of SF and PKD scholar-academics, Jonathan Swift, once wrote:

These two Evils, Ignorance and want of Taste, have produced a Third, I mean a continual Corruption of our English Tongue, which, without some timely Remedy, will suffer more by the false Refinements of Twenty Years past, than it hath been improved in the foregoing Hundred.... If a Man of Wit, who died Forty Years ago, were to be able to read this Letter? and after he had got through that Difficulty, how would he be able to understand it?" ("On The Corruption Of The English Tongue," *Tatler*, CCXXX, September 28, 1710)

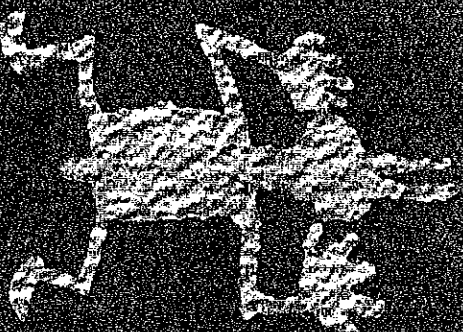
For the average PKD fan/reader trying to understand *On PKD* will indeed lead to a kind of cognitive pandemonium as they strive to decipher claims that are not at all self-evident and judge the neutrality and objectivity of what has been included, occluded, and/or omitted. And in this instance the academics are very much the pilgrims, in the sense of Chaucer rather than Bunyan, not us. *On PKD* is meant for them, not us. [FCB, 1994]

10. "They Did Sight Stimulation On My Brain," the Policeman Said.

Retrofitting Blade Runner: Issues in Ridley Scott's Blade Runner and Philip K. Dick's Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? Edited by Judith B. Kerman, 290pgs., pap, \$20.00.

Reviewed by Scott Pohle

Darkness. Shadows. Night. Fire. Rain. Visually evocative. Erotically tactile. Blade Runner.



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Please make checks to Wesley Matthews

An unarguable visual influence on the mid-80's cyberpunk movement. William Gibson, cyberpunk icon, even went so far as to admit to fleeing the theater in a cold sweat barely fifteen minutes into the film. Could seeing his vision of the near future Sprawl sprayed on Ridley Scott's silver screen a full two years before his award-winning novel *NEUROMANCER* was to hit the shelves of Walden Books be a bit unsettling?

With this volume, Ms. Kernan has compiled an impressive list of retrofitting essays, and in this author's opinion, it is long overdue. In a nutshell: "[t]his book of essays attempts to look at the multitude of texts and influences which converge in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*, considering literary, filmic and technical issues... its implications provide a starting point for urgently important thinking about the moral issues implicit in a hypertechnological society." (Editor's Introduction, Pg. 2)

These essays are exemplary in the field of SF film criticism; they are both poignant and lucid in their arguments and delivery. After glancing at the contributor's page, it is no doubt why. It reads like a who's who of academia, chock full of department heads from Universities spanning the nation. All told there are twenty essays in this richly dense 290 page trade paperback, sporting such titles as "Metahuman 'Kipple' Or, Do Male Movie Makers Dream of Electric Women?", "Entropy, Emptiness, Empathy: *Blade Runner* and Detective Fiction", and "The New Eve: The Influence of Paradise Lost and Frankenstein on *Blade Runner*". There is even an essay by Phil Dick biographer Gregg Rickman entitled "Philip K. Dick on *Blade Runner*: 'They Did Slight Stimulation On My Brain'".

Kernan divides the book into four sections: (1) Social Implications: *Blade Runner* as Thought Experiment; (2) Genre Issues: Sources and Synthesis; (3) Film Sources and Adaptation Issues; and (4) Aesthetics and the Creation of Science Fiction

Worlds. Though this cognizant organization, Kernan leads the reader through a nearly exhaustive examination of the film, to include traditional dissections of its themes and imagery, all the way to the controversy over its musical score.

"All told there were perhaps as many as ten different drafts of the screenplay prepared between 1979 and 1981, starting with an eight page treatment by Hampton Fancher to convince producer Michael Deeley to option the novel. By July 1980, Fancher's original treatment had evolved through several drafts to a working screenplay titled *Blade Runner*." ("Script to Screen *Blade Runner* in Perspective", by W. Kolb, *Retrofitting Blade Runner* Pg. 134)

RETROFITTING BLADE RUNNER

ISSUES IN RIDLEY SCOTT'S *BLADE RUNNER*
AND PHILIP K. DICK'S
DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?



Edited by Judith B. Kernan

"0:18. When

Rachael asks Deckard if he's every retired a human by mistake, he hesitates a moment too long and they both know the possibility worries him. Early in the scene between Rachael and Deckard, the camera point-of-view is upward when shooting Rachael and downward when shooting Deckard. Scott uses these points-of-view frequently to differentiate between replicants and humans. Tyrell, in waxed jet-black hair and a shiny, blue sharkskin suit, wears trifocal glasses that exaggerate his eyes. Scott says, "I wanted the character of Tyrell to look vaguely Egyptian, vaguely Tutankhamen -- he almost looks em-

balanced. In fact there was a development in the story where Tyrell was dead and kept in a cryogenic chamber awaiting discovery of whatever disease he has died of. He'd certainly make replicants of himself. In fact, if I were him, I'd make six! One in London, one in America, one in Tokyo and so on! That's why the pyramid occurred! Shadows dance uncertainly on the walls during this and the following scenes." ("*Blade Runner* Film Notes", W. Kolb, *Retrofitting Blade Runner* Pg. 158)

I found *Retrofitting Blade Runner* to be an invaluable film companion. In particular, the two essays by William M. Kolb, from which the above passages were taken, were superb for their render-

ing of the film's pathos. I highly recommend this book for anyone at all interested in either the movie or the field of SF film criticism.

II. AHHEM...

by Perry Kinnman

If I could just get your attention. Get those of you who are scanning along to just... slow... down... for a minute. Dig your toes in. Good! Now, the reason is... is... well, it's like this...

A couple of years ago I was looking for something to add to my PKD collection -- something different -- and I remembered reading in *ONLY APARENTLY REAL* about how Paul Williams was making monetary gain on cold winter nights by cutting up Phil's old cancelled checks. A signature, I thought. That would be nice.

The signatures he was cutting out were to be pasted in special limited-editions of Phil's books. As everyone knows those books with the tipped-in signatures are a lot more valuable than the ones without. I could get Phil's signature without dish-ing out the millions of bucks, and it would be net. Something really different too.

I wrote to Paul about this. He wrote back and said he'd try and get one but in the meantime he had a few of Phil's old letters for sale and would I like one. They looked interesting so I got a few of them (and I recommend all PKD fans to get one too; it's like one step closer to having Phil in the room). Anyways, on one of the letters Phil had started to mispell the month on the date. A really simple mistake. To correct it he'd quickly inserted an 'ahem' and continued on, like this:

Agu (ahem) August 26, 1975

When I saw it I liked it. I thought it was great. I could feel a lot of personality shining through in that one small word. It made the page come alive. The date in this case even took on character.

About the same time I saw this I had been running through *DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?*, taking notes on Mercutism, empathy boxes, etc., when, suddenly, there at the end of Chapter 16 was another 'ahem.' Coincidence, I guess. I noticed this one was used, perhaps, to touch on an embarrassing subject. Rick Deckard had had a hard day retiring some Andys, dealing with his own uncertain mind and now found himself at a hotel with Rachael, an android who he was developing feelings for.

"... Have you ever made love to an android before?"

"No," he said, taking off his shirt and tie. "I understand -- they tell me -- it's convincing if you don't think too much about it, but if you think too much, if you reflect on what you're doing -- then you can't go on. For ahem physiological reasons."

Bending, he kissed her bare shoulder.

Well, after seeing this same word twice in a row in two different locations it got my curiosity up. Ahems aren't that common a word. There was something to this particular word for me now. A connection had been made. I had to follow it up. I'm a Dickhead. I got out my dictionary, a Random House pocket edition, dogeared with the cover missing and the first ten pages too. Fortunately 'ahem' came after 'aduce', which is the first word in my book. The definition given is as follows:

ahem (hem'), interf. (an utterance to attract attention etc.)

Not much, but better than nothing as definitions go.

Returning to PKD's use I could see that, yes, these 'ahems' were used to attract attention. But, oddly enough, to bring attention to negative things. In the first case an error, in the second to get some embarrassing words out. Why put things better left unnoticed in the spotlight? What other purposes as indicated in the 'etc.' at the end of the definition exist?

One easy one to guess would be to correct. It throws up a flag to say, 'we have a mistake here and now we're going to fix it' and the speaker goes on to say what it is he has to do to remedy the situation.

Directly related to this would be the purpose to protect. By making amends the speaker puts up a kind of shield. This helps deflect any embarrassment away from him. This rumbling noise comes through and covers, protecting him for the duration of the delicate moment. It fends off criticism in a primordial sort of way. And it lends strength to the weak words, helping them along.

'Ahem', then, basically seems to have a dual role: to attract attention and to deflect attention away. You want to be noticed and to not be noticed all at the same time. It is a bridge across the impossible.

When my new *IN PURSUIT OF VALIS* arrived, another 'ahem' came popping out in the first few pages! This one was located in chapter one, page 4. Phil was talking about his book *UBIK*.

"... So my novel *UBIK* was based on life

and now my life is based on it but only because it, the novel, goes back to life. I really did not make it up. I just observed it and put it into a fictional framework. After I wrote it I forgot where I got the idea. Now it has come back to, ahem, haunt me, if you'll pardon me for putting it that way."

He was commenting on how reality was breaking back through into his life. Like Glen Runciter's presence did in UBIK so now was Bishop James A. Pike doing in his, Phil's, life. He inadvertently makes a pun as Pike's returning is ghost-like in the traditional sense. Listen to me, Phil says. But wait. Forget it. Don't listen too closely. Phil probably felt slightly embarrassed attacking a good pun. Who wouldn't. Of course there must have been loads of satisfaction behind it. Life influencing book, book now influencing life. The constant flip-flop of cause and effect.

The next 'ahem' I came across was in "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale." Doug Quail is feeling tipped off. In his pocket he has discovered half of his poscords for his Mars trip, returned to him by the director of Rekai, Inc. And he is remembering the director's promise that if he remembered his visit to Rekai he'd receive his money back, in full. Doug is angry and wants it all back now. The receptionist there at Rekai Inc. is trying to calm him down, her job no doubt, and goes beyond conventional office practices to do so.

"Mr. Quail," the girl said, "although you are a minor clerk you are a good-looking man and it spoils your features to become angry. If it would make you feel any better, I might, ahem, let you take me out..."

Thus the receptionist disassociates herself

from her own utterances with an 'ahem'. She has protected herself. Has admitted her words are emotionally fraught. Yet she is calling out to be heard. She wants to be taken up on her proposition.

In the notes for the story "Precious Artifact" in the back of THE GOLDEN MAN, Phil uses another 'ahem' when expressing modesty at possibly inventing a new system of logic. The 'Y' equals null-Y' thing. Actually, he's not quite sure of himself. Humor again comes into play.

"Either I've invented a whole new logic or, ahem, I'm not playing with a full deck."

At first I thought it was just a word. Anyone could use it, and many do. Some device of habit one latches onto, not giving much thought to, nothing more. The next 'ahem', however, led me to believe that Phil was definitely conscious of it. Conscious of using it.

In "Ophiurus With Clay Feet" (COLLECTED STORIES, Vol. 4), we have a Mr. Jesse Slade who has decided to become the 'muse', or go back in time and inspire a certain 20th Century writer of Science Fiction named Jack Dowland. Inspire him to write the SF that makes him famous. Unfortunately, however, he blows it. Due to his bald head, wearing his tie upside down, use of strange speech patterns ahead of their time, any one or combination thereof, he messes up badly. Even when he first arrives and greets the lady at the door he starts off on the wrong foot. So he needs the services of an 'ahem' to save himself.

Slade, thoroughly prepared, said smoothly, "Mrs. Dowland?"

The woman nodded. Now a small child appeared to peep at him past his mother. "I'm a fan of

your husband's monumental..." Ops, he thought, that wasn't right. "Ahem," he corrected himself, using a twentieth-century expression often found in books of that period.

In the quote itself there is a nice explanation of its use. It plays a minor part in the story. One can sense, too, more of Phil's specific conveyance of feeling. In doing so it took on more power and purpose. Rising a bit higher in the world of expression, nearing terms like 'Excuse me' or 'Thank you'. It had passed from being a guttural rumble into a word. Although it could be taken lightly it could also be taken with authority. In Phil's case he seems to have mainly used it as an indication of modesty. Not the more common attention getter he wants the attention but he needs the protection more. Since then I've found two more 'ahems' in the course of my reading. One in ANDROIDS again, near the beginning of chapter two, where a TV announcer is interviewing a Mrs. Klugman (somehow I envision Phil picking this name up from "The Odd Couple" show on TV), a recent immigrant to Mars who has left all the terrible conditions of Earth behind. Drawing out, as is his purpose, the goodness of Martian life as he means of persuading others on Earth to pack up and move too, the announcer articulates carefully:

"Back on Earth, Mrs. Klugman, in the old days, did you also worry about finding yourself classed, ahem, as a special?"

Before mentioning the term 'special' with its heavy connotations in this novel, he has to, must, resort to an 'ahem' to get it out, to soften the blow, to present and protect this laden term.

The other instance is in THE SELECTED LETTERS, 1977-79. Phil, in a letter to Patricia Warwick dated April 2, 1978, has erroneously misspelled 'Burg' as 'Berg.' Another simple mistake. Spelling again. I can sympathize.

Ahem... I said the German word for castle was Berg. It is Burg. And the castle system was called Ordensburg. Sorry.

This ahem is different as it comes at the beginning of the sentence. It is also set off by three dots so there is a lot of breathing space around it. It booms out powerfully, emphasizing the attention-getting rather than the mistake.

Of all the other preceding ahems that come in the middle of the sentence only one is not set apart by commas. The one where Rick Deckard is with Rachael Rosen in ANDROIDS. Try reading that

sentence out loud. Then read it again as if it had commas around it. It somehow flows out more easily and naturally. With no pauses around it it comes across as harder to say in the sentence. There is not much time to breathe. Pauses make words stand out and so Rachael talks quickly, wistfully, getting everything out at one time. After all, her allotted time is quite short. Or perhaps the comma-less 'ahem' as used by Rachael indicates a more ironic use of the term as the situation she and Rick are in indicates its usage as a mere gesture, a nod to convention.

But wait. What have I done? maybe I'm reading too much into this. I've gone from saying it's a neat lively expression to intentional, authoritative, dramatic word-usage. A dual-rolled term that pulls you closer and pushes you away. Attacks and corrects and protects and exhibits shades of subtle usage. Somehow it doesn't seem right. I liked the small word that shows human quality better.

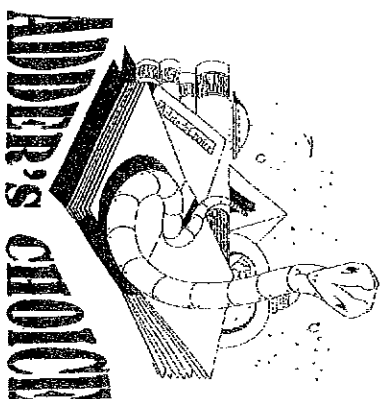
In any case I will continue to notice 'ahems' wherever they are. All these ahems are just a thread running through PKD's writing. I know. But trivial as they seem they, together with all the other threads -- the flappies and kipple and reality -- weave a tapestry of the fascinating world I never tire of. One I like to sink my teeth deep into.

12. Ken Campbell's "Jamais Vu"

September 26, 1993, Manchester.
Reviewed by Benedict S. Cullum

Many questions were raised and many answers offered during the course of Campbell's monologue. How though, does one justify the submission of a review concerning a British theatrical performance to a small circulation, North American produced, specialist 'zine? Are credentials and/or justification required here, I find myself asking myself to which a voice replies: Yes, that'll help, and wasn't that what the monologue was about after all, questions, connections, finding a place in the scheme of things?

Briefly, Ken Campbell was a force (the force?) behind the Science Fiction Theatre, performing in past times with the author Brian Aldiss and Sylvester McCoy, the last Dr. Who. Active in theatre since the '60s, one credit of particular note involved his presentation of the conspiracy-theory laden ILLUMINATUS series for the stage: a feat which, I believe, involved marathon 22-hour per-



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formances! He is also a self-confessed Philip K. Dick fan, which itself is good enough for me!

As might be expected following those last two credentials, paranoia is to the fore in the presentation of his exaggerated and eccentric travels, both his own and that of those he meets en route. From his encounter with the former lawyer from Cardboard City near the National Theater – or National Fortress as he prefers to think of it – to the majestic, volcanic climax on the Isle of Vanuatu in the New Herbrides, 1300 miles from Australia, Campbell will have you believing that everything comes. You'll be seduced with tales of dark denunciations, Manticoran gods, cargo cults and the occluded histories of warring secret societies that have coursed from the beginning of the Christian era to the present age where, say he, we witness the imminent and sinister demise of the British monarchy!

Campbell's monologue describes a voyage of discovery which starts, appropriately enough, on the day the performance itself is commissioned. As Campbell tells it – and part of the fun is detecting truth from half-truth from embellishment, from speculation from out-and-out fabrication – he has been summoned to the National Theater/Fortress in order to discuss the possible inclusion of the unwritten third part in his series of semi-autobiographical tales in a series of anthologies planned for the year. The previous two in Campbell's own particular series where CONFESSIONS OF A FURTIVE NUDIST and PIGSPURT.

A seemingly spur-of-the-moment visit to a lecture sets off a chain of chance encounters and – in the second half of a value-for-money three hour performance – we are taken to the island of Vanuatu which previously had comprised a good part of the thematic territory of the aforementioned PIGSPURT. Campbell's detours are as remarkable as the journey itself; indeed, perhaps the journey is one large meandering detour modelled, says Campbell on the sink plunger with its circular lip, domed rubber hemisphere and wooden handle!

For anyone minded to experience a thought-provoking, often hilarious, heteroskeller exposition of just exactly what is going on around us as we wander in a daze I'd recommend that you "go with the flow" to a theatre near you should an Atlantic crossing be envisaged for 1994.

13. An Interview with

Philip K. Dick

Conducted by Frank C. Bertrand through the

mail in January, 1980.

Frank C. Bertrand: I would like to start by asking a cliché question phrased a bit differently. How do you define science fiction? In asking this, though, I do not seek a dictionary-type definition, but rather what is it about a work of fiction that when you read it causes you to say, "This is science fiction?"

Philip K. Dick: SF presents in fictional form an eccentric view of the normal or a normal view of a world that is not our world. Not all stories set in the future or on other planets are SF (some are space adventures), and some SF is set in the past or the present (time travel or alternate world stories). It is not mimetic of the real world. Central to SF is the idea as dynamism. Events evolve out of an idea impacting on living creatures and their society. The idea must always be a novelty. This is the core issue of SF, even bad SF. That events accord with known scientific truths distinguishes SF from fantasy. Good SF tells a reader something he does not now about a possible world. Thus both the new (novel idea), and possible world (setting) are inventions by the author and not descriptions. Finally, SF makes what would otherwise be and intellectually abstract concrete, it does this by locating the idea in a specific time and place, which requires the inventing of that time and place. Characters need not differ from characters in non-SF; it is what they encounter and must deal with that differ.

FCB: Why is there SF? That is, why is it written, why is it read? Would literature be better or worse off if it had never come into existence? Just what function does SF fulfill in literature and for those who choose to read it, or write it?

PKD: There is SF because the human brain craves sensory and intellectual stimulation before anything else, and the eccentric view provides unlimited stimulation, the eccentric view and the invented world. It is written because the human mind naturally creates, and in creating the world of an SF story the ultimate in human imagination is brought into use, thus SF is an ultimate product of and for the human mind. The function of SF psychologically is to cut the reader loose from the actual world that he inhabits; it deconstructs time, space reality. Those who read it probably have difficulty adjusting to their world, for whatever reason, they may simply be neurotic, or they may have an abundance of imagination. Basically, they enjoy abstract thought. Also, they have a sense of the magic of science: science view not as utilitarian but as explorative. The writer of SF has in his possession ideas not yet

committed to print; his mind is an extension of the corpus of already written SF. He is SF's probe into the future, its vanguard. There is not a vast difference between reading SF and writing it. In both cases there is joy in the novel – i.e. new – idea.

FCB: Would you please recount just when it was that you first became interested in philosophy? Was it a particular course or book or idea that initially generated your interest? Or a particular teacher in high school, before, after?

PKD: I first became interested in philosophy in high school when I realized that all space is the same size; it is only the material boundaries encompassing it that differ. After that there came to me the realization (which I found later in Hume) that causality is a perception in the observer and not a datum of external reality. In college I was given Plato to read and thereupon became aware of a metaphysical realm beyond or above the sensory world. I came to understand that the human mind could conceive of a realm of which the empirical world was an epiphenomenon. Finally, I came to believe that in a certain sense the empirical world was not truly real, at least not as real as the archetypal realm beyond it. At this point I despaired of the veracity of sense-data. Hence in novel after novel that I wrote I questioned the reality of the world that the characters perceived – systems report. Ultimately I became an ascetic pantheist, led to this point of view by decades of skepticism.

FCB: Once your interest in philosophy was sparked, how did you then pursue this interest? What books did you at first read? What courses if any did you take in philosophy?

PKD: I dropped out of college very early and began to write, pursuing my interest in philosophy on my own. My main sources were poets, not philosophers: Yeats and Wordsworth and the seventeenth century English metaphysical poets, Goethe, and then overt philosophers such as Spinoza and Leibniz and Plotinus – the last influencing me greatly. Early on I read Alfred North Whitehead and Bergson and became well-grounded in process philosophy. I did take a basic survey course in philosophy at the University of California at Berkeley, but was asked to leave when I inquired as to the pragmatic value of Platonism. The late-Socratics always fascinated me, in particular Pythagoras, Parmenides, Heraclitus, and Empedocles. I still view God as Xenophanes viewed him. Gradually my interest in philosophy passed over into an interest in theology. Like the early Greeks I am a believer in panpsychism. Of

all the metaphysical systems in philosophy I feel the greatest affinity for that of Spinoza, with his dictum, "Deus sive substantia sive natura", to me this sums up everything (Viz. "God i.e. reality i.e. nature"). After flirting with nihilism for years I've settled down to monism. I regard even Christianity and later Judaism as heavily dualistic and hence unacceptable. To me the truth was first uttered (in so far as we know) when Xenophanes of Colophon, an Ionian, stated, "One God there is... in no way like mortal creatures either in bodily form or in the thought of his mind. The whole of him sees, the whole of him thinks, the whole of him hears. He stays always motionless in the same place; it is not fitting that he should move about now this way, now that. But, effortlessly, he wields all things by the thought of his mind". My interest in Pythagoras came from reading Wordsworth's "Ode", and from there I passed on to neo-Platonism and to the pre-Socratics. The German Aufklärung influenced me, especially Schiller and his ideas of freedom; I read his "Ways of the Dialectic Lowlands" and the "Wallenstein Trilogy". Spinoza's views regarding the worth of democracy also influenced me. Especially I studied the Thirty Years War and the issues involved, and am sympathetic to the Protestant side, in particular the various Puritans. When I was twenty-one I wrote a piece on the superiority of the American governmental system of checks and balances, praising it above all other systems of governments either in modern times or in antiquity. I sent a copy to the then governor of California, Earl Warren, to which he replied, "It is a gratifying experience to receive such an expression of appreciation of the government for which all of us work and serve. An although it may be that many others have the same depth of feeling you expressed, few are so articulate. Certainly your letter is unique in my experience, and I have received many through my years in public office." That was in the year 1952, when my first stories were published. It coincides, therefore, with my appearance as an author in the world of SF.

[Ed's note: This interview first was found in Nicks #36 (1988) and was sent along to us with his permission to run it by Frank C. Bertrand.]

14. Barjo

At the Art Institute of Chicago, December 1, 1994. Reviewed by Dan Sutherland.

Viewing a contemporary film from France that does not offer

Gerard Depardieu as its leading man frees the expectations of the American film viewer. There is not the neurotic compulsion to "interfere" or "like" Gaul's leading man. The viewer is relaxed and prepared to suspend disbelief for actors who are not as identifiable. Unfortunately, M. Depardieu -- and extremely competent performer -- automatically brings to mind certain nuances and characteristics that can impede a narrative.

This ability to suspend disbelief can extend past the actor(s) to the text itself. Especially if the text is one that is familiar and cherished. This expectation is heightened when the author is a favorite or an all-time great.

Under these conditions films and other adapted creations are placed under thick glasses indeed.

I went to the screening of Jerome Boivin's **BARJO** (literally "nutbag" or "nutcase") with all of this textual detritus layered about my head. I was biased towards an idea of how this adaptation of PKD's mainstream novel, **CONFESSIONS OF A CRAP ARTIST**, should look. By doing this I was setting myself up for a disappointment.

I was logged out of this by the caustic, uncooperative and mean-spirited people who were running the house at the Film Center of the Art Institute. They had not provided me with a promised press packet of **BARJO** (they were to have provided a photocopied one at that! A master being too precious for a mere fanzine). And they would not even allow the customary complimentary press ticket. Their reason for doing this was that this fanzine -- all fanzines -- were too small, came out too late and could not do their business any good. Of course, this is an oxymoron in mission purpose for the Art Institute, a non-profit institution talking about business loss based on a complimentary ticket is below contempt.

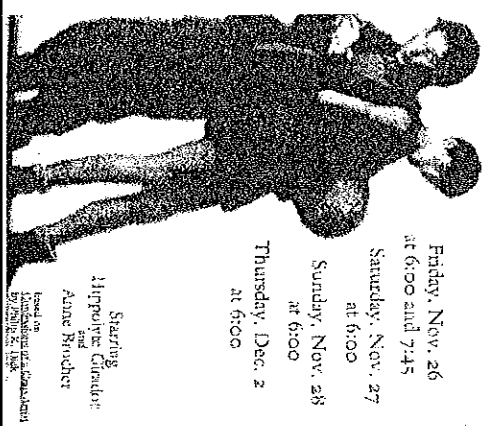
This parsimonious attitude really got me pissed! So pissed that I forgot why I went to the damn movie in the first place.

But it cleared away any expectations I had set for the film. It was no longer an adaptation of a PKD novel. It was a piece of entertainment to take my mind off the shitty behavior I had been subjected to from the tennant who was the assistant to the assistant. Still, in a way, that trained cobra had helped me with this review.

So, into Jerome Boivin's **BARJO**... The film is set in an odd provincial capitol of France. The town is big enough to get into small trouble and small enough to have everyone know your business. Barjo -- played with four-eyed hebephrenic curiosity by Hippolyte Girardot --

CHICAGO PREMIERE
an outrageous new comedy from Jerome Boivin, the director of *Baxter*

BARJO



Friday, Nov. 26
at 6:00 and 7:45
Saturday, Nov. 27
at 6:00
Sunday, Nov. 28
at 6:00
Thursday, Dec. 2
at 6:00

Starring
Hippolyte Girardot
Anne Brochet
Directed by
Jerome Boivin

extra-marital affairs and the torment he suffers at the hands of his spouse and brother-in-law.

This film does not have the frightening paranoia of the 50s. It has a more relaxed, fin de siècle madness to it, and attitude of "things are nuts because time is running out", versus the "things are nuts because the end of the world could happen any minute" attitude of Dick's era.

There is a relaxation in the film. The coverage is non-repetitive and imaginative. The scenes are staged in a brisk fashion. The dialogue is so relentless and quick that it seems like great improvisation. Unfortunately the subtitles could only

keep up with what seemed like 35% of the spoken text. But, all in all, the film is put together with a wondrous sense of glee.

To say that this film is a character-driven piece is an understatement. Once the setting is oddly established, the piece relies on the energy and neurotic volatility of its characters. After the first two reels you forget about the needs of plot and narrative as you watch the characters torture one another.

The comedy of PKD's novel is, as I've alluded to above, more paranoid than the film. The book has this feeling of the walls closing in -- very quickly -- and never moving back. The film becomes more and more like comedy verte. Which for me means I could have watched the characters of the movie for hours longer than the film's running time.

That's the fascination with many of Dick's characters. Their situations and circumstances are usually lousy, but you're so interested in them because they are not icons but the dysfunctional breadwinners that PKD admired in real life. **BARJO** is not what an American version of **CONFESSIONS OF A CRAP ARTIST** would be. But it is definitely what the modern French comedy would be of the book.

And the film is now available on video as well. To order it, send \$89.98 and \$4.00 for postage and handling to:

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Facets Multimedia
1517 West Fullerton
Chicago, IL 60614
1-800-331-6194

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15. Philip K. Dick and the Kabbalah

by Paul Rydeen

Much has been written in the defunct Philip K. Dick Society newsletter, *Gnosis magazine* (1), and elsewhere about the gnostic influences in Phil Dick's semi-autobiographical **VALIS** (2). The point is well-made, the influences are clearly there, as is evidenced internally within **VALIS** and its prototype **Radio Free Albemuth** (3) as well as Phil's infamous *Exegesis*. I intend to show that the form of Jewish mysticism known as Kabbalah was just as much an influence as was Gnosticism, and that the dreams and visions which began in February and March 1974 were interpreted by Phil in kabbalistic terms -- either knowingly or unknowingly. Readers interested in gnostic interpretations

of the events in **VALIS** are referred to Jay Kinney's excellent article in the defunct *Critique* (reprinted in *Gnosis*). The emphasis is on the so-called Valentinian school of gnosticism and Jungian interpretations.

I am certainly not the first to notice the kabbalistic motifs in Phil's writing. An interesting article in a recent "fanzine" (4) attempts to demonstrate a relationship between the structure of Phil's early novel **THE WORLD JONES MADE** (5) and the ten sephiroth of the kabbalistic Tree of Life. *Steamshovel Press* prints an excerpt (reproduced above) from a recent book called *Saunders of the Illuminati* (6) which points out many masonic themes in **VALIS**; Freemasonry is saturated with kabbalistic ideas. In a recent letter to the present author PKD biographer Lawrence Sutin relates at least two cases of Phil mentioning the Kabbalah directly in unpublished portions of the *Exegesis*. Hopefully one day these writings will see print.

There are several places in Phil's writings where kabbalistic themes are mentioned directly and acknowledged as such. One clear kabbalistic reference is found in **VALIS**. Phil has the little girl Sophia reading from the *Sepher Yetzirah* (7) -- a pre-eminent kabbalistic treatise -- when the three members of the Rhipidon Society visit the Lamptons. To what end I do not know. "Sophia" is the Greek for "wisdom"; the Hebrew term is "Chokmah". Divine Wisdom as personified in the biblical book of Proverbs and subsequent Jewish commentaries later came to be associated with the Shekhina. Phil uses her as a main character in *The Divine Invasion* (8), the sequel to **VALIS** (original title: **VALIS Regained**). According to Gershom Scholem (9), one kabbalistic writer recorded that all the sephiroth from Chokmah on down must endure countless incarnations while history runs its course. This is certainly the case with Sophia in **VALIS**, but admittedly the idea was current with the gnostics as early as Simon Magus.

Another minor reference, which perhaps shouldn't be counted as such, is when Phil has himself reading Moses Maimonides *Guide for the Perplexed* (10) at 21. I believe he recounts this in **VALIS** and at least one other place. When his wife mentions the fact to a professor at her school, he remarks that Phil is probably the only person in the country reading that particular book at the moment. Maimonides was an eminent Jewish theologian from medieval Spain, but his doctrine is best described as "anti-kabbalah". Still, this shows Phil's early interest in Jewish mysticism which would eventually lead him to the mystical Kabbalah. Phil claimed that in 1974 a two-word cypher was sent, this cypher signifying the advent of the Messiah.

The two words were KING FELIX (meaning "happy" or "rightful king"), which appear juxtaposed in the original edition only of Phil's FLOW MY TEARS THE POLICEMAN SAID (11). In VALIS the Lamptons tell Horselover Fat (Phil's alter ego) that the phrase has kabbalistic significance. I assume they mean gematria, the practice of assigning numerical values to individual letters and summing the totals for various words and phrases. Several experiments along these lines have yielded no fruit. One parallel I do see is with Sternhamphorash, the Divided Name of God. There are three verses in the biblical Exodus which comprise 72 letters each. In the original Hebrew they appear directly above each other. When the verses are read vertically rather than horizontally, 72 words of three letters each are formed. The Kabbalists took these to be the names of 72 different angels, or aspects of God. One version of the list appears in Knorr von Rosenroth's Kabbalah Denudata (12). Phil's two-word cryptid appears in the same form, the word KING printed directly above the word FELIX. Whether or not this comparison is valid, the kabbalistic preoccupation with special words and phrases cannot be denied. I think in the case of KING FELIX it is the presence of the phrase that has meaning, rather than any possible permutation. Note that it is at this point in VALIS that Sophia reads from the Sopher Yetzirah, which for me cements the connection. There are also several unacknowledged references to the Kabbalah in Phil's later work. Just a year or so before his death, Phil told interviewer Gregg Rickman repeatedly that he identified himself with Elijah (13). He said he heard a "still, small voice" that was Yahweh. He said he saw the Ancient of Days, and was shown the Tetragrammaton. While these are all standard Judaic references, the fact that the voice Phil heard was feminine can only be understood in a kabbalistic sense; he called it the Spirit of God, but the proper name for the Divine Presence is Shekhina. Curiously, it seems to be only after the destruction of the Temple that the Shekhina is given female attributes - during the period leading up to the written formulation of the Kabbalah.

While Phil was under the influence of Elijah, he "healed" his son Christopher by correctly pointing out his undiagnosed hernia. This information was given him by the Voice. In the Bible it's recorded how Elijah healed the widow's son, which is exactly how Masons refer to Hiram Abiff (14). In his Historical Illuminatus Chronicles, Robert Anton Wilson hints that this secretly refers to the Messiah himself, with which the dead and resurrected initiate is identified (15). Note that Mani was also called the Son of the Widow by his fol-

lowers (16). Elijah is the one who comes before the Messiah, just like John the Baptist presaged Jesus. Phil gave Christopher a secret name, and I can't help but wonder how great his aspirations for the boy really were. Though most of Phil's extraordinary visions were never incorporated into his published work, they are recorded in interviews and biographies and deserve our attention. For instance, the Ancient of Days is another name for the Throne of Judgement seen by Daniel in a vision of God. Ezekiel's vision of the fiery chariot gave rise to a whole school known as Merkabah mysticism ("Merkabah" being the Hebrew for "chariot"). Another name for the Divine Chariot is the Throne of Glory. The so-called Riders of the Chariot are Jewish mystics who seek ecstatic communion with God in dreams and trances states. By ascending to the heavens they attempt to view God on his Throne of Glory, the Divine Chariot. Phil's vision of the Ancient of Days is only mentioned in passing, but from the reference it certainly seems to refer to a Judaic/mystical tradition, possibly a kabbalistic one. One wishes Rickman would have pursued the topic a little further. When Phil told Rickman about seeing Yahweh, he described him as clothed in sixteen suits. This may refer to the sixteen permutations of the ineffable name transliterated YHWH. These four letters may be arranged sixteen different ways, each of which is considered to be a name (title) of God. The ten sephiroth were often referred to by the Kabbalists as garments which must be successively removed as one approaches God in ecstasy. That is, they protect the merely mortal from the Divine.

According to Lawrence Sutin, Phil recorded another kabbalistic vision in his Exegesis (17). Years after the original VALIS experiences, Phil was sitting up late, musing over everything and smoking a joint. He probably fell asleep, because he says he saw the Ark of the Covenant. When he challenged God to show himself, the Mercy Seat opened and Phil saw the eye-in-the-triangle inside. Apparently Phil was quite frightened, but he never said why. The eye-in-the-triangle is a masonic symbol, and a cursory study of Freemasonry will show a clear kabbalistic influence. This symbol represents the all-seeing eye of god. Where it originated - and what other meanings it has - is another matter altogether, beyond the scope of the present work. Suffice it to say the all-seeing eye is at least as old as Egypt.

As a young boy Phil saw his double, an older version of himself who came from the future. He experienced this in a semi-waking state, probably akin to the type of nightmare known as the "Old hag". As an adult, Phil experienced the whole thing

from the other perspective in a dream. He stood before his childhood self, watching him lie in bed afraid but unable to communicate with him. He also had recurring dreams in which he saw his double holding up obscure texts for his dreaming self to read. Both the idea of seeing one's double and of reading unknown texts in dreams come right out of the Kabbalah. Kabbalists used dream incubation techniques to induce the appearance of astral texts; the reading of which may yield kabbalistic secrets. The astral double corresponds to Adam Kadmon, the primordial man, whom St. Paul equated with the second coming of Christ (18). Mani saw him too, but I intend to treat the Manichean elements in Phil's life in a separate article. Phil's doppelganger, or guardian angel, was mute, which brings to mind the stories of the Golem. Although most Jewish folktales treat the Golem as a physical creature akin to the alchemical Homunculus, I have reason to believe it exists on the astral plane as well.

The impetus for Phil's mystical VALIS experiences in February and March of 1974 was the severe pain he was suffering as a result of having an impacted wisdom tooth removed. Phil called his oral surgeon, who promptly phoned in a prescription for some Darvon to a local pharmacy. When the delivery girl arrived, Phil took one look at her and became mesmerized by the golden fish dangling between her breasts. He found himself transported back to first-century Rome, and thus it all began.

In Freudian terms, the tooth can be a symbol of libido (not necessarily sexual). Dreaming of the loss of a tooth, for example, can represent a fear that one may lose one's standing in some way - physically or emotionally - or be a warning from the subconscious that this is threatening to happen. Note that one of Palmer Eldritch's three stigmata was his artificial teeth (19). Phil's impacted wisdom tooth was like his latent gnosis, awaiting the

proper stimulus to trigger his anamnesis.

The Hebrew for "tooth" is shin, which is also the name of the twenty-first and penultimate letter of the Hebrew alphabet. (The reader familiar with Phil's novel THE PENULTIMATE TRUTH (20) may do well to ponder the connection.) The English equivalent to shin is "s" or "sh". Perhaps because of its trident shape (literally, (three-toothed) and sibilant pronunciation, the Kabbalists associated this letter with the element fire. Compare Phil's trident dream at the end of VALIS, after Fat departs again for the Greek islands. A special relationship between shin and the Holy Spirit exists; the numerical value of both the letter taken by itself and the Hebrew phrase RUACH ALHIM ("the Spirit of God", usually translated "Elohim") is 300. The Spirit is often represented as a flame, one example being the tongues of fire that came to rest on the apostles' heads on that first Pentecost. Many spirits and other air elementals have been associated with fire as well. The Spirit of God has often been identified with the Divine presence, the Shekhina of the Kabbalah (also the Sabbath). Later Christian Kabbalists (namely, Pico) and the Theosophists attempted to justify their doctrines by showing that the union of God as Yahweh/Jehovah (YHWH) and the Holy Spirit (Sh) was Jesus (YHSHWH). The four letters of the ineffable name represent the four natural elements of the ancients, while the fifth element - spirit - fills out the fifth point of the pentagram, a symbol of man. The triple-pronged shin was thus taken to be a representation of the Trinity. YHSHWH is usually translated "Yeheshuah", of which the English form is "Joshua". "Jesus" comes from ESOUS, the Greek version of the name. This formula seems especially valid if one considers the esoteric doctrine of the Holy Spirit as the feminine counterpart of God. Certain Kabbalists have maintained the Hebrew RUACH is of the feminine gender. In some gnostic systems the consort of God is Sophia, Phil's Holy Wisdom.

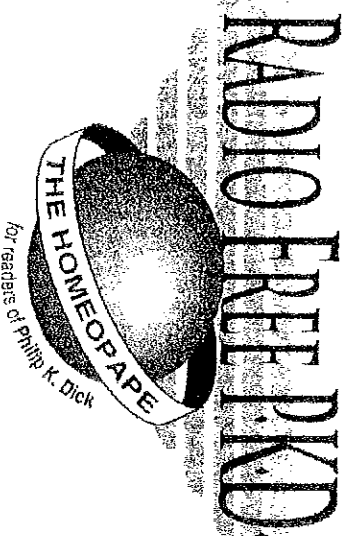
I think the above is sufficient to demonstrate a clear kabbalistic influence on Phil's life and consequently, his later writing. This influence is as strong as the (Valentinian) gnostic influence already noted within the novels themselves, as well as in Kriney's article. Besides the direct references to Mainonides and the Sopher Yetzirah there are several unacknowledged references. Many more remained unpublished during Phil's lifetime, hidden away in the Exegesis and interview material, remaining to be discovered - like the hidden Paraclete in the Nag Hammadi library (21) - by interested researchers. I'm sure I've missed several of the

PHIL DICK

more obscure references. Whether Phil actually knew the Kabbalah well enough to draw on its terms to frame his experiences is moot; it is certain that he drew upon kabbalistic archetypes whether he realized it or not.

SOURCES

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16. PKD and Role-

Playing

by Jonathan Tweet

Role-playing is a hobby closely tied to science fiction and fantasy. In a role-playing game, the players invent and portray characters in a fictitious world. All the action goes on in the players' heads, with the rules designed to determine what happens when these fictitious characters come into conflict. If your character is a knight in shining armor, the rules tell everyone whether he is strong enough to defeat a giant, tough enough to withstand a dragon's fiery breath, comely enough to win the smile from a damsel, and so on.

My latest role-playing game, *Over the Edge*, is set not in a realm of romantic fantasy but in a world of modern paranoia and surreal danger. Writers such as William S. Burroughs and Philip K. Dick are major influences of mine. I see two ways in which Dick influenced *Over the Edge* because I see two ways in which I enjoy his work.

The first influence is the weird imagination gone wild. The weird fringes, the slips through time or across dimensions, the heroic and bizarre characters, the profusion of twists and weird plot elements, the strange science, the threatening government, and more. Dick seems more determined to present an engaging, surprising, and heady story than to follow a logical series of events or to explain to detail the background of the worlds that he creates. The explanations that the characters hear or invent for their predicaments are never certain, and sometimes they are outright lies. What's really going on in UBIK? Who are the protagonist's friends in SCANNER? Who invented the drug JL-180 in NOW WAIT FOR LAST YEAR and what does it really do? In some novels, the characters find out by the end of the story; in others they don't.

Inspired by this profusion and confusion, I designed the nightmarish urban setting in *Over the Edge* with the same freedom from the need to explain. Some strange details in the game are left completely without any explanation. For other details, the rulebook provides several possible explanations, several of which or none of which may be true, the result is a wide-open and weird background for the characters and plots of that players invent.

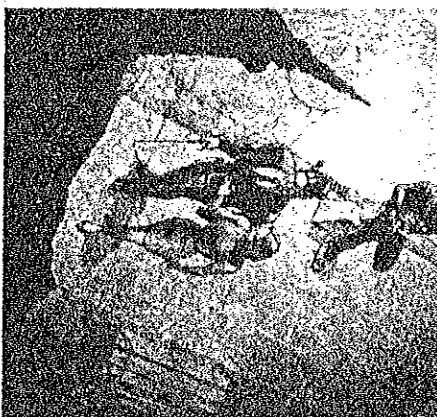
For a good look at the second reason I like Dick's work, read the first and last pages of NOW WAIT FOR LAST YEAR. Even though this book seems to be about an alien invasion, time travel, and a bizarre drug, the book begins and ends with one man's challenge to love his wife. The fate of humanity is a backdrop to this man's decision to commit himself to the woman he loves whether it makes sense or not. While the weird drugs and bizarre characters grab me, it's underlying sense of human dignity, of the importance of human relationships, that keeps me reading Dick's work.

So along with the mutagenic centipedes, the mind-altering chemicals, and the freak show characters in *Over the Edge*, I took pains to include a more personal and human element. Issues of family, duty, and ethics run alongside the surreal shocks and dark humor.

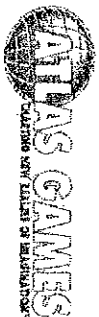
Even though *Over the Edge* is not a game about Philip K. Dick's worlds, the admiration I have for his work is obvious in its design. I hope that, by playing the game, roleplayers will get a chance to

PSYCHOSURREAL ROLEPLAYING

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by Jonathan Tweet



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get some of the thrills and satisfaction I've gotten from Dick's books, and the opportunity to get involved in the creative process themselves.

Over the Edge is available for \$24.50 (including postage & handling) from Atlas Games, P.O. Box 406, Northfield, MN 55057.

17. For Trade:

Paul Rydeen has the following PKD titles available for trade he specifies that he will trade for other PKD materials, old Lovecraft books, or anything else that catches his eye. "No sales please. I worked too long hunting these down to accept mere money for them". Here they are:

(1) TRANSMIGRATION OF TIMOTHY ARCHER - 1st ed., Timescape HC, ex-library

Philip K. Dick

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Chris carries a wide variety of PKD paperbacks and hard covers, many at discounted prices, as well as many other SF/horror/fantasy new and out of print books. Free catalogs issued.

DreamHaven Books & Comics
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John Hudak
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John has a wide selection of collectable PKD materiel, including many choice first editions.

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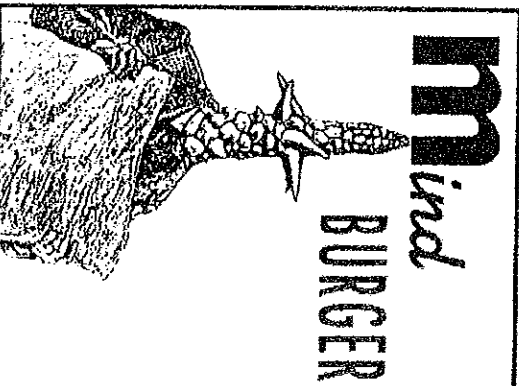
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19. An Obituary: The Rev. Dr. X

by Dave Hyde

Few people knew The Rev. Dr. X personally and of those few most of them were pissed at him. You see The Rev. Dr. X (from the quacks of John Parsons of Kokomo, Indiana - though he would deny it) was the most self-righteous sonofabitch you're ever likely to meet. And you might meet him anywhere: on the streets of New York or Washington D.C. panhandling enough to keep him in drugs and booze for a day before going out and doing it again. Or you'd run into him at one of the Rainbow gatherings, crashing the Sacred Peyote Tent at 2 in the morning, tripping on a strip of blotter and demanding instant enlightenment for his friends. Or in the face of the authorities, telling them to Go Get Fucked.

At Home you might find him yavving about A SCANNER DARKLY and the genius of Philip K. Dick while at the same time bitching about a trifle you'd lost 3 years ago and which he knows the damned dog ate coz she threw it up all over him when he passed out that one time. Jeesh Johnny! How many times we gotta tell you? Or chatting quietly with his mother.

But, really in any situation The Rev. Dr. X was at home as he was always the center of attention. I mean, Ehs could walk in the room and there's Johnny-on-the-spot, "Hey King! where'd you get that suit? I can see you didn't get it off the rack at K-Mart," and wiggling his eyebrows. Crouche-wise, at the cloakroom. Many a time I've seen him do this sort of thing and I'd about bust a gut laughing at the reactions he got.

Incidents. That's all one remembers when someone's gone. I can't encompass The Rev. Dr. X, you had to know the guy. He was active in politics, both locally and nationally, giving money, heart, time and passionate support to many worthwhile causes: Free Leonard Peltier! Dump the pump! White House out of Peace Park! Reagan out of office! Save them big fat funny whales! Free Dope Now! (that last being the most important)

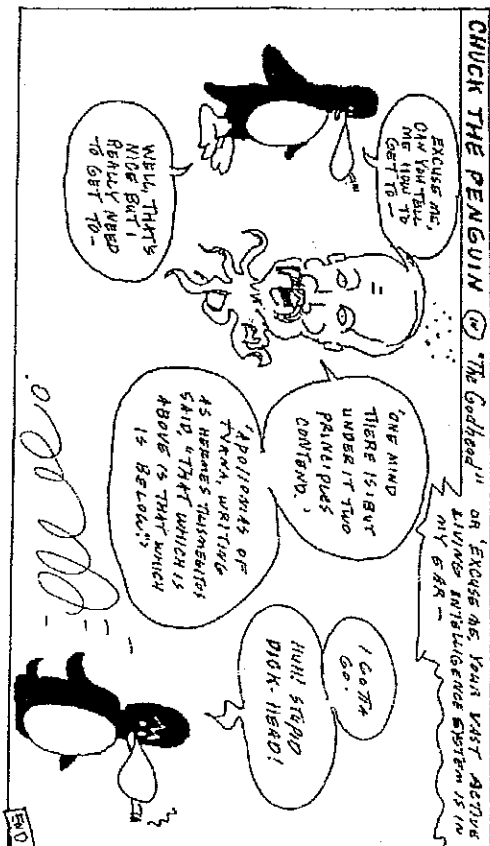
And for the fans of Philip K. Dick, we've lost one of our own. The last two works of fiction the Rev was reading were SOLAR LOTTERY and THE EYE IN THE SKY - his interest renewed by discussion in the pages of FDO. He founded Gaymesdean Slime Mold with Beth Mountingchild and I back in 1984 and was our creative director and head salesman till the day he died.

That day was August 22, 1994 in his home in Kokomo which he shared with his Mom. He suffered another seizure of which he'd had many since the emergency brain surgery following the bludgeoning he received outside a liquor store in Georgetown, D.C. in 1987. Temporal lobe epilepsy. The Rev. Dr. X had it from that day and it killed him 7 years later of a heart attack brought on by the seizure.

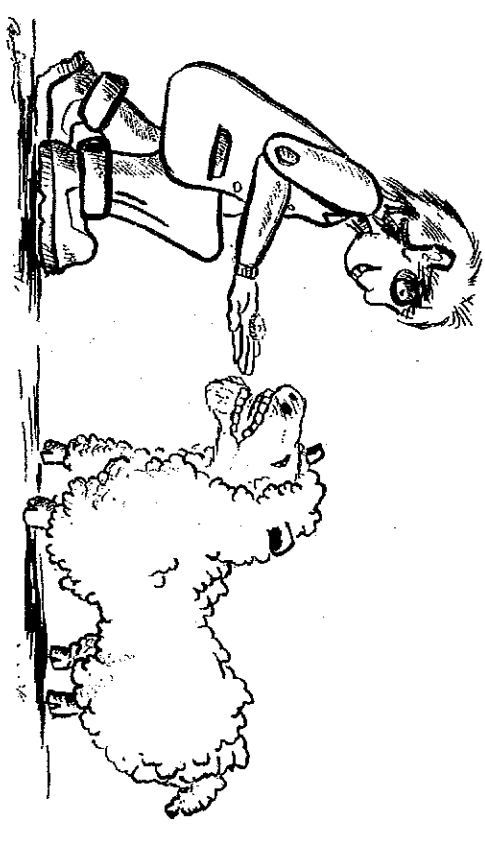
Dead at 37. Murdered in slow motion. Survived by a loving mother, father, sisters, nieces, nephews, uncles, aunts, cousins, friends, and a crippled slime mold. Survived by everybody. Here follows in Newspaper obit form a list of Rev. Dr. X's associations:

THE REV. DR. X: Bastard of the Mystic Farts; Founder and Pastor of The First Church of Pretentious Overemotionalism and Pre-Fabricated Consciousness, Kokomo, Indiana; Member, The Philip K. Dick Society; Founding Member and Director, Gaymesdean Slime Mold Brods; Rainbow Brother; Deadhead; Dickhead; Regional Director, Free Leonard Peltier Campaign; Greenpeace streetwalker; The Nature Conservancy; Whitestone of the Upper Kispoko Band of the Shawnee; Kokomo Against Pollution; Kent May 4 Center, Kent, Ohio; White house Anti-Nuclear Vigil, Wash DC; Card-carrying member of the ACLU; Political activist par excellence; Poet and Metaphysician; Video Star; Beatiemantic and closest Yoko basher; Friend to the dumb and downtrodden and thorn in the paw of the Authorities. The Rev. Dr. X, brother and friend.

GSM is preparing a collection of what we can find of Rev. Dr. X's surviving works. Anyone interested in this project, please write to us and we'll send you something when we get it all together.



Alternate Reality 1: The android takes extra good care of its calcium-framed, chipless sheep.
Alternate Reality 2: The sheep takes real good care of its first android.



For all those interested, this issue of FDO was laid out on a DX2 66 running DOS 6.22 and Windows for Workgroups. Pagemaker 5.0 was used exclusively for all design work. All images were scanned in using a Microtek scanner connected to a Macintosh Quadra 950. The images were then "refined" on a Macintosh Iliac using Adobe Photoshop 2.5, and then dumped onto a disk where they were in turn loaded onto the DX2 66. All pages were printed on a Hewlett Packard Deskjet 540 at 300dpi resolution. Also, the cover art as well as the Indian elephant on page 8 and the manatee on page 12 were found in a book of copyright free animal images.

~ Scott Pohlentz