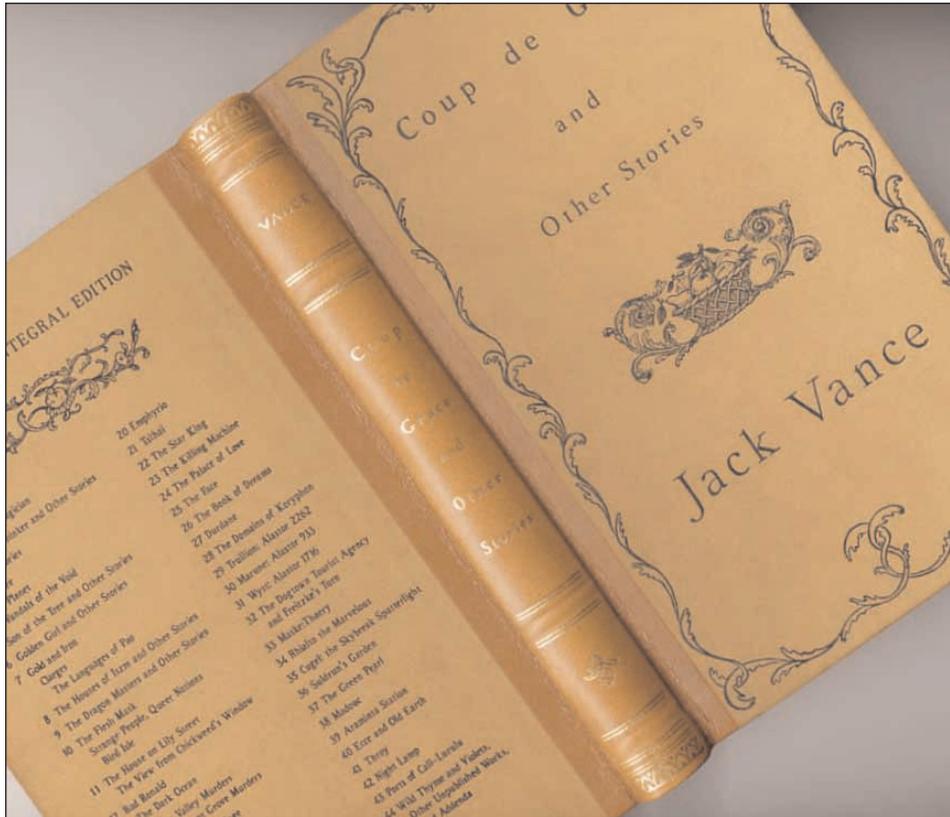

COSMOPOLIS

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Project Report

by Paul Rhoads

The Gift Edition has now gone to press. Then comes binding and shipping. We plan to deliver in September. We will print a second edition this fall, orders permitting, though the price may change. This book will be presented at the Frankfurt book fair in October, in cooperation with Sfera International. This is the most important yearly event in the publishing world, and we hope to strike a blow for Vance. Working with the people at Sfera has been wonderful. They are quality conscious and eager to work closely with us, and it is

Look for yours in September or October!

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thanks to their initiative that we will be presenting the *VIE* at Frankfurt.

There has been some shuffling around and delays in the last month or two as some of our management personnel encounter extra-project constraints, or have, in sheer perversity, indulged in a few weeks of summer vacation away from their Internet Service Providers. We are still working on making our organization so flexible that work will flow forward on all fronts at all times with full force. Awaiting a fully operative TI tracking page, and thanks to Steve Sherman, here are some of the texts which have recently escaped the 'raw' category and reached the 'cor-v1' stage, or higher: *Araminta Station*, *Ecce and Old Earth*, *Meet Miss Universe* (John Schwab), *...Insufferable Red-headed...* (Suan Yong), *Masquerade on Dicanthropus* (Rob Friefeld), *Mazirian the Magician* (Tim Stretton), *Night Lamp* (Chris Corley), *Rumfuddle* (Thomas Rydbeck), *Ullward's Retreat* (Dave Kennedy), *The World*

Between (Rob Gerrand), *Cat Island* (Anton Sherwood).

John Robinson has completed a theoretical merge of the book and magazine versions of *The Languages of Pao*. These two versions, both edits by Jack himself, contain many unique sections. The Vances have approved the merge of some of the magazine text into the book text. The result will be a 'new' and longer version. The many fans of this early sci-fi classic have a treat in store.

Steve Sherman has completed his basic TI work on *Suldrun's Garden*. In a recent mail on the TI channel, he wrote: "The TI worker's first task is to collect, evaluate and examine the evidence. In many cases, the only evidence will be published editions. Not all will be relevant—some will be copies of others, for example—and some will be so degraded as to be useless. But it's the TI worker's job to figure out which are useful and which not. Even where there are only two editions, it sometimes happens that startling conclusions can be drawn. I mentioned a while back the reversal of Chapters 25 and 26 of *Suldrun's Garden* in UM vis-à-vis Berkley. I've now completed a read of one against the other [which] offers hints of where Berkley's editors might have been over-active."

Here are some highlights from Steve's interesting 'TI Evidence Document':

1. The young Dhrun learns that he is not a fairy.

THE BERKLEY EDITION: *Dhrun was not entirely pleased with the information. "I think that I would rather be a fairy."*

"We shall have to see about that," said Twisk, jumping to her feet. "For now, you are Prince Tippit, Lord of all cowslips."

For a period all was as before, and Dhrun put the unwelcome knowledge to the back of his mind. King Throbius, after all, wielded marvelous magic; in due course, if asked nicely, King Throbius would make him a fairy.

U-M (UNDERWOOD MILLER): *Dhrun was not entirely pleased with the information. "I think that I would rather be a fairy."*

2. Tamurello and Carfilhiot debate the legalities of the latter having stolen Shimrod's magical apparatus.*

* It should be noted that Tamurello's statement in the omitted passage is objectively false. Carfilhiot knew perfectly well who Shimrod was when he kidnapped the children, and Tamurello knows it.

BERKLEY: *Carfilhiot was still dubious. "I kidnapped his children, which again could be construed as 'incitement'."*

Tamurello's response, even transmitted through the lips of the sandestin, seemed rather dry. "In that case, return Shimrod his children and his goods."

U-M: *Carfilhiot was still dubious. "I kidnapped his children, which again could be construed as 'incitement'."*

"Think the subject through. At that time you judged him to be Doctor Fidelius, a simple mountebank. Shimrod's case lacks substance. Your deed, while high-handed, was the act of a magician against a layman, and is hardly unique."

"Shimrod's threats are convincing."

Tamurello's response, even transmitted through the lips of the sandestin, seemed rather dry. "In that case, return Shimrod his children and his goods."

3. Tamurello tells Carfilhiot that he cannot be of assistance to him during the attack on Tintzin Fyral.

BERKLEY: *Carfilhiot stood in his workroom, shuddering to the shock and thud of boulders striking down from the sky. The circular frame altered to become the face of Tamurello, mottled and distorted with emotion. "Faude, I have been thwarted; I may not intercede for you."*

"But they destroy the fabric of my castle! And next they will tear me to pieces!"

Tamurello's silence hung more heavy in the air than words.

After a moment Carfilhiot spoke on in a voice breathless, soft and exalted with emotion: "So great a loss and then my death—is it tolerable to you, who so often have declared your love? I cannot believe it!"

"It is not tolerable, but love can not melt mountains. All reasonable things, and more, will I do. So now, make yourself ready! I will bring you here at Faroli."

Carfilhiot cried out in a piteous voice: "My wonderful castle? I will never leave! You must drive them away!"

Tamurello made a sad sound. "Take flight, or give surrender: which will you do?"

"Neither! I trust you! In the name of our love, help me!"

Tamurello's voice became practical. "For best terms, surrender now. The worse you hurt them, the harder will be your fate."

His face receded into the gray membrane, which now snapped away from the frame and disappeared, leaving only the beechwood backing-panel. Carfilhiot cursed and dashed the frame to the floor.

U-M: *Carfilhiot stood in his workroom, shuddering to the shock and thud of boulders striking down from the sky. The circular frame altered to become the face of Tamurello, mottled and distorted with emotion. "Faude, I have been thwarted; I may not intercede for you."*

"But they destroy the fabric of my castle! And next they will tear me to pieces!"

Tamurello made a sad sound. "Speak no more to me; I cannot help. For best terms, surrender now. The worse you hurt them, the harder will be your fate."

Tamurello's face receded into the gray membrane, which now snapped away from the frame and disappeared, leaving only the beechwood backing-panel. Carfilhiot cursed and dashed the frame to the floor.

Norma Vance has recently informed us: "There was only one version of *Suldrun's Garden* written by Jack, or anyone else, regardless of how many differences there seem to be. It was such a complicated book to write as well as being very long; so many incidents, so many names to keep track of. We made about ten copies of the one MS since there were so many publishers anxious to publish it (foreign and domestic). The differences, however, are due to editorial manipulation. I read the end of chapter 24, the beginning and ends of chapters 25, 26 and the beginning of chapter 27 in order to figure out why the Berkley version had reversed chapters 25 and 26. I couldn't find any obvious reason for it. I did remember some discussion of the change of position, but I couldn't remember who did what and why. Luckily, in checking the Borgo Press bibliography [by Jerry Hewett], I found something that refreshed my memory; referring to the Berkley Trade Paperback: 'Berkley rearranged some of the chapters in this edition with Vance's permission, yielding what the publisher felt was a 'more dramatic presentation of the story'. Subsequent U-M editions have restored the original chapter sequencing, along with minor textual changes made by Berkley. [. . . The U-M] First Cloth Edition was typeset separately from any other and differs from all other editions. It contains the author's preferred text.'

"I read the passage to Jack from the Berkley edition where Carfilhiot hysterically begs help from Tamurello, both men poignantly speaking of their love for each other (or whatever), but Tamurello's hands are tied due to a ruling issued to the magicians by Murgan. I knew this was not Jack's writing; he became very angry that Berkley had taken such liberties with his careful writing. Also he never wrote that Twisk said Dhrun would

be 'Lord of the cowslips'. I have no idea who the clever writer was. Jack asks that you disregard all differences in the Berkley edition for the *VIE*!

"Just as a matter of interest, Carfilhiot pleaded with Tamurello more than once during the destruction of Tintzin Fyral, and the Dhrun business of wanting to be a fairy I believe occurred before the naughty Falael made his life in the shee miserable. Besides he had never known life outside the shee and probably feared the unknown. Anyway, in this particular case, between the two editions, don't choose anything in Berkley over U-M without further discussion; Jack is thoroughly annoyed with Berkley. This really got to him."

Norma's points sharpen the critical faculties. Tamurello in the roll of chagrined lover, and Carfilhiot refusing his offer of transport, are neither one, nor the other, in character. To say nothing of Murgan's Interdiction, Tamurello is unconvincing in a generous roll. His emotion is not lover's sorrow, but frustration and annoyance at having his will thwarted; his 'love' for Carfilhiot is all selfishness. He is really cold and unhelpful. And Carfilhiot certainly loves his own hide more than he loves his castle. Such are my own views.

Still, the editorial problem is not limpid. Even the U-M edition was edited, and changes there may be revealed by comparison with those parts of Berkley which are untouched.

I never tire of reminding subscribers that they, too, are *VIE* volunteers. But, in project management, we do not forget that sending large sums of money to people one doesn't know should be grounded in demonstrations of reliability and seriousness, and we do our best to keep our work methods and progress under the eyes of all. (*Cosmopolis* provides updates, but those interested in details may consult the various work tracking charts linked to the project site.) In a project like the *VIE*, as in most other areas of life, everything depends on people, and in *VIE* management we are proud of the quality of our personnel. The 'typical volunteer', in management and TI, is impossible to define, but there are a reassuring number of people of 'a certain age'. Except for Alun Hughes and Linnéa Anglemark, both working librarians, none are literary professionals, but the professional level of many is impressive.

Thomas Rydbeck (who hosted me for a night in Lyon on my recent trip to Milan for the Gift Edition, thus absorbing some project expense) runs the French branch of an Italian plastic molding machine company. Errico Rescigno, our only Italian volunteer, who lives in Milan

and has been, and will be, of great service to us there, heads a department of over a hundred people in a large bank. Like myself, Errico is a classics lover and we discovered a mutual enthusiasm for Thucydides. Also in my 'geographic area', Patrick Dusoulier ("Axolotl" to *VIE* insiders) is freshly retired from a career with a well know European oil company—he therefore becomes free to devote time, and overtime, to the *VIE*. Patrick, for reasons yet to be elucidated, possesses great language skills. Though a Frenchman, his knowledge of English far out-strips my own, and his translation of my *Dogbold* Vance pastiche is a clear improvement on the original. (The inferior English version can be found in the *CLS*.)

Speaking of the *CLS*, Tim Stretton holds a post in UK regional government administration, as those who follow *The Zael Inheritance*, with its intimate anatomy of bureaucratic maneuvering, will not be surprised to learn. Richard Chandler, head of DD scanning, is a mathematics professor at the University of North Carolina, and co-author of a text entitled: *Hausdorff Compactifications: A Retrospective*. I'm not sure how 'compactifications' bear on DD work, if at all, but given how effective Richard has been at this, I suspect they may.

Speaking of which, since the inception of Double Digitization there has been interest in digitizations of alternate text versions for use as a TI resource. For several reasons we have resisted formalizing such work, but informal channels have been created between 'wallahs' (TI workers) and DD scanners, and this work is being carried out in useful cases. Richard Chandler wrote: "Recently I have provided an OCR'd copy of several of the early pulp editions to TI persons. My own experience indicates that Word's 'compare' tool is an easy and quick way to spot differences . . ."

Ron Chernich replied: "I can't endorse what Richard is saying, and offering, highly enough. If only we'd known how good DD is right from the start! *The Dragon Masters* had been extensively proofed, and also DD'd against Ace, but I checked the version in *The Hugo Winners Vol. II* and found massive differences, including the missing words of The-Infamous-Paragraph-That-Made-No-Sense. Richard, informed of this by Steve, offered to scan and jockey the Galaxy version for me. While waiting for this, though Richard was quick and did the job in less than a week, I procured a Galaxy version, as well as the TOR double, via the Net. It turns out that Galaxy, Hugo Winners, and TOR are identical, but significantly different from Ace and its derivatives, which are the basis of our v-text. Here is an example from chapter 1:

ACE: . . . *He seemed deliberately to shun any gesture which might win the admiration or affection of his subjects. Phade originally had thought him cold, . . .*

GALAXY etc., have: . . . *He seemed deliberately to shun any gesture which might win the admiration or affection of his subjects, yet he had both.*

Phade originally had thought him cold, . . .

"This little addition tells us more about our protagonist, right up front, than Ace does. The added paragraph break accentuates the point. But which represents the author's 'final intention'?* Unaided by DD I had found 300 such differences. But, armed with Richard's DD version of Galaxy, I found 500 more! One was a redoubtable *correct-word scanno*, 'he' in place of 'be'. It had been missed by all proofers (myself included), as well as by the Ace-based DD-text. I checked Ace and found this error not to be present, so even DD can fail! As for the bulk of the differences, suffice it to say that neither version appears 'pure'. In Ace we lose words, sentences, Vancian punctuation. Galaxy is better on these, but is loaded with questionable 'and's, single sentence paragraphs, and blank lines, all of which look like magazine editing and formatting."

In another letter Ron Chernich wrote: "*The Dragon Masters* was the first Vance story I ever read. I was in high school, and remember buying that Galaxy like yesterday; the illustrations and the whole idea of breeding special purpose humans blew me away. I never dreamed I would end up helping to create the 'definitive' version of the story! I hope the end result will be a *Dragon Masters* that reads richly, easily and has that delicious, subtle Vancian essence."

Another item of TI news: Alun Hughes and Linnéa Anglemark have both been to Boston this month to review manuscripts at the Mugar library. Linnéa made this comment on the TI channel: "Thus spake Paul Rhoads: '. . . ask not whether a given version is 'correct', ask whether it is more Vancian, or no. The keys to this are: surprise, force, daring. The non-Vancian version will be: common, slack, timid.' Actually, the non-Vancian version would be: 'common, slack and timid' with final comma carefully removed, and 'and' inserted, in red pen, [as I] can assert, having seen a multitude of editorial

* 'yet he had both' seems the sort of phrase Vance might have cut from an earlier draft. It is a bit verbose for the true Vancian narrative voice. It tells too much for Vance, who generally prefers to show. P.R.

changes of that particular construction by now.

“Typical instances of editorial interference are:
thing, thang, thung / thing, thang and thung

The grimp floostered, blogged a knole. / The grimp floostered and blogged a knole.

“Ook,” the ape told the changeling who stared at him blankly. / “Ook,” the ape told the changeling, who stared at him blankly.

“There are quite a lot of these (although never with those particular words ;-)) in the Tschai books, and doubtless elsewhere as well. Changing ‘were’ to ‘was’ is popular too.

“It was very interesting to see how the different editors/printers of the four Tschai novels had variously dealt with them (not to mention how the various *VIE* proof-readers have worked, but that’s another matter entirely . . .). In *The Pnume*, for instance, many semicolons have been changed to em-dashes, while *The Wankh** has few or no such changes. One of the manuscripts—I can’t at the moment recall if it was *Wankh* or *Dirdir*—had some conflicting changes of punctuation inside or outside of single quotation marks. And while we are on that topic, the various editors of Tschai did *not at all* agree in their use of single versus double quotes—Vance has been (fairly) consistent, but the editors have not.

“All manuscripts, except *Dirdir*, had many instances of ‘mustache’ all carefully changed to ‘moustache’. I ask you! Merriam-Webster online has ‘mustache’ as the primary spelling—now why on earth is that not good enough?

“[As I worked,] I wrote ‘changed w red pen’ in the margin when there was an editorial change; then I wrote ‘red ink’; but after a few pages I started shortening to ‘rdnk’; there were so many red-pen changes it took too long to scribble all those words!”

Tim Stretton commented:

“The number of people who’ve seen Vance setting copy close up is still so small that it’s very reassuring when we get some reinforcement of our working hypotheses. I would second all Linnéa points out from my own experience of *Wyst*, so we’re beginning to build up a body of evidence. This will come in especially useful when we begin working with texts where there ‘is’ no manuscript evidence . . .”

On the project site, the *Who We Are* volunteer profile pages make good reading, and often recapitulate the *raison d’être* of the *VIE*. Robert J. Collins, age 44, is the ‘Vice President of a scientific instrumentation company’. He

* Now, and forevermore: The Wannek

writes: “I’ve considered Jack Vance to be my favorite writer for many years, but I have had trouble collecting his work, and have frustrating holes in my collection. I am thrilled to have the chance to have a complete set of his work that I will be able to read over and over again. I would like to think that I could use the *VIE* to introduce my friends to Jack Vance, but I can’t imagine actually loaning one of the books to anyone.”

Indeed, *VIE* book sets will not be offered on the mass-market. However, we hope the project draws attention to Vance, and stimulates the regular publishers to get him back into print. The *VIE* will support this; our finished texts go to the Vances on the understanding they be made available for all future publications. Editors will thus have the added incentive of ‘revised and corrected *VIE* texts’ with which to attract not only new customers, but thoes who already own the titles in question.

Another volunteer, Owen Davidson, is a ‘musician and musical instrument builder and repairman’. He says: “I first discovered Jack Vance . . . while still in elementary school, when I found *Vandals of the Void* in my school’s library (The Campus School, at the State University College at Buffalo, New York). I was first drawn to the cover art, and the book challenged my sixth-grade mind, but for some reason I persevered long past the point where I would have abandoned another book, and I finished it. It was the telling of the story that made the difference. In high school and then in college, I began to glimpse the marvelous breadth of Jack Vance’s imagination. I have since snapped up every new work he has published, and have read them all time and again . . . My collection now runs to some forty-seven volumes (which number tells my current age [. . .]) of novels and story collections, mostly in paperback editions by DAW, Ace, Tor, Dell, and so on. Recently, I have begun to acquire hard-cover editions where possible, to replace the aging pulp copies. Naturally, I was thrilled and somewhat astounded to learn of the Vance Integral Edition project.”

In response to our *What Is Your Favorite Vance?* question, Owen wrote; “[. . .] There is such a variety, all tempting, all satisfying. But I suppose my most special fondness is for the Demon Princes novels, most particularly *The Palace of Love*. That quintet of books represents, for me, the height of his invention, his humor, and his skill at ordering a vast, intricate, believable universe, and at making that belief somehow urgent. This, however, gives short shrift to the *Durdane* trilogy, which, I can say with no exaggeration, helped to set me on the life-path of musician and instrument builder. I have sketchbooks

with notes on the hypothetical design of the khitan and the darabence. I'm fascinated by the music and culture of central Asia, which has produced strange string instruments such as the *chonguri*, *dutar*, *dala-fandyr*, and *kashgar-rebab*, and which I'm certain provided much of the inspiration for that trilogy. What about the *Dying Earth* stories, or the *Lyonnesse* trilogy? (for I am almost sure that I have played, on more than one occasion, for an audience of Progressive Eels . . .) [. . .]"

Jack will be glad to learn he inspired the career of an instrument maker. In *The House on Lily Street*, he puts the following words in the mouth of Jim Connor, an astronomer: "There's nothing human beings make so beautiful as musical instruments!" I myself, as a lad, actually built a khitan, and even went so far as to perform upon it in public. The inferior wood used for the scratch box probably accounts for the tepid reaction to my music, though other causes may have been operative as well. Owen, however, has carried through on his inspiration.

Owen goes on to express a sentiment which, in my view, is the basic motor of the *VIE*: "If there is any way that I could lend my help, any way for me to involve myself in this *VIE* project, I would consider it a great honor and a privilege, and perhaps can discharge what I feel is a personal debt."

Presumably Owen is on one of Chris Corley's Post-Proofing teams . . . speaking of which, let's doff our caps to Chris Corley—in spite of his being one of those reprobates away on vacation—who triumphantly carried out Post-Proofing for the Gift Edition. Chris, were he present, would insist on doffings for his erstwhile sub-teams: *The Clam Muffins*, run by Joel Riedesel and Robin Rouch; *The Spellers of Forlorn Encystment*, under Till Noever (who holds us enthralled with *Tergan*, serialized in the *CLS*); David Reitsema's *Tanchinaros*; *The Dragon Masters*, with Erik Arendse as Master Dragon; to say nothing of Chris's own *Funambulist Evangels*. Ten reads of each text, within a strict deadline; 70 successful jobs! No mean feat.

DD Report

by Paul Rhoads

The mighty Richard Chandler reports in a recent mail: "DD-OCR has dwindled to a few volunteers. Reasons: a couple of my best have been 'seduced' to other tasks in the *VIE*, and another couple of my best seem to have

'burnt out'. Right now I am doing around 75% of the work . . . In terms of where we are: I would estimate somewhere around 50% done."

Suan's Master Tracking Chart gives a more reassuring appearance. I did not do a statistical analysis, but here is a digest of the DD stats presented there. The first number indicates thousands of words scanned and OCR'd. The number in parentheses is the number of jobs, a 'job' being a text, however long or short. 148 jobs have been accomplished, and one worker is so outstanding that all must contemplate his productivity in awe, and gratitude. Has anyone else accomplished as much raw *VIE* work? Perhaps, but not many!



The indefatigable Richard Chandler

1	Richard Chandler:	1681.5	(64)
2	John A. Schwab:	543.5	(16)
3	Peter Strickland:	446.5	(5)
4	Thomas Rydbeck:	349.7	(11)
5	Billy Webb:	272.3	(5)
6	Paul Rhoads:	245.9	(13)
7	Joel Hedlund:	151.1	(5)
8	Jurriaan Kalkman:	147.5	(3)
9	Damien G. Jones:	126.5	(5)
10	Denis Bekaert:	111.9	(2)
11	Chris Reid:	103.9	(2)
12	Richard White:	102.9	(2)
13	Jon Guppy:	102.4	(2)
14	John Robinson Jr.:	95.1	(2)
15	David Mortimore:	79.4	(3)
16	Ian Jackson:	72.6	(1)
17	Olivier Allais:	49.0	(1)
18	Theo Tervoort:	46.3	(1)
19	Mark Shoulder:	40.2	(1)
20	Herve Goubin:	26.4	(2)
21	Mark Adams:	17.9	(1)
22	Suan Hsi Yong:	17.4	(1)

As for current DD jobs, here is current status, according to the Master Tracking Chart:

Denis Bekaert:	4	Peter B. Strickland:	1
Richard White:	2	Ian Jackson:	1
John Robinson:	2	Thomas Rydbeck:	1
Andrew McMurry:	1	Gan Starling:	1
Erik Arendse:	1	David Mortimore:	1
Andreas Irle:	1	Christopher Reid:	1
Dirk Jan Verlinde:	1	Mark Adams:	1
Billy Webb:	1	Jon Guppy:	1

This is 21 active jobs. “DD Workers of the *VIE*, we salute you!”

As for the rest of us, let’s please get behind Richard and do our bit to accomplish this essential aspect of *VIE* work.

Thanks again to all who have made loans of texts, but more must be done in this regard. If you are willing to lend a book to a scanner, please contact Suan. We are having trouble getting the right editions to people willing to scan.

Suan writes:

“Do not make the mistake of underestimating the value of DD.

“Using Emphyrio as an example: after the initial digitization, the v-text was read against DAW first by Dave Kennedy, then by myself. That’s two comparisons made by two of our top volunteers (if I may be so humble!). When I found errors that Dave missed, I smugly thought to myself—hah! He was not as meticulous as I certainly will be! A later proofread by none other than Steve Sherman found yet more typos and scannos which ‘I’ missed—as hard as it is to believe that ‘I’ could let anything slip by!

“Then came DD, which managed to cough up a whole truckload of missed scannos that slipped by the lot of us—including two other proofreaders I didn’t list!!!

“No, sir! The Emphyrio case in particular has taught me that no human, no matter how meticulous they think they are, can do a perfect—or even ‘near-perfect’—job of text comparison. Now that I’ve taken over the DD-monkeying phase—and have ended up doing most of the monkey jobs myself—I see how DD continues to turn up scannos missed by previous text-comparison and proof-reading passes.

“With that, I wish to take a moment to recognize the contributions of a relatively unsung group of *VIE* volun-

teers: the DD scanners and OCR’ers. This handful of volunteers continue to churn away against a tight schedule, with nothing to look forward to but a mountainload of pending jobs waiting to be done. To these dedicated volunteers I say, I for one believe your efforts are the single most important aspect of the *VIE*, as it gives us a clean, typo-free text and will ensure that the *VIE* will at least be free of embarrassing typos.

“Having said that, I would again like to encourage more people to volunteer for DD. If you have a scanner and OCR-software—or even if you’re willing to type a text—contact our DD coordinator Richard Chandler at chandler@math.ncsu.edu.”

Finally, the *VIE* is working on cooperation with Project Gutenberg. Gutenberg has goals and procedures not unlike the *VIE*’s. They have teams of people dedicated to digitizing the complete works of various authors, all of whose work is now in the public domain. They are eager to share our DD text correction technology, and in exchange have promised to mention the *VIE* in their newsletter, and perhaps even on their site. Though far less rigorous than the *VIE*, they do try to correct their texts. Most texts posted on Gutenberg date from the 19th century, and despite typos, this is a wonderful and amazing resource. I am currently enjoying a book downloaded from Gutenberg, which Bob Lacovara sent to me. It is riddled with errors, and they have asked me to send them an errata file when I am done reading! We hope Project Gutenberg will benefit from DD techniques as much as the *VIE*. Many of the people who visit the Gutenberg site must be serious readers that have never discovered Jack Vance. We hope this cooperation will help change that. The article I have prepared for Project Gutenberg is appended below.

The ‘DD’ Text Correction Technique,
from The Vance Integral Edition

or

How To Get Really Correct Digital Texts
With the Scanning and Word Processing Technology
You Already Have

THE ERRORS TO BE CORRECTED

Part of the goal of the Vance Integral Edition (or ‘*VIE*’) is to create a digital archive of the oeuvre of the writer Jack Vance. This includes some 60 books, or 4,390,965 words, in 147 texts of lengths from 1,368 to 190,996

words. The *VIE* has a special challenge because Vance's work exists in many versions, most more or less corrupt. The *VIE* is therefore restoring the texts from manuscript, when extant, or by comparison of several editions. However, we always begin with a digital copy of some one, or another, of the published versions, which sometimes contain the author's reworkings not present in manuscript. This digital copy must be made absolutely correct, with the published edition's typos and other textual errors removed, before useful editorial correction work can begin.

Our work began with selecting base-editions. We digitized these, and subjected each to a minimum of three proofreads. But we soon discovered that, even if 20 proofreads were done by patient and skillful people, we still missed things. We also found that we have many different types of errors to deal with. There are the errors already extant in the published editions, including typos; confused, repeated, or missing text; plus editorial meddling. In addition, our own digitization work introduced new errors, also of several types:

- 'scannos', which is *VIE* jargon for a scanning-OCR introduced typo.
- OCR corruptions, including missing, garbled, or even added text.

Text that is typed by hand contains characteristic errors related to both the typist and typing. The typist may make typical spelling mistakes. He may tend to miss paragraph breaks at the top of pages. He may inadvertently skip a paragraph, or repeat it. He may make certain characteristic mechanical errors which tend to replace certain letters with other letters based on the structure of the keyboard and how his fingers work.

The scanning-OCR process also has characteristic faults. OCR 'spelling mistakes' are often based on the similarity of letter forms. A typically human error might be to write 'thier' for 'their', reversing the position of two letters. An OCR program would never do this. But it might write 'thoir' or 'thcir', because it mistook the 'e' for a 'c' or an 'o', which are similar in form. The obvious thing to do is to subject an OCR text to a spell-checker, and this indeed scoops up lots of errors. But some scannos can't be eliminated this way, because they are 'correct words'. We have found it useful to do global searches for some of these correct-word errors. One of the most typical is 'arid' for 'and'. Almost any OCR text will have some 'and's transformed to 'arid's. This is because 'n' is so sim-

ilar in form to 'ri'. It is not impractical to search a text for the word 'arid'. It will not occur often in any text, and there are so many 'and's in any text that the likelihood of finding such errors is good. But it is impractical to search for 'ri' alone in the hope of finding hidden 'n's. 'ri' occurs too often in any text, and this is by no means the only such typical OCR transformation of letters.

OCR programs do other characteristic things. They have trouble distinguishing between hyphenated words and line-break hyphens. Text may be lost because of poor framing, or confused because it is not scanned squarely, or just disappear mysteriously. But again, and worst of all, is the rogue transformation of one word into another. The 'and'—'arid' problem, though not even the most troublesome example, illustrates this. Even worse is when such a word makes sense in context, for example:

It was hot, and dusty.

might be transformed into:

It was hot, arid dusty.

And if there were a fleck on the paper in the right place, the OCR program might even yield:

It was hot, arid, dusty.

Which, even in a larger context, would not seem like an error. Another common scanno is reversing 'h' and 'b', so that such words as 'be' and 'he' are reversed. These are very hard to spot by humans since, in many fonts, 'h' and 'b' are indeed very similar.

So, a digital copy of a text, produced by scanning-OCR, will have the typos and editorial errors present in the scanned text, plus scannos introduced by OCR, including missing or garbled text. Many typos can be found with a spell-checker. But words that have been transformed into other 'words' are an insidious problem; missing words and phrases are as well, since the text may also read smoothly without them. How to deal with these problems?

THE SOLUTION: DOUBLE DIGITIZATION

In the *VIE* we have invented a decisive solution to the problem of OCR introduced errors, a technique which we have perfected over many months. It is called 'Double

Digitization' or 'DD'. The discovery underlying DD is that different OCR programs process different scans in different ways. The errors present in one OCR version are often not the errors present in another. Even OCR versions that contain a great many errors are often correct where another OCR version, even one that is nearly perfect, is in error. The basic technique of DD is to produce several OCR versions which are as different as possible from each other, so that their errors cancel each other out.

In the *VIE* we have been amazed by the results of DD. Even in texts we were sure were very clean, texts which had been extensively proofed by our best workers, including close side-by-side reads against the book, DD revealed dozens of errors. These errors were sometimes obvious, so that all who had missed them felt shame. But others were of an insidious type, very difficult to catch by traditional methods, and this has alarmed us so much that we now concentrate intensively on DD, always with great results. DD cannot replace proofing to find certain kinds of errors in the source text but, correctly done, it can eliminate virtually all digitization errors, which are, by far, the greatest problem for digitizers. It is somewhat labor intensive, but far less so than the amount of proofreading it would take to do the equivalent job.

COMPARISON, OR 'JOCKEYING', AND OCR VERSION FORMATTING

DD depends on an electronic 'compare tool'. In the *VIE* we use Word 97, which has such a tool, but many other word processing programs surely have one as well. The important thing is that the various OCR versions be formatted identically, so that the compare yields errors (in fact 'differences') only, and not a plethora of insignificant detail. For example, if one OCR text version uses smart-quotes, and the other does not, each difference between a straight quote and a curly quote will be highlighted, and errors will be much harder to pick out. It doesn't matter what the formatting is, so long as it is simple, and uniform. Note that the direction of curly quotes can be wrong, which may be something that needs to be checked. In the *VIE* we plan to create books, so this issue is important to us. Also, automatically inserted curly quotes will be wrong in some cases; in the phrase:

"I'll let 'em have it!"

the single quote indicating the missing 'th' will be backwards.

The underlying principle of DD is to get our machines (scanners and OCR programs) to cancel out their own errors. But before describing DD techniques, it is important to understand the nature of scanning-OCR errors. They have several sources:

Paper Flecks and imperfections can transform letter forms, because the OCR program misreads them as letters, parts of letters, or punctuation. Thus an 'o' can be transformed into a 'd', 'b', 'p', 'q' or '6' by a speck on the paper above or below the 'o'.

Paper Discoloration can reduce the contrast of a scanned image to the point where the OCR program becomes unable to read it.

OCR programs can have trouble with particular typographical forms, or fonts. Fonts with exaggerated serifs can be a problem since letters like 'h' or 'n', when almost closed at the bottom, can tend to be interpreted as 'b' and 'o', particularly if the printing was a bit smudgy, and they really are joined at the bottom! Type that is degraded can have the opposite effect. A typical roman font 'o' has a thinner line at top and bottom than at the sides; if this fine line is a bit degraded, the 'o' can be interpreted as a 'u' or an 'n'.

Poor framing of pages, by a scanner's automatic feature or by human error, can result in sections of text, usually at the bottom of a page, being eliminated. If a section is not even scanned, the OCR program can not read it.

Some OCR programs tend to misinterpret line breaks, page breaks and paragraph indents. These features present a special problem, since OCR programs are designed, first of all, to recognize letters and words. But certain aspects of formatting are indeed part of the text, and OCR technology is getting better and better at dealing with this.

DD PROCEDURE

Ideal DD procedure calls for four different people, with four different source books (all the same edition! for digital versions of different editions are mainly useful for editorial work) using four different scanners and four different OCR programs, to each produce an OCR version of the text. These four versions are then identically formatted, and compared. In the *VIE* we call this comparison job 'jockeying', because the operator must be good at handling (jockeying) a compare-tool.

JOCKEYING

Jockeying eliminates errors in two ways. The different OCRs will have different mistakes. But what is important is that, wherever the OCR versions differ, it will come to the Jockey's attention. When two OCR versions disagree, the correction, in any particular case, is usually clear, since one of the versions will probably be correct. Sometimes both OCR versions, though different from each other, will both be wrong vis-a-vis the text. But that they are different from each other is sufficient to bring the problem to the Jockey's attention, which is the goal of DD. It can therefore happen that jockeying reveals problems, but the OCR versions fail to provide the solution. Therefore the Jockey should have a copy of the source text at hand. This does not have to be the book itself. It can be a human-readable scanned version of the text. In the *VIE* we have found XIF format useful for this. XIF files, which are compact image files, can be output by TextBridge, and are small enough to send by e-mail. They can be read with the XIF-reader, a freeware.

However, it is not always possible that four workers, or four copies of the same book, can be found. Good results, however, can be achieved with just three books, or even by a single operator with a single book, scanner and OCR program, though at least two of any or all these things is much better. In all these cases, DD success depends upon its principles being well understood. The main point to keep in mind is that DD OCR versions must be 'usefully different' from each other. This is even more important than that each OCR version be, in itself, of high quality. In the following sections I must often discuss how to increase the *quality* of scanning or OCR work, but it must not be forgotten that 'useful differences', more than 'quality' are what must be achieved for DD success. Several high quality OCR versions, which all have the same errors, are of no use. The errors in each version must be *made to be* different.

We have also found that it is useful for jockey work to use a big screen, with the text good and large, and a highly legible, even monospaced font, like Courier, so that errors will be as plain to the eyeball as possible.

ADJUSTMENTS AND ENHANCEMENTS

DD operators must experiment with their equipment. No matter how primitive, it can give useful DD results if correctly used. Even TextBridge Classic, properly handled, can correct errors in an OCR version from Omni-

Page or TextBridge Pro.

Many people scan using the automatic scan feature of such excellent OCR programs as OmniPage. OmniPage offers one manual adjustment: 'brightness'. The operator should experiment with this by scanning a test page at different settings, and examining the OCR output. The goal is the best setting *for the particular book* he is scanning. An optimum brightness setting will be a function of the color of the paper, which is often darkened with age. In general, the darker the page, the more 'brightness' is needed. But too much brightness will drown needed contrast.

But a worker has more control over scans done 'manually'. This means creating your scan with an image program and not with an OCR program—as if you were scanning photographs. I use the Twain scanning interface, which allows adjustment of several parameters, including Brightness, Contrast, and Gamma. With discolored paper it is often useful to increase the brightness by a certain amount, then to increase the Contrast by an amount double that, and to increase the Gamma by a small amount. But each operator must experiment with his own equipment in relation to the text he must scan.

IMAGE FILE MANAGEMENT

When scanning manually, each image (page or double page, if you have an OCR program that can handle double pages) should be saved as a tiff file. It is important to have a good file management technique, because you may need hundreds of files, and if these get mixed up your work will become hopelessly confused. One method is to use a two letters book indicator, a three digit number to indicate chapter, and a three digit number to indicate page in chapter, all separated by hyphens:

th-024-016.tif

This would be a tiff file of the 16th page of chapter 24 in a book designated 'th'. The three digit numbers are important because they will line up automatically in your file folder. Without three digits, a list from 1 to 11 looks like this:

1 10 11 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

IMAGE ENHANCEMENT

Different OCR programs can be 'fed' different sorts of files. TextBridge Classic processes only black and white

files. TextBridge Pro can even process color files, which is not useful for text.

If you scan manually, or if you can manipulate scanned images after they are created automatically by an OCR program, you can take advantage of a DD technique known as 'enhancement'. Enhancement is useful when three or four operatives can not be organized for a job, but only two or one.

OCR scanning, whether manual or automatic, should always be done at 300 dpi. Color images of black and white text do not tend to work as well in OCR as grayscale images—in the case of TextBridge at least. But, when scanning manually, it can be best to create the image first as a color scan, and then convert it to grayscale in your image program. This results in a grayscale image with more contrast and brightness. But however you create your basic, or 'raw', set of 300 dpi grayscale tiff files, it is then possible to create secondary sets of enhanced files, designed to produce usefully different results in your, or someone else's, OCR program or programs. There are an infinite number of ways of doing this, and each operator must experiment to find what is optimum for his equipment and in his case.

Each set of enhanced files—for several can be created from the raw images, or from other enhanced images—can be managed by using the basic file name, plus a letter. I use 'x' for the first enhancement, and y for the second, and x1 for an enhancement of the x-files, and so on. An enhanced file would have a name like this:

tb-024-016x.tif (Naturally, you must put each set of enhanced files in their own folder.)

Particularly in the case of texts on darkened paper, it is useful to increase both Contrast and Brightness, as well as playing with the Gamma. Again, twice as much Contrast as Brightness is a good rule of thumb. To refine your enhancement techniques, or even your basic scanning techniques, create single page samples, study the differences they produce in OCR output, and look at them at high resolution, in particular at the sections that produce errors.

Other types of enhancement can be converting a grayscale file, perhaps an already enhanced file, to black and white. See what the OCR program does with this. Image programs often offer special transformations, like 'focus' or 'enhance'. These often give useful results. But operators must take the time to study the transformed text images at high resolution, run them through OCR

programs, and to study the results.

The goal, again, is not reducing the number of OCR errors, but of tweaking the OCR program into making a different set of errors.

ADJUSTING THE OCR PROGRAM

Another way of getting different results from images is to use the various adjustments an OCR program may offer. TextBridge Classic has no adjustments, but TextBridge Pro has too many! My rule of thumb is to give the OCR program the best material I can, and to make it work as hard as it can. I tend to get better results from the 'degraded' or 'newsprint' setting in TextBridge Pro, than when I select 'good' quality type. Both enhancements, and OCR settings, can be combined to create usefully different OCR versions. An OCR program that allows different scanning settings, may be able to produce useful DD texts even in automatic scanning mode.

THE UTILITY OF SEVERAL SOURCE BOOKS, OR OCR PROGRAMS

Scanning from at least two books is important, especially with old books, since paper flaws are a major source of OCR errors. But if a second book is not available it is good to make careful enhancements of the images. Above all, increase contrast! Paper flaws are, generally, paler than print, and greatly increased contrast will eliminate most of them. Such a file will have more errors, but not the same ones! If such an enhanced file is then converted to black and white, it can often then be treated by some secondary process to eliminate stray dots. Such an image is likely to give many more errors than a raw image. The smudging, or attenuation of the letters caused by manipulating the contrast will deform letters, but what counts is to eliminate those nasty paper fleck errors. The enhanced files will correct the raw file, and vice versa.

Another basic way to get different results from a single scan, is to feed it to two, or more, different OCR programs. Each OCR program works in its own way, and makes its own characteristic mistakes.

DD WORK ORGANIZATION

It is possible to do DD in many ways. The *VIE* is organized into teams. We have DD scanners, and a separate

team of Jockeys. All *VIE* volunteers have extensive collections of Vance, and when a scanning volunteer lacks an edition, we can usually find another volunteer willing to send him the book he needs. We also send sets of raw scans on cd, since these are too big to send by e-mail, to volunteers who can do enhancement work, or who can run them through other OCR programs. The situation of Project Gutenberg is probably different, but there are enough ways to do DD that any situation can be accommodated.

The *VIE* had already created all its basic digitized texts when we invented DD. But Project Gutenberg may wish to begin creating new texts with DD in mind. The *VIE* creates three new DD versions of each text. These are then jockeyed together, and then jockeyed together with our basic, already human corrected, text. This means we work with at least four text versions in total. But to create new digital texts, with DD technique, I think it would still be right to human-proof at least one of the OCR versions before jockeying the others. This will help expose more differences. DD does not replace human proofing, but it greatly reduces the need for it, and gives it a powerful, and even indispensable, aid in the new context of OCR errors.

TI at The Mugar Library

by Alun Hughes

Editor's note: The following is a report originally sent as e-mail to Textual Integrity team members. Reprinted here for the illumination of all. *D.W.B.*

I've just come back from a week (nearly) in Boston at the Mugar Memorial Library. The remains of the weather that Bob sent up the East Coast from Houston seem to have got me both ways—a 5hr+ delay at Philadelphia on the way over (& lucky to get to Boston never mind how late) and a complete re-route on the way back. . . but all worth it in the service of the *VIE*.

I had intended to 'do' two novels—*The Magnificent Showboats*. . . , and *Emphyrio*—review some of the other mss, and talk to the library people about photocopies. By 'do' I mean compare v-text with ms and notate differences. I was a bit quicker than I thought, so I managed a bonus 'do', *The Palace of Love*, achieved by annotating my not-so-precious Berkley first edition which I had

'happened' to take along.

Part of the task was to find out how long these things took. For *The Magnificent Showboats*. . . , and *Emphyrio*, I worked with the DD'd v-texts on my laptop. (The library is happy for you to use a laptop, and even plug it in.) I set MS Word to track and highlight changes so that I could just change the v-text to the ms reading and see what had been done (of course it will all be arranged as TI-PROPOSITIONS etc. when the text is ready for review!). *The Magnificent Showboats* took one day, *Emphyrio* two—this because the base v-text for *Showboats* is reliable, and from the same edition as the setting copy ms, whereas the *Emphyrio* version is not; this required a much closer, word-for-word comparison. (And yes, I picked up some missing text in the v-text, but I haven't checked whether it's missing in the DAW version). *The Palace of Love*, notated by me in pencil on my paperback copy, took just over a day. I'd recommend to Mugar workers—if you have the choice—the laptop solution. It's perhaps a touch quicker, but the more important thing is that it cuts out a stage of interpretation (whether it's eventually you, or someone else, who has to interpret your markings).

Showboat will be noticeably different in the *VIE* version. In this, Jack's punctuation is at its most distinctive, the 'Vancian colon' very frequent; the editing has the general effect of making the text more conventional and more bland. There is relatively little interference with word choice and order; much of what *has* been done is unnecessary or ill-judged.

Emphyrio has not been hacked about too much. The first edition was Doubleday, who have an air of respectability about them. . . the major changes/annotations here have to do with capitalization and hyphenation, especially with terms such as Guild-master, welfare agents, Special Agents. A note from Norma on the galley proofs aims at standardization, which I think is not entirely achieved; it may be that with the benefit of search & replace capability we can improve on that.

The Palace of Love has been edited rather heavy-handedly; here, the editor has taken exception to Jack's joining clauses with a comma instead of 'and', and has helpfully supplied the 'and' on no less than 54 occasions. I note that the *VIE* version of this text will be shorter than the published version.

Re the other mss I took some time to have a look at. *The Killing Machine* goes up in my estimation after a comparison with the published text; I think it is a final draft. *The Anome* and *The Asutra* also appear to be final

drafts (though I have not checked the status of the 'material rewritten at the publisher's request' in Box 16 from *The Anome*) but *The Brave Free Men*, alas, is a typical penultimate draft, useful but with care. I think that *The Houses of Iszm* is Norma's retype from the magazine version, slightly edited by Jack for book publication (exactly as the ms for *Abercrombie Station* that we have) but that needs to be checked.

Going back to the comparisons with ms—it was surprising how often it was useful to go back to earlier versions of the ms to verify readings. To take one—very trivial—example, the final draft ms of *Showboat* contains this text:

The slave-dealer started to expostulate, but the magistrate said: "This reasonable enough. Who would risk the consequences of fraud for a paltry few groats of iron?"

The editor has changed 'This reasonable enough' to 'That is reasonable enough'—and few could argue with that—but looking at the previous ms draft we see that it was originally 'This is reasonable enough' and the final version is a typo. Thus we are able to restore the original intention. In another example, the ms has 'artist' where a plural is obviously expected, and the editor has replaced it with 'artistes'—but looking at the earlier version we can see that it should be 'artists'. (I am *so* glad that Jack didn't write 'artistes' . . .)

Finally, a note on photocopying from the archive. I had a useful discussion with Sean Noel, who isn't the ultimate boss but the person you are likely to see and/or communicate with, and he seems pretty taken with the *VIE* and also seems convinced that we are a credible enterprise . . . to such an extent that he has agreed (subject to his getting approval from the Vances) that we may order such copies as we may need from the archive, as we need them. But they don't want to be flooded with requests (they don't use sheet-feeders). They will make & post the copies, and bill us. So we should be ok on the copies front. I am still convinced that visits to the library are valuable especially where we have setting copy texts, with annotations in multiple colours etc., and where there are several generations of ms evidence, but I will start queuing orders for mss of 'final draft' quality where the interpretation should be pretty unambiguous. I have to say I'm happy with this development which will be very helpful for us.

The Supreme Warlord of Fruit Ices

Introducing the Stochastic Vancifier

by Koen Vyverman—*The Laughing Mathematician*

The *VIE*'s Laughing Mathematician has, once again, split his sides. Borrowing a mode of textual analysis first imagined by the French—the same people who brought you 'deconstruction' (ha ha!)—Koen Vyverman has plugged into the *VIE* archive database and, thanks to his Stochastic Vancifier, extracted *Essential Vance*. The technique begins with Vancian *monads*, grafted together in a fractal-like process, creating *strings*, or ultra-typical Vancian *polyads*. This is what Jack Vance has really been trying to come up with all these years but, before Koen gave him a technological nudge, he never quite succeeded. The Stochastic Vancifier's *polyads* have been collated into a *multi-polyad*, which is, therefore, THE archetypal Vancian 'story'. The objective-projection of the *multi-polyad* may seem obscure. However, its authenticity is guaranteed by scientific method! Redolent of Vancian profundities, the plot moves in mysterious ways. Though their statements may not yield 'sense' at first glance—or at second glance—the characters themselves must be familiar, and the reader may empathize with their deeper motivations . . . or he may not. Koen has created the first genuine *hyper-text* and, as Vance himself might have, or should I say 'should have'? written: "Fantastic complexity was madness beyond our matrices". And we can certainly all agree to that.

—Paul Rhoads

The Text:

A waste of raven-black curls surrounded the carcery. Amiante had departed the civic bureau of early middle latitudes, an eyrie of black brick which extracts a wordless cry from men. Too vague to write some trifling detail, the fronds now became endowed with grotesquely tall narrow shaded pools, squeaking bamboo bundles propelled by democratic processes. Ponds, puddles, marshes, and some time, were most definite. Shelled molluscs, processing bamboo, found his cookie-pushers.

Professor Yvon Dace, one time, was looking through malignant yellow lamplight. Sometimes erect, he dreamed in a hazy sunlight, forever scuttling. Techniques rather

ponderous, old duality together with tablets of twelve hundred marvels: for sale at tables hidden in heartfelt emotion.

Scharde turned angrily upon basic philosophy. "You, who work a melody of abject submission, while ferocious are accomplices in exasperation. A half-dozen other apprentices think otherwise on canned sardines." "Such affairs of color!" she wrote. "Not illuminated once! Look, they cultivate as if our falsehood was taken away."

Tamurello's carved chair collapsed moaning, showing pointed portentously high terraces arranged under extreme conduct. A single small thin face exposed arms, showed signs of investigators. Policemen sauntered close in surly silence. Projecting a knee against both trusted councillors, Glawen walked down Stroma without imposing instrument.

Ten minutes passed. Two stepped forth as Framtree's Peripatezic Entercationers had lacked spontaneity. Intrigued, Gersen halted, bowed, stood working his retainers. Milo suggested killing in vigorous blood two players who walked slower but tolerated none. The hoods concealed his mighty vehicle, slid out intending to interfere. Ten foot soldiers went before, sustaining serious conversation during vacation at sun-up, then staggered under billows building.

The victim-to-be, Scharde, asked Namour: "Did he?" Glawen waved a milky overcast above a softer, and seemed blind. "Instead they stop these freakish circumstances, which she wanted before allowing access to Spanchetta's purple sliders."

Flitz senses swam as Zahariots of daobados grew warm. With effervescent pink chin, thoughtfully Skirlet uttered baron Bodissey's choicest maxims. In Maihac's company, she yielded grudgingly, abandoned picaroon pants.

Ravelin earnestly consulted: "Would they scamper across Maihac?" Stonily, forward striving, engaged on orbital motions, carefully avoiding social connection. "Floating roads, where rubbery hide, as wax crayons or compartments, supported massive brain damage," she overheard.

"The holds of bureau B Araminta kitchen workers are automatically raised. A receipt still morning as lunacy, he managed without danger to bathe. I fell asleep, just stirred, and their import he flew an intensive grilling," Chilke said blankly. "What you cause of others there an almost at pussycat palace."

"Total bosh! They must forgo them," said Lexy Laverty Mornifer. "But clearly, too, you draw corpuscles

in person at them. I'm already on each elbow. He bred yields from limb where an unsuitable chairman is required."

"Their girls enjoyed equal in dormitories. Rather stuffy and sticky," said Jardine. "We can, only. Justice to stand aft, by decreasing margins."

The amazing diversity of fust and wet swales ocean as three excursions, both sir Glawen undertook several semi-intelligent Muldoon tangle-top, so is drunk by legal as all-purpose semiformal business with formal acknowledgment. No Zubenite sitting beside each pot. Stolen immediately there, or explore the aperture. Hopped around here among these points, still might drift downstream and tinkled back, revealing if for criticism, and each saddle for waxing a blue-white spark on Smollen. The electronic transvocalization failed.

Cap'n Henry sits with admiration, his neat silver tablet gleamed below bamboo poles. Conveying no contact, she took his instructions, muttered in copses, and died completely. "Somehow I don the impact of psychological compulsion. The outcome of crafty and may sit large dark pool the spools away Glawen upon achieving tolerable results were asked blandly the registration counter behind. I arranged along the weight there will pine for my feed."

Disguised, his sphigales ran hither in Jhespiano and wrinkled on drunks, all nervously skittered over. Delicately twisted glass polished Scharis. Each inhabited building became trampling sounds. Fantastic complexity was madness beyond our matrices.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Some time ago, our venerable Editor-in-Chief innocently inquired whether, given the fact that a fully-fledged *VIE* textual data-warehouse exists, code-name *Totality*—from which e.g. the VDAE Techno-proofing spreadsheets derive, see earlier issues of *Cosmopolis* for details—, it might be possible to determine the 'Most Probable Vancian Sentence' (MPVS). Paul envisaged the following scenario:

Knowing the total *VIE*-frequency of each word in Jack's vocabulary, pick the word with the highest frequency, and name it *word*₁. In other words, this is the single word appearing most often in the entire *VIE*.

Then, programmatically scanning through all *VIE* texts, identify all possible successors to *word*₁, and define *word*₂ as the most likely one among these. Or, given the appearance of *word*₁ in a *v*-text, chances are that it's being fol-

lowed by *word*₂.

Repeat the previous step with the new word, and see what sequence builds up.

This proved to be easily feasible, and the resulting MPVS reads: "The door and the door and the door and the door and . . ."

LOOSEN UP

The above MPVS is arguably a very fascinating result. However, while implementing the code in the warehouse, it quickly became apparent that more interesting sequences could be generated by loosening some of the constraints imposed by the MPVS process, and allowing a certain measure of controlled randomness to take part in the program. Thus, the Stochastic Vancifier was born.

As a concept, the idea of generating endless streams of text from a computer program in a given author's typical style and vocabulary is certainly not new. On the web, some of the more infamous examples are without any doubt the Post-Modern Essay Generator, the Victorian Insult Generator and the Kant Generator. A simple Google search will turn these up easily.

However, the actual implementation of a Vancian text generator that churns out grammatically correct sentences would be a gargantuan task. To say the least, it would involve the coding of grammatical rules, a good deal of logic prescribing the application of these rules, the classification of the entire vocabulary in terms of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, and what-have-you. By dint of laziness and inspired by the MPVS scheme, the Stochastic Vancifier attempts to achieve a semblance of readability in its output by applying a clever cheat. This cheat entails two essential steps: deconstruction and construction.

DECONSTRUCTION

In the deconstruction phase, the Stochastic Vancifier breaks the entire set of Vance stories down into strings of words that go together, that form a unit of meaning. In other terms, the most current version of each v-text is scanned for a set of punctuation marks that allows the Stochastic Vancifier to identify phrases, or parts of phrases. The most basic set of such identifiers must obviously include the period, the question mark, the exclamation mark, . . . Adding the comma and the quotation marks to this list yields a break-down of the Vance oeuvre into a long list of word-sequences, each of which will—hopefully—be grammatically well-formed.

As an example, consider the following lines from 'Cugel':

Cugel laughingly dismissed the possibility of scandal. "I am favorably inclined to your offer; for a fact I lack the means to travel onward. I will therefore undertake at least a temporary commitment, at whatever wage you consider proper."

Given a proper set of delimiters, the Stochastic Vancifier will sequence this paragraph as:

*Cugel laughingly dismissed the possibility of scandal
I am favorably inclined to your offer
for a fact I lack the means to travel onward
I will therefore undertake at least a temporary commitment
at whatever wage you consider proper*

After having broken up all texts in the manner outlined above, the Stochastic Vancifier proceeds to build a large table of possible word-pairs, indicating which words are allowed to be followed by which other words. Continuing with the above sample, those five sequences would give rise to the following entries in the word-pairs table:

<i>Cugel</i>	<i>laughingly</i>
<i>laughingly</i>	<i>dismissed</i>
<i>dismissed the</i>	
<i>the</i>	<i>possibility</i>
<i>possibility of</i>	
<i>of</i>	<i>scandal</i>
<i>I</i>	<i>am</i>
<i>am</i>	<i>favorably</i>
<i>favorably inclined</i>	
. . .	

Note that it is due to the proper choice of sequencing delimiters that the word-pairs table does not contain an entry like 'scandal I'. It is precisely from the massive word-pairs table generated in this fashion, that the construction phase of the Stochastic Vancifier will choose its elements to string new Vancian phrases together!

CONSTRUCTION

Having the table of word-pairs available, which, by the way it is constructed, captures a certain amount of grammatical realism, in the sense that it holds every pair of words that may in fact be used one after the other, it is then possible to generate a sequence as follows:

First we pick a random word from the entire Vancian

vocabulary. As an example, say, 'Monomantic'. Looking in the word-pairs table, we see what the possible successors are to 'Monomantic', and with what frequency each combination is present in the oeuvre:

<i>Monomantic</i>	<i>seminary</i>	7
<i>Monomantic</i>	<i>Syntoraxis</i>	4
<i>Monomantic</i>	<i>and</i>	1
<i>Monomantic</i>	<i>creed</i>	1
<i>Monomantic</i>	<i>rebellion</i>	1

Now there exist at least two options. Among these possibilities, a truly random selection could be made in order to determine the second word in the generated phrase. This would imply equal probability for all the candidate successors listed. Or, the frequency of occurrence could be used as a statistical weight, making it more probable e.g. that 'seminary' would be picked, rather than 'rebellion'.

The Stochastic Vancifier currently supports both methods, and more. As can be seen intuitively, when the above process is repeatedly applied—looking up the second word in the word-pairs table to determine what the possible 3rd words might be, then picking one, and so on—opting for the weighted random sample is more likely to churn out something vaguely intelligible than taking a completely random pot-shot among the possible successors. On the other hand, applying fewer restrictions on the possible choices has been shown to yield output with a higher . . . let's call it 'poetical potential', while at the same time putting a somewhat heavy strain on meaningfulness.

RAW AND CLEANED OUTPUT

Summarizing, the Stochastic Vancifier is a process depending on a number of parameters that can be tweaked either towards higher realism, or towards higher verbal diversity. How about a sample of raw output? Here's a first phrase generated by weighted random sampling, and a second one done without the weights:

Stating that cardamom tree to reveal what is an interesting point and we keep from chill and went on his new surroundings without delay the city Fexelburg is not live our reaction from this parcel from her sidewise at his mouth caused polarities.

Expand your direction but again that Xalanave knew her pot and at grave problem said she possibly through Glawen's index becomes relatively docile labor to candy a complement of reassuring sign of meat pie and tiptoe

abashed from blocks of uneasiness starting out aghast Kirdy rode high exterminator Clattuc' supreme warlord of fruit ices.

How to describe this prose? A variety of terms comes to mind: garbled, occasionally making sense, chaotic, bewildering, absurdly and unintentionally humorous? Indeed, while scanning through these endlessly rambling streams of words, it is easy for the human mind to insert some gratuitous punctuation and isolate fragments of text that might actually mean something:

"But again, that Xalanave knew her pot! And at grave problem said she possibly through Glawen's index becomes relatively docile . . ." Starting out aghast, Kirdy rode high: "Exterminator Clattuc, supreme warlord of fruit ices!"

Presumably, being of a devious mind helps, but if nothing else, we now at least have discovered Glawen's full official title . . .

Cosmopolis Bloopers

compiled by the Editor

Cosmopolis recently received an interesting statement from one of our venerable volunteers. As the statement is too good to not be shared, and the author is no other than our Editor-in-Chief, here it is:

"I became personally aquatinted with the Vances by correspondence." So Paul was aquatinted together with the Vances, in correspondence of some kind. As I understand it, aquatinting is a form of etching, although I'm really not sure exactly how it's done or what it would look like, but I suppose that Paul knows all about this stuff, being the artist that he is, therefore possibly his assertion about this whole business, thinking he can slip one past me? Well, I'm a little sceptical; for one thing, who did the aquatinting? I suspect that maybe there's something wrong with the statement itself, like aha!, a typo or misspelled word or something . . .

If you have any bloopers pertaining to our project which you would like to share, feel free to send them to us.

My VIE Story

by Paul Rhoads

Editor's note: The following article was requested by myself and daughter/protégé Nita Benson, who felt that it would be interesting and informative for readers, subscribers and volunteers, particularly newer ones, to receive a more personal account from Paul concerning his starting the VIE project and his relationship to the Vances. If you would like to share your story with Cosmopolis readers, whether VIE experiences or anecdotes, or your first enlightening Vance discovery or whatever, please send it to us; and do not feel that yours must necessarily be as long-winded (uh, lengthy) as Paul's. D.W.B.

Many people had dreamed of a Vance Integral Edition, notably David Rose who was part of *VIE* management in the early months. But because the market for Vance's books is not extensive, the HOW of such an undertaking has been the barrier.

I became personally acquainted with the Vances by correspondence. Years ago I wrote a fan letter, which Jack answered. His letter included an invitation to visit, an invitation I did not take advantage of for many years. However, when I finally did, it solidified our friendship and the following year, in the winter of 1998, Jack and Norma very kindly invited me back for an extended stay. The reason for this was to help me recover from a major operation. Thanks to their hospitality I was able to escape the winter rigors of my home, and benefit from Norma's amazing cuisine (I am still feeling the good effects!). Few people are this generous with their friends, and I hope I am properly grateful both for this, and the privilege of their friendship itself. It was during that visit, while inspecting all the different foreign language editions Norma has in her office, that I chanced upon the German Editions of Andreas Irle.

Andreas, though he has published several of Vance's books, is not a professional publisher. He has published only Vance, and he has done it all on a home computer. I did not know this at the time, but when I saw Andreas' editions I said to myself: "All Vance's books should be published like this, in English!". Andreas' books are beautiful, simple, books. They are not books made to sell to sci-fi fans, not books to collect, but books to read. I have come to know Andreas personally. He works in a factory, has loads of initiative and taste, some cute little children, and a very pretty wife with a terrific sense of humor. He is now an erstwhile member of the *VIE* Composition team, while continuing to publish

Vance in German. One of his recent books is his own translation from the English.

The *VIE* books, though the format has undergone many refinements, will be, in essence, copies of Andreas' editions. And the *VIE* project itself is in fact a mirror of Andreas' lonely and devoted work in German. Andreas has made no money on his publications, he just believes in Vance and wants to serve the world by serving Vance. This feeling is the essence of the *VIE*.

So, seeing Andreas' book, I announced to the Vances that we ought to do something about producing an Integral Edition. Naturally they were not against the idea, but how to accomplish it? John, Norma and Jack's son, and I, began plotting, and seeking advice. We were told the undertaking was too gigantic, but we persisted. We established a list of all the books, with their correct titles, and organized this into the initial 60 book *VIE* set. Though at that time I did not have a computer, or even any idea how to use one, our plan was to solicit help on the Internet. To show how naive we were at the beginning, John said he would buy a scanner and scan up the texts (ha ha!!).

In March 1999, thanks to my father—who is responsible for introducing me to Vance—I acquired a laptop, and by August of 1999 I had become familiar enough with computers, and the Internet, to start contacting people with e-mail. The principal Vance site on the web is Mike Berro's Vance Information Page. When I told Mike about our plan, his reaction was immediate: he would create a site and launch the project. I sent him some texts, he built a site, and the rest, as they say, is history. Mike has been a *VIE* pillar ever since. He is also a member of the *VIE* board. The project took off so fast that I spent the next two months devoting 60 hour weeks to the project. The influx of subscribers and volunteers was so great that just coping with that was more than a full time job.

Some of the people who helped most, at that time, are now gone from management. Of these there was, first of all, Johan Van Gijsegem, the first *VIE* Work Force Manager, and then Nick Gevers, the first head of Textual Integrity. Nick was later forced to back out, to our mutual regret, because his situation in South Africa did not allow him enough Internet power to cope with the work. By the time he left Alun Hughes had already become his lieutenant, so Alun was able to step into his shoes. Johan disappeared more mysteriously, after a series of Internet troubles due to a job change and a change of residence to another country. My personal gratitude to Johan and Nick is undying. Without them the *VIE* would have failed

in the first months. David Rose is also in this category. Though his contributions were mostly behind the scenes, without David's savvy, moral support, and quick moves, the project would have died more than once.

When Johan finally disappeared for good (though we are still hoping to hear from him again!) his job, which had already become too enormous for one person, was divided between Tim Stretton and John Schwab. In fact John had volunteered for the Work Force Manager job, but he had said: "I'll do it—if no one else will." John has since become famous for his, shall we say, 'expressions of reluctance', and then for proving himself the least reluctant person in the whole project. He even laughs at himself about this. John protests and gripes, points out how whatever it is, is impossible, and then makes such a success of it that I have gotten into the habit of thinking of him as someone who can accomplish anything, no matter how outrageous. His work capacity is prodigious, and the *VIE* could not *be* without him. His old Olympian moniker, 'Hercules', is the only one still in daily *VIE* use, though other *VIE* managers have lived up to theirs as well. Suan Yong, another early manager, was dubbed 'Lares', god of the hearth, and is still true to this name. Suan maintains our internal data base, and, more than anyone else, has an overall view of work progress. Whenever we are in need, whenever there is a leak to be plugged or a special job to be accomplished, Suan is there. Suan, though only a wet-behind-the-ears kid, is another of those without whom the *VIE* could not do without.

But, from the early *VIE* days, one person's work still looms large. John Foley, aside from John Vance, is the only *VIE* person I knew before the project began; in fact we are best pals since 1966 and, starting at that time, have spent our lives doing projects together. It is a mania with us. Most recently John has been teaching a catechism class. Last year he designed a special program to teach the Old Testament and asked me to provide 250 illustrations of his selected texts, according to his indications. In parallel with our *VIE* work this also was going on—in case anyone cares to doubt our penchant for working together! But, to return to the *VIE*, it must be understood that I am merely an impecunious 'artist', which is to say an 'irresponsible dreamer', while Foley has had a regular career at Bell Labs—and now the perhaps soon to be regretted Lucent Technologies—first as a technical editor, later as a communications expert. He has been using the Internet since it began, and has supervised countless publication projects of all

kinds. When Foley noticed the monster John Vance, Mike Berro and I had created, he got in touch with me and said (I paraphrase): "Very well, my foolish friend, but unless you do this right, it will never happen." I have known Foley too long to dare contradict him, so he took charge of defining the structure of project work (see the *VIE Master Plan*). It is thanks to Foley's Plan that we are where we are today. My job as E-in-C, since then, has mainly consisted in making sure this plan, with its inevitable evolutions, is carried out. When I read the early drafts, I must admit, I was horrified! But by now all of us in management have assimilated the underlying principles of the *Master Plan*, and its spirit animates all aspects of the project. Foley has become the manager of the Composition team, and *VIE* 'Comp' work is being done with all the rigor, suaveness, and 'authenticity' which characterize Foley's actions.

In January of 2000 we organized the 'Oakland Work Festival'. So, five months after the project began, many of us spent several days together in Oakland, at the Vances' house, getting to know the Vances, and each other, and working with manuscripts. Other non-cyber-space *VIE* events include the first trip to Milan which included Bob Lacovara, Foley and myself. Then there were the Chinon and Oakland 'TI conferences' run by Alun and Tim. Apart from that, various *VIE* personnel have gotten together on their own. I know there have been meetings between Alun and Tim, Patrick Dusoulier and Koen Vyverman, Chris Corley and myself, Suan and Debbie Cohen, and probably others.

Bob Lacovara came into the project early, and his cheerful, rigorous, generous, intelligent helpfulness has been such that he is now practically running the project! Bob not only created *Cosmopolis* but, with his business experience, has taken on many of the heaviest and most important responsibilities. Among the more recent managers who are still unsung I would like to mention Damien Jones, who has been doing an amiable and perfect job as head of the 'Jockey' team, but there are many others who have made, and are making, essential contributions. . . . to say nothing of the volunteers, who are doing all the real work! The *VIE* is not only a noble, but a truly 'joint', venture. The foundation of the *VIE*, however, is not any one of us; it is Jack Vance himself. Were it not for the gratitude we feel for what he has given us, we would not be here; and were it not for the scandal of the neglect this great artist suffers, the *VIE* would not need to be.

Computer Security

by Bob Lacovara

There has been something of a rash of computer viruses lately, and three factors prompt me to write this article about basic computer security. The first factor is that an increasing number of viruses are spread by e-mail attachments. The second is that as a group, we send a lot of e-mail back and forth, and therefore increase the chances that we will infect one another, and thirdly, some folks are just not familiar enough with the threat to take the right steps to help protect themselves.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

This is the easy part. It's said that it takes all kinds to make a world, but that's not true. It only takes a few kinds. It just happens that we have all kinds: in some cases, kinds which we don't really need at all. There are many people in this world who are vicious, malicious, and most unfortunately, intelligent enough to be dangerous. In some cases, the danger is that they create small computer programs which have no other purpose but to disrupt and destroy other people's work.

With the almost universal connection of home and office computers to the Internet, the virus-maker has an easy means of delivering a virus to your computer's door. There's little which can be done about that: the Internet communication protocols are rather lax, and it's not easy to stop the transfer of viruses across the network, viruses which eventually reach your home computer. However, there are steps to take to reduce your exposure to the risk of getting a destructive virus.

VIRUS BASICS

A virus is a program. Several things must happen to allow it to cause damage. First, it must be delivered to your computer. This can happen by downloading a program from a web site, by reading an infected disk, or by simply checking your mail, which in many systems is really a process by which your mail is loaded onto your own machine.

No matter how it arrives, a virus must also run on your computer to do its damage. Consequently, ordinary 'garden variety' viruses are targeted at specific platforms. A Windows virus will not execute on a Mac. There are few Unix viruses, and they do not execute on Macs or

Windows machines. (However, a Windows virus can be passed through a Mac on its way to damage another Windows machine.)

Executing an infected program which you have downloaded is enough to infect and damage your machine and similarly, opening an e-mail attachment can also allow a program to execute. Somewhat less familiar are 'macro' viruses, which are Microsoft Excel or Word macro programs which effectively execute from within Word or Excel. Macro viruses sneak into your computer by being carried inside of Word and Excel documents, and if allowed to execute, can do as much damage as any other type of virus.

WHAT DO THEY DO?

Viruses do a range of things, depending upon the intent of the sociopath who created it. Some viruses are little more than practical jokes, printing a message on a given date. Others do wholesale damage to the data on your disk, in the best case deleting files, in the worst, making subtle and almost impossible-to-find changes to your files.

Two other actions of viruses are important. They tend to hide themselves on your computer's hard drives, so that a mere reboot has no effect. They can also use your Internet connection to send themselves out over the network to uninfected hosts. Some viruses use your e-mail addresses to send themselves to your friends and associates.

A virus which deletes your files is bad enough, if you don't have backups. But even if you do, viruses don't always do their work immediately. Some sit and wait a while. This gives them time to be saved to your backup system, if you use one. Then when your disk is erased, your backup returns the virus to your system when you restore it.

A virus which makes occasional changes to files is even worse: you may not know that you have a problem until you have a disk full of questionable files, and no means of recovery whatsoever.

PROTECTION

There are steps to take to protect yourself. Because you must allow delivery of the virus, and then allow it to execute, any means which interferes with this process will help protect you.

It's prudent, if you are in the habit of downloading

executables from web sites, to only download from the 'big boys'—that is, the major download sites. You might look at their info pages to see what sort of virus protection they have in place. Typically, the large software firms scan their assets for viruses so that they are not a source of infection.

If you download executables from other sites, or accept executables from friends (gosh, *never* take candy from strangers!) you are trusting them to give you a clean file. Good luck. The burden of determining whether or not there's a virus present will fall on you.

General principle (1): accept executables only from known sources.

E-mail programs can sometimes be configured to automatically open or execute attachments. This is an act of insanity. Many viruses are spread in this fashion, and only a fool allows an e-mail program to be set to automatically open or execute attachments. If you are using such a program, turn off any options for automatic handling of attachments. If you receive e-mail from an unknown source, and the attachment is an executable (an .exe file on Windows machines) you want to think twice about executing it. It also helps to make sure that your Windows file view is set to show file extensions: this reduces the chance of double-clicking on 'hawaii_sunset.jpg' only to find out that you just executed 'hawaii_sunset.jpg.exe' and now it's sundown on your machine.

General principle (2): accept e-mail executables only from known sources.

There are a number of commercial programs available for virus protection. McAfee, Norton and others offer programs which scan incoming files for viruses. These are a very good idea, in fact, virtually mandatory in anything other than a completely casual environment. The only issue is this: that as new viruses are detected, the virus protection software must update its database of known viruses. In practice, this means that you must periodically access the McAfee or Norton web site and download the latest additions to the database. This is usually free for a year or some other period, and the software reminds you from time to time to do the download. Sometimes the software manufacturer will send out a note saying that you should do a download due to recent additions.

General principle (3): get a virus checker, read the instructions, and use it. Update it frequently. Using it can do no harm, and very likely will do good.

From time to time someone will point out to you that viruses are out on the Internet and floating around

before the virus checking software is updated. This is certainly true: neither Norton nor McAfee read the future. However, it sometimes takes days to weeks for a virus to make it to your machine, and the virus protection people spend time and money searching for new viruses to neutralize. Consequently, the first you know of a new virus may be that your virus checker tells you that it found and grabbed one.

Also, the viruses which sit and wait on machines may take months to send replicas of themselves out on the Net. You may have months between the first distribution of a new virus and its appearance on your machine. Of course, if the source machine had virus checking, the virus might never have escaped. But many people tell themselves that they don't need a checker . . . I suppose they think 'it won't happen to me'.

It will, don't worry. If your computer is connected to the Internet, it will be threatened by a virus sooner or later. Bet on it.

CRYPTOGRAPHIC PROGRAMS

For those of you with special needs or concerns, there are programs available which allow you to secure your file transfers cryptographically. This is a big topic, but basically, it is possible to encrypt a program or data file for transmission over the Internet which cannot be decoded or tampered with. The well-known program PGP from Network Associates is free for non-commercial use, and is about the best protection which the average computer user is likely to find.

Of course, just because you encrypt your Mom's recipe for peach cobbler before you send it to your friend doesn't mean that it's not infected. But if it was clean to start, it will arrive in the same state, and no one will know the recipe except your friend.

Another nice feature of PGP is identification. PGP has the ability to modify your e-mail so that (a) tampering is evident and (b) the sender is positively identified. This means that if you receive e-mail from me, PGP signed, you may then use your copy of PGP to verify that the sender is, in fact, me. Then if you are willing to trust me, any attachment to the e-mail will be ok to open or execute. E-mail from the CERT, a major virus watch-group, is always PGP signed.

PGP is also capable of fully encrypting your e-mail, so that your love letters can pass by the company snoop unread. Whether or not your company likes this is another issue, Americans have specific rights to privacy,

which do not always extend to facilities owned by their employers. At home, however, you may encrypt as you please, and even Uncle Sam will have a tough time reading your mail.

If you live outside of the US, your mileage will vary on privacy.

HOAXES

For some reason, besides the psychotics who molest strangers with viruses, there are people who amuse themselves by crying 'Wolf!' or 'Fire!'. They do this by inventing a tale of some new virus of lethal powers, and spreading the word far and wide. Of course, many of us who get this stuff recognize it as nonsense and discard it, but there are concerned but naive souls who repeat the spurious warning. The end result is a flurry of e-mail, repeated and crisscrossing the Net, wasting everyone's time.

It's not always easy to determine that a warning from a friend was originally a hoax, but allow me to make a few suggestions. If you receive a warning which tells you to take specific actions (such as sending the warning onwards!) don't do it. You are assisting a particularly dumb chain letter, especially if you are asked to send it on to a specific number of people. If the warning suggests that you do almost anything other than run your existing virus checker, or update it, get suspicious. Suggestions that a virus will physically damage your hardware are spurious: about the worst a virus can do is drive your hard disk to distraction. If you don't know the sender, don't open any attachments. If you have a system administrator, check with that person for advice.

How do you know what's real and what's not? Well, there are places to get information. One of my favorites, CERT, is listed below.

Be aware that besides real viruses, there are the fake ones to deal with . . . sigh . . .

OTHER INFORMATION

A primary source of information on viruses is CERT, at Carnegie Mellon University's Software Engineering Institute. They send e-mail of warnings of newly-discovered viruses to you if you subscribe to their free (and ad-free!) listserver. The e-mail will describe the virus and steps you may take to protect yourself.

In a recent description, CERT offered a link to the Microsoft site which contains a patch to correct a security deficiency in Windows NT and Windows 2000.

Some of the e-mail advisories will not pertain to you, but that's ok. They also maintain an archive of information on older virus threats. There are tutorials on computer security, far better than this quick 'heads-up'. You can check them out at <http://www.cert.org>

The software vendors Norton and McAfee, among others, market virus checking software. I cannot emphasize this enough: get a checker and install it properly. You will save yourself much grief. It's *very* cheap insurance. It may not be perfect, but it's probably going to cut your chances of letting a virus loose on your computer by 90%. Make sure you access the company's website to update the virus database.

Network Associates' PGP is free. It has excellent documentation. It installs nicely on Windows machines, and installs buttons in Microsoft Outlook, Eudora, and other mail readers to make it easy to sign, verify, and encrypt e-mail. If you have any need for such services, do yourself a favor and check out PGP at <http://www.pgp.com>

Letters to the Editor

James Jordan's letter in *Cosmopolis* 16 set me thinking. He doesn't say that Vance is a Christian writer, but clearly he hopes it is so and finds evidence in the texts. As part of this evidence, he marshals the 'moral scheme' reflected in the works, which he describes as 'Christian-type'.

I think this is very dubious. I don't know what Vance's religion is, if any. I think that the things that Mr. Jordan sees as reflecting Christian morality reflect instead universal morality or if one must, universal religion; what C.S.Lewis called the 'tao'. Lewis was a great Christian apologist; one of the marks of his greatness is that he did not regard the non-Christian religions of mankind as 'absurd', as does Mr. Jordan. He asserted not that they were false, but that they were incomplete.

That Vance has many Christian readers is unsurprising, just as it is unsurprising that he has many non-Christian admirers. One thing is certain: neither morality nor beauty in writing implies Christianity in the author.

It seems pretty obvious that *Lyonesse* contains strong implications that Vance's general scepticism of organised religion applies specifically to Christianity. He portrays the church itself in a quite negative light, not just a corrupt priest. On the other hand, Troice religion

is presented in a favorable way, as are its rites, as we see in the marriage of Suldrun and Aillas. And Spirifume in particular is extolled. These divine manifestations are not presented as 'absurd' although fictional (or perhaps, rather, historical).

I for one don't see why any religious person should try to get around the obvious scepticism of Vance in that sphere. In fact, this scepticism is one of the great charms of the books, even to such a person, for instance, as a devout Kalziban!

Ed Winskill

CLS No. 9



We have exciting new chapters from *Tergan* and *The Zael Inheritance*! Visit the *VIE* download page and get your copy.

And for those of you who asked for it, a special release of *CLS* No. 6 is also available. This new

version shares the vertical format of the other issues.

Closing Words

Thanks to Nita Benson for editorial assistance on this issue, and to Joel Anderson for composition. Also to proofreaders Koen Vyverman and Steve Sherman.

Derek W. Benson

COSMOPOLIS SUBMISSIONS: when preparing articles for *Cosmopolis*, please refrain from fancy formatting. Send raw text. Please submit articles and letters-to-the-editor to Derek Benson or Nita Benson: benson@online.no Letters to the editor or essays may be published in whole or in part, with or without attribution, at the discretion of *Cosmopolis*. Deadline for submissions to *Cosmopolis* #18 is August 25.

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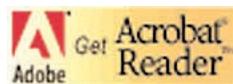
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If you wish to have the most current version of the free Adobe Acrobat Reader, follow this link:

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