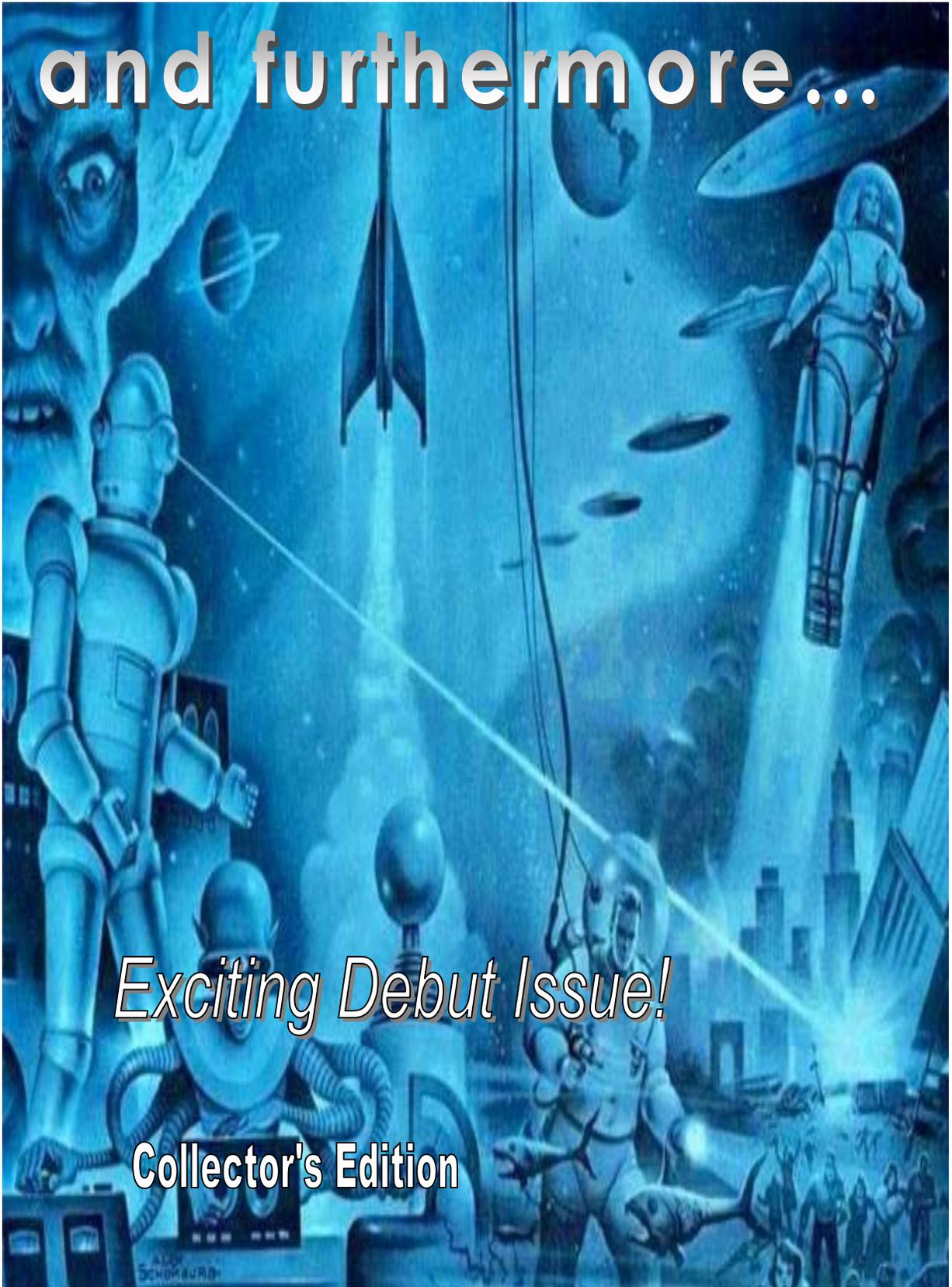


and furthermore...

Exciting Debut Issue!

Collector's Edition

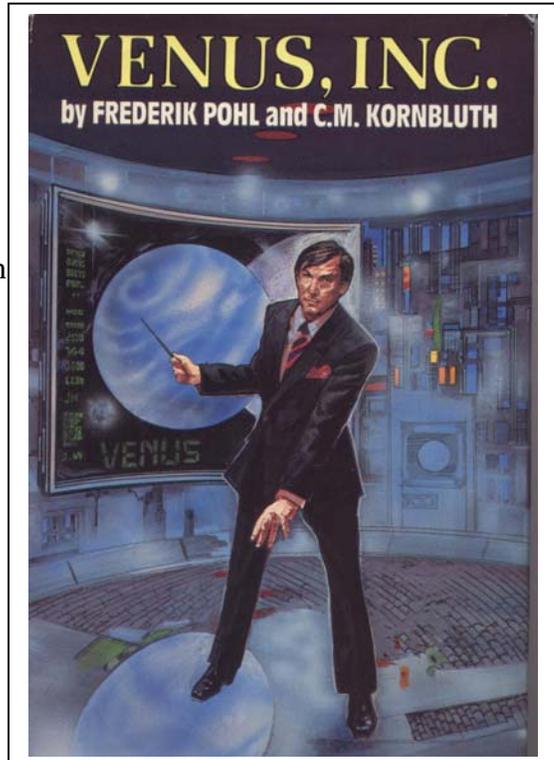


While I really enjoyed these novels, they got me to thinking about advertising in general, especially with Super Bowl XL just past, and how modern American culture is so commercial-driven. One of the reasons why I watch the game every year is because of the new television commercials that are specially created for the gigantic viewing market (an estimated 1.2 billion worldwide this year). A sixty-second spot that aired during the first half of Super Bowl XL cost the advertiser 2.6 million dollars. For the second half, the cost dropped to a mere 2.3 million dollars per 60-second spot. (Will they take a check?)

But the question that this book raises in my mind is, “Just exactly how much of what we want in life is really of our own choice, or has that choice already been made for us?” This is an interesting question that we all must be aware of in our overriding consumer society. Vance Packard’s long and undeservedly out-of-print book, *The Hidden Persuaders*, delves more in depth into how Madison Avenue has been shaping our buying habits in such a manner that our buying habits create the need for the market. In other words, we are *all* marketers and consumers. Written in 1957, Packard’s book is both a condemnation and a warning about what we are turning ourselves into.

For that matter, one of the articles that I use in my classes is an essay written by John Fraim in 2000, “Friendly Persuasion: the growing ubiquity of advertising, or what happens when everyone becomes an ad?” Fraim contends that all of us are advertisements in one way shape or form. What we wear, drink, eat, drive, and so forth, are all part of an unconscious desire to be part of the crowd; to not be left out of the latest fashion or marketing trend. This is sort of like teen-aged peer pressure in trying to get someone smoking or drinking because “it’s cool,” but riding a much more ominous train of thought. It is an interesting article to read, and sparks some lively discussion in the classroom.

So I read *Venus, Inc.*, and began wondering if the decisions I make in my life are truly my own or if they are dictated by masterminds planning their skullduggery behind closed conference room doors on Madison Avenue. Subliminal messages are all around us; they’ve even been tried out in supermarkets and shopping malls and found to be eerily effective. This makes this book that much more effective in light of President W’s stated desire for America to go back to the Moon by the year 2015, or some such nonsense. That damned International Space Station isn’t even *finished* because our technically inefficient and obsolete space shuttle fleet needs serious overhauling before work on the station can even *resume*! Back to the Moon?



Yeah, right.

In order to get everybody behind him on this fantasy of his, President Bush might need to enlist the help of the best Star Class Copysmiths working at the Fowler Schocken Agency. That might help.

Then again, we'd probably get there faster if we simply used a good, old-fashioned Kramden Booster. I hear tell it packs one hell of a wallop.



Bang, Zoom!



Hey, folks. Feel free to e-mail your comments to jpurcell54@earthlink.net. My goal is to keep *And Furthermore...* a snappy little zine that follows up on something mentioned in my primary fanzine, *In a Prior Lifetime*. See? I told y'all sometimes we do write about science fiction!

Thank you for following along down to the bottom of page 4.



John Purcell