



## CONTENTS

|  |                    |    |
|--|--------------------|----|
| RED SHIFT  | Maureen Porter     | 3  |
| WALKING ON GLASS - <i>The BSFA Column</i>        |                    | 4  |
| Co-ordinator's Report - Maureen Porter           |                    |    |
| Job Adverts                                      |                    |    |
| London Meetings                                  |                    |    |
| BSFA Information Service - Phil Nichols          |                    |    |
| London Writers' Group Meeting                    |                    |    |
| NEWS   | Paul Kincaid et al | 6  |
| MEDIA NEWS                                       | John Peters        | 11 |
| MEMBERS' NOTICEBOARD                             |                    | 13 |
| FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION: A Discussion Document |                    | 14 |
| - Rob Meades                                     |                    |    |
| COMPETITION CORNER                               |                    | 15 |
| Roger Robinson                                   |                    |    |
| THE PERIODIC TABLE                               |                    | 16 |
| Convention News                                  |                    |    |
| Convention Roundup                               |                    |    |
| Reviews of Contrivance, Iconoclasm, Sol 3        |                    |    |
| MEDIA REVIEWS                                    |                    | 19 |
| <i>The Caves of Steel</i> - John Peters          |                    |    |
| <i>Hellbound</i> - John Peters                   |                    |    |
| <i>Moontrap</i> - John Peters                    |                    |    |
| <i>They Live</i> - Colin Bird                    |                    |    |
| <i>Vengeance the Demon</i> - John Peters         |                    |    |
| LOCAL FANOMENA - <i>The Clubs Column</i>         |                    | 20 |
| Keith Mitchell                                   |                    |    |
| SCIENCE NEWS - John Peters                       |                    | 21 |
| WRITEBACK - <i>The Letters Page</i>              |                    | 22 |
| SOAPBOX  |                    | 24 |
| <i>Why Scientists are Idiots</i> - Cecil Nurse   |                    |    |

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# Red Shift

UNIVERSITY TERM ENDS WITH NOT A BANG, NOT A WHIMPER, MORE A delicate fizzling out, matched by the fizzling out of my brain, and to judge from the small response to last issue, the sun and drought has got to everyone else. I can only hope for a rainstorm soon in order to revive those flagging synapses, and get you people writing in. Perhaps this issue's Soapbox, Why Scientists are Idiots will inspire you to set vitriol to paper, or even generate a mild remonstrance - please?

I'm always amazed to find that so many people apparently enjoy the editorial, particularly when it is the piece I find most difficult to write. Or rather, I kick around for an hour or two, wondering whether I have anything to say, and then, just when desperation sets in, so does an idea worth exploring, and off we go. This issue's great thought arises from a series of panel discussions and lectures I sat through at the recent Leeds SF Conference, a three day gathering of academics and other interested parties. Reduced to very simplistic terms, the theme of the morning was that the only science fiction worthy of the name was the science fiction which contains 'science', and more than that, the science must be 'accurate'. To my mind, this immediately presents a problem in that it is surely impossible to do anything more than conjecture at the state of far-future science (I deliberately use the word 'conjecture' rather than 'predict'. I'm not at all convinced that one can rely more than fleetingly on science fiction as a literature of prediction). Gibson's *Neuromancer* was cited as an example of poor science fiction - the science was bad, and the grammar was bad. I thought this particular criticism missed on two fairly major points. In the first place, I see nothing wrong in Gibson's grasp of the intimate functioning of computers being sketchy, when it's the overall effect he's aiming for; a description of a computer-reliant society rather than a text-book on how to get a Mac-clone up and running. Secondly, whilst one can see the reasoning behind initially teaching correct grammar, punctuation and spelling (and yes, I'm old-fashioned enough to believe that the rudiments of grammar are vital, but new-fangled enough to believe that there must be a better way of teaching them, than through meaningless rote), writing fiction isn't simply about reproducing these rules. The very best fiction pushes back the boundaries, in ideas, and in style. Gibson portrays a decadent society, one in decline - it seems not unreasonable that the language might also decline. Russell Hoban's *Ridley Walker* is perhaps the finest example of this supposition. I wonder, too, if an accusation of bad grammar would now be levelled at such an acknowledged classic as Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, for example.

I wasn't too taken with what I thought was a very weak-handed and poorly founded attempt at criticism. Worse was to come, however. Two well-known authors in the field - no names, no pack drill, as I am paraphrasing rather than quoting directly - basically argued that the only science fiction worth considering is 'hard' science fiction, SF with science in it, in other words. This was later followed up with the contention that the role of the literary critic is less to consider the structure of the fiction, the theories operating, than to consider whether the science is accurate, solidly founded in modern scientific theory and practice. Only when we had achieved this would we truly be able to function as critics. I spent a long time pondering this as I drove down the M1 that night, and several weeks later, I'm still no nearer reaching any kind of satisfactory conclusion. To pinch a quote, 'in my father's house, are many mansions', a situation I had vaguely supposed also existed in the science fiction world, and yet this discussion suggests that some people at least, and respected authors at that, do not agree. I'd thought we were past replaying the old argument of the Two Cultures, and yet here it is, alive, well and screaming vigorously.

It becomes clear that 'science fiction' as a term embodies inherent problems. Does that word 'science' predicate the need for the fiction to contain real, accurately functioning modern

science, or does it hark back to the times when the ill-division between science and magic was drawn very finely, and it was apparently possible to step from one to another without much effort? As many of you will know, I've always preferred the term 'speculative fiction', simply because it gives access to a far broader range of options, and perhaps because I dislike having bounds placed upon my reading matter, simply because there is a name for it. I might add that one person also deplored the way fantasy and horror spill over into science fiction, and presumably vice versa, as well as criticising the choice of Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and Rachel Pollock's *Unquenchable Fire* as Arthur C Clarke Award winners in the last two years. I perhaps should be circumspect on commenting on the Pollock, having had a hand in its choice, but the judges all agreed that it was an imaginative interpretation and presentation of a world in which magic functions in the way that science currently functions - remember Campbell's dictum that 'Science is Magic that works?'. The Atwood is classic far-future dystopian literature, a staple of the recognised body of science fiction writing.

It's a puzzle to me, I admit. It seems to take us towards a world of pigeonholes, categories, boundaries and limits, and away from a vigorous atmosphere of cross-fertilisation, the breaking down of barriers between genres, something I perhaps naively imagined would be considered to be more valuable, enriching all our fiction rather than delineating it more rigorously. And to see the barricades being thrown up within what might be termed as recognisably science fiction writing, between the 'soft' and the 'hard', between the social sciences and the physical sciences, it's even more disappointing.

So, I'd like to throw open the discussion, and ask other people what they think. Should the term apply strictly to fiction involving hardware and technology. How far can you take that? Ballard's *The Drought* might well be noted as a pertinent text given the fact that so many of us are currently languishing under drought restrictions which threaten to become stricter as the summer continues. That's exploring a situation created by scientist, but examining the consequences, reflecting the human dramas rather than putting us right in there with the scientists trying to solve the problem. Indeed, one might ask just where the scientists are. Ballard's *High Rise* provides another classic example. It's known that social scientists have worked on the problems of high-rise living as a result of reading this book. It seems to me to qualify as science fiction, but again, it's social science. Does that count. Gibson doesn't because his science is suspect, and yet I've read science fiction by scientists which is so cripplingly boring... what's a reader to think? What do you think? Should the boundaries be allowed to blur, or should we be chalking them out more firmly than ever?

It's tempting to draw an analogy with fandom itself. There are many ways of being a fan, many varieties of fandom, and equally, there are people only too eager to disparage one variety of fandom in comparison to another, or to proclaim their own interest as the only one which adequately expresses an interest in science fiction. This is garbage, in the same way as I regard the declarations about scientific fiction being the only sure way, but it still goes on. I hope that it doesn't take its lead from what seems to me to be a completely wrong-headed, blinkered even, desire to corral us all in our rightful pens. I detect a movement abroad in fandom which recognises that we really are all the same under the skin, deep down. One can only wish the writers might come around to see things in the same light.

And there endeth the lesson. Comments, contributions to the debate, all are welcome. And keep the general contributions coming. I'm still mildly disappointed with the lack of response to Keith Mitchell's clubs column. Surely we can do better than

Continued overleaf ...

# WALKING ON GLASS

## The BSFA Column

CO-ORDINATOR REPORT

I cannot say that this is the piece of *Matrix* I most look forward to writing, mainly because I end up with a sense of nobody actually reading what I'm saying, and partly because I only seem to swing into action when something unpleasant has happened.

On the one hand, there has been no particular expression of interest as to what name should grace my role as Head BSFA Whizzkid, so Co-ordinator it is, for the moment. To be honest, it really doesn't matter what you call it, the job still has to be done. In an equally stunning display of apathy, not much has been heard on the subject of regional meetings. The Iconoclast panel was pretty inconclusive, mostly because only seven people attended, three of whom were the panel. I put it down to the weather mainly. However, for those who meant to say something and didn't, I'm still thinking about this, as I still think there is a lot more we could do to draw a disparate membership together in some way.

A more painful matter however is the state of mailing sessions. You cannot have failed to notice that the last mailing arrived late. This was because there were simply not enough people at the collating sessions. Unfortunately I didn't hear about this until Sunday evening, otherwise Paul and I might have been able to travel over to Reading and give a hand. Now, I like to be at mailing sessions where possible, and I like committee members to turn up from time to time, but a) I don't believe that it's written down that committee members shall not have other social commitments from time to time, and b) neither is it written down that the same stalwart few will be left to do the job, session after session.

Now listen up - we cannot afford to have all the magazines professionally collated; well, we might, if we raised subscriptions by a good few pounds, a move which I suspect would not endear us to members, so, we are reliant on the goodwill of members, especially in the South-East of England, to help with this collating. Right now, we are not getting this help. We collate at Reading because we have roomy facilities, and it's convenient for our printer in Guildford. I'm not changing printer, because we get too good a deal and too fine a service to consider such a move. Whilst I grant you that the University is at some remove from the station, there are plenty of buses, and I daresay that if we know in advance, we can collect people from the station and return them there in the evening.

I'd like to make it clear that we don't expect the same people to come back for session after session, nor do we expect everyone to spend all weekend at the job. In the same way that Committee members have other things to do, we realise that you might also have other weekend commitments. But it would be very helpful if some of you could make some sort of effort to turn up some of the time. Otherwise, I can assure you that the same sort of situation is going to arise time and again. To my mind, it doesn't seem too much to put a little effort back into an organisation which, I feel, gives you a damn good deal.

I can see objections being raised - too far to travel, being a favourite one. Well, I've regularly travelled by train from Folkestone for mailing sessions, making a four-hour, two hundred mile round trip at the mercy of BR. Alright, so I have to, but if I can make the long-distance trip, I reckon that those nearer could probably manage to attend once or twice a

year. Not knowing anyone is another caveat - look, it's usually a small, friendly group, and we all go round the pub together at lunchtime. We're nice people, we'll make you tea and coffee. You even get an extra month added to your subscription.

So, what I'm asking is that maybe once or twice a year, you think about coming along to a mailing session. We really only need about a dozen people each day to make the whole thing viable, and good fun. Whilst I accept the possibly forthcoming criticism that dates have moved around recently - there have been problems, I admit - the dates for the rest of the year are, so far as I'm concerned, immutable. These are the dates for the mailing sessions for the rest of the year - 7-8 October, 2-3 December. Keith Freeman's telephone number is 0734 666142 for more information about how to get there, and indeed to check that the mailing is going ahead. We need you. If you don't believe me, wait until your next mailing doesn't arrive when it should, and then think.

If you have any sensible suggestions on what we could do to encourage participation in mailing sessions, please send them to me. I think we have to rule out wages, and we can't become peripatetic, for reasons previously explained.

I also have to apologise for the fact that *Focus* is not included in this mailing. This is due to the unfortunate demise of Liz Holliday's computer, just prior to her trip to the USA. She wasn't able to make any contingency arrangements before leaving, and I also did not hear of this sad state of affairs until she had already left for Clarion. I know that Liz did try hard to do something about this unfortunate state of affairs, and I regret that we were not able to solve the problem satisfactorily. *Focus* will appear next mailing, one way or another. I apologise for any inconvenience this may cause, and would strongly urge people not to regard this as an indication of *Focus* being dropped. This is simply not so.

## JOBS\*JOBS\*JOBS\*JOBS\*JOBS

### AWARDS ADMINISTRATOR

We have received one application for the post of Awards Administrator, but it's not too late for you to apply, if you think you would like to work for the BSFA. This is an important staff post within the BSFA, reporting to the Co-ordinator, and it entails producing ballot forms for nominations and final ballot for the BSFA Award. You'll also have to count the votes and handle the award ceremony, as well as sending out publicity on the award after the winners have been announced. The post should certainly involve some promotional work both before and after the event, and the person who eventually gets the job should be prepared to give a lot of thought to working on improving the image of the awards. It may come but once a year, but it's still a challenging post. After all, you'll have to keep up to date with what's happening in SF enough to know whether a nomination is eligible or not. And you're going to have to be the sort of person whom nobody doubts has got the winner right.

If you think it's a job that would suit you, please contact me, and outline your plans.

Continued on opposite page...

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this? Are we getting it wrong, in which case how about telling us how and why we're getting it wrong instead of leaving us to stew in our ignorance? It's futile to sit at home and complain where we can't hear you. The usual hair-tearing about a lack of letters, Sceptic articles, and everything anyway, you will doubtless take as read, in which case may I take it as read that you will all contribute? I'm hoping now, to start turning the centre pages over to, no, not pin-ups, silly, but in-depth articles. On what, though? This is where *Matrix's* Cinderella image comes more clearly into focus, covering all and everything, and, some might argue, nothing at all. What sort of thing would you like to see?

I'd particularly like to turn your attention to this issue's article on the proposed Friends of the Foundation organisation. Please feel free to send me your comments on this. I'm very keen to foster stronger links between the BSFA and the

SF Foundation. I've just been elected to serve on the Council of the SFF, and the BSFA will be hosting a discussion on the Friends of the Foundation at the next London meeting, on 17th August. Get your comments to me, post-haste, and I will attempt to incorporate them into the discussion. Better still, come along if you can.

Finally, another one of my little throw-away ideas. Hot on the heels of Desert Planet Books, what would you regard as quintessential SF and fantasy reading, the books we all ought to have read. Categories should be interpreted broadly. I'm interested in the possibilities of compiling recommended reading lists for newcomers to the genre, and finding out what we aficionados ought to have read.

In the meantime, I hope you're all coping well with the environment running rampant in this heatwave. Just remember - we are at least prepared. We've already read about it!

Continued from previous page

#### FOCUS EDITOR

As you know, Liz Holliday, editor of *Focus*, has decided to give up the editorship at the end of the year.

"Editing *Focus* requires a weird blend of enthusiasm, tact, and patience - plus a touch of sheer bloody-minded honesty. You'll need lots of ideas, a commitment to high standards of content and production, and the ability to panic creatively. In return for all that, you'll get all the support you need from me and the rest of the committee, critical faculties will develop like never before, and you may even make a few useful professional contacts."

If you think you can do this job, please tell me why, and how you would fill *Focus*.

#### DESIGNER

The BSFA stands in sore need of someone willing to do general design work, from producing designs for stationery and badges to helping lay out future publications. If you feel you can offer any help in this direction, please contact the Co-ordinator. If able, please send samples of your work (these will be returned).

Whichever post you're applying for, please write to me, Maureen Porter, 114 Guildhall Street, Folkestone, Kent CT20 1ES, with your thoughts and ideas. And remember that you shouldn't feel that you will be thrown in at the deep end and left to struggle. The rest of the Committee will provide support and encouragement.

#### \* LONDON MEETINGS \*

David Barrett has now fully taken over as organiser of the London meetings, and has arranged the following events for your delight and delectation.

August 17th will see a visit from Stephen Lawhead, who has just published *Arthur*, the third part of the Pendragon cycle, the other parts being *Galahad* and *Merlin*. We also hope to discuss the setting-up of Friends of the Foundation, regarding which, see the document published elsewhere in *Matrix*.

September 21st sees a gaming panel which will be organised by Marcus Rowlands.

London meetings are open to everyone, admission being 50p to BSFA members, £1 to non-members, and the events take place in the upstairs room at The Plough, Museum St, near the British Museum. Nearest tube station is Tottenham Court Road, just a brisk five minutes walk away, and conveniently situated near Forbidden Planet. Organised events kick off after eight, but the room is open just as soon as any of the committee get there.

#### INFORMATION SERVICE UPDATE

##### Successes and Failures

by Phil Nichols

Since the last *Matrix*, the new Information Service has plodded slowly forward, with almost daily additions to the lists of offers of help and questions to be answered. I admit to having occasionally failed in my aim to reply to all letters within fourteen days, but - through the twisted way my mind works - I see this very failure as a sign of the moderate success of the Service's relaunch, in that it has given me more than enough to do in my limited spare time.

Among the successes of the Service so far, I count the following questions posed by members, all of them answered with some degree of satisfaction:

- Q: What is the shortest SF story ever published?
- A: The one by Fredric Brown that goes 'The sun sank slowly in the east.'
- Q: What was the Isaac Asimov novel in which people live isolated lives in a planet, rarely meeting in the flesh?
- A: *The Naked Sun*

Q: Who wrote the story about a planet possessing a very small, fast moon orbiting at knee-level?

A: Jerome Bixby, *The Holes Around Mars* (1954). The planet was Mars.

Note the dominance of questions about particular stories. A prime concern of the BSFA membership seems to be identifying half-remembered (or half-forgotten) stories. Although these three questions were fairly easy to answer, the half-remembered story also brings about most of the failures of the Service. Questions unanswered so far include the following:

Q: Where can I find a short story (by Ray Bradbury) called *The Geek*? (No such short story has yet been located, whether written by Bradbury or anyone else. A novel of this title, by Alice Louise Ramirez, does exist, however.)

Q: What (or who) is an 'impezer'?

Q: Who wrote the story that goes like this...

Several of the letter have been sent to me. And frankly, they're a pain. If you must ask this kind of question, give me as many clues as you can!

I am currently compiling the second *All-Points Bulletin*, a summary of some of the most peculiar questions received. This, like *APB#1*, will be sent to those volunteers who may have the expertise required to answer a specific question. However, the response to *APB#1* was somewhat minimal to say the least.

Naturally, if you happen to know the answer to any of these 'failed' questions, let me know as soon as possible. Or if you have a question of your own, or wish to volunteer to have your knowledge tapped, please write, enclosing an SAE if you expect a reply. The address, as always, is: Phil Nichols, 19 Kendal Avenue, Copnor, Portsmouth, PO3 5AX



# NEWS

Compiled by Paul Kincald (with a little help from *Locus*, *SF Chronicle* and other sources)

## ■ SF ENCYCLOPEDIA TO BE REVISED

### BRITAIN'S INDEPENDENT PUBLISHERS UNDER THREAT

Another spurt of takeovers and mergers among British publishers is creating a small number of massive publishing companies that many experts now believe is threatening the viability of the medium-sized independent companies.

The latest moves in the publishing merry-go-round came when RANDOM HOUSE bought the CENTURY HUTCHINSON group for £64 million. The takeover gives the hardback houses of CAPE and CHATTO access to the mass-market paperback imprint ARROW. The new managing director of RANDOM CENTURY is Anthony Oestham, editor of the *SF* anthology *Science Against Man* (1970) and founder of the independent imprint CENTURY in the early 80s. But already there has been one casualty of the take-over. BOOLEY HEAD, who publish Gerry Kilworth's mainstream novels, has effectively closed down.

Meanwhile, Christopher Sinclair-Stevenson, head of HAMISH HAMILTON, has resigned because of "incompatibility" with the corporate life in the PENGUIN group. His departure is likely to result in a corporate shake-up so that HAMISH HAMILTON and MICHAEL JOSEPH become even more assimilated in the PENGUIN empire.

The result of these and other changes is that most of Britain's best known publishing houses are now incorporated within larger groups, with increasing noise about loss of editorial independence, while Sir Simon Hornby, chairman of WH. SMITH has complained that "There is no longer the same degree of sensitivity in the editing or the design or indeed the quality of the paper or type used."

The main groups are: Rupert Murdoch's NEWS CORPORATION, which includes COLLINS, GRAFON and PALADIN; PEARSON, which includes LONGMAN, PENGUIN, VIKING, HAMISH HAMILTON and MICHAEL JOSEPH; BERTELSMANN the German group which includes DOUBLEDAY, BANTAM and CORGI; PARAMOUNT which includes SIMON & SCHUSTER, PRENTICE HALL, POCKET BOOKS and CORNET; Robert Maxwell's MAXWELL COMMUNICATIONS includes MACDONALD, ORBIT, FUTURA and SPHERE; MACMILLAN incorporates SIDGWICK & JACKSON, PAN and PICADOR; REED INTERNATIONAL includes OCTOPUS, HAMLYN, MANDARIN; HEINEMANN, METHUEN and SECKER & WARBURG; and RANDOM CENTURY incorporates CENTURY, HUTCHINSON, CAPE, CHATTO, ARROW, ARENA and LEGEND.

But if these groups are losing independence and in other ways, then they are gaining in terms of the strength of corporate marketing techniques and services, and the financial clout to offer massive advances. It is this that is worrying certain observers who fear that the medium-sized independents, who have a reputation for literary quality, may not be able to match these advances, and lose out. These independents include DEUTSCH, DUCKWORTH, FABER, HARRAP, BLOOMSBURY, HEADLINE and VIRAGO, but one of the leading independents, GOLLANCZ, is already up for sale, and observers believe that more are to follow. Meanwhile, book sales are stagnant and book publishing is hardly cash-generating, so with the growth of large international publishing conglomerates, particularly with groups whose main income is from other areas, such as film, TV or newspapers, it seems inevitable that there will be further "rationalisations". BOOLEY HEAD may not be the last familiar name to disappear from the publishing world.

### SF ENCYCLOPEDIA REVISED

The *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, edited by Peter Nicholls, has been universally recognised as one of the key *SF* reference books since it was published in 1979. Unfortunately the revised and updated editions that were planned for subsequent years never materialised. But now it seems that a new, fully revised and updated edition, will see the light of day. Under the editorship of Nicholls' co-editor, John Clute, the new edition could be expanded by as much as 100,000 words; but though it has been taken up by a packager who is enthusiastic about the project, there is no word as yet of a publisher taking the book on.

## ■ MAJOR SHAKE-UP IN BRITISH PUBLISHING

### ■ MORE ON HUGO CONTROVERSY

### ■ WILLIAM F. TEMPLE - AN APPRECIATION BY ARTHUR C. CLARKE

### HUGO BALLOT RIGGING CONTROVERSY

Further details have emerged about the controversy over block voting in this year's Hugo Awards nominations, which resulted in *The Guardians* by Todd Cameron Hamilton & P.J. Beese being withdrawn from the Best Novel category, Hamilton withdrawing from the Best Professional Artist category, and which also affected the final list of nominees for Fan Artist, Fan Writer and the John W. Campbell Award. (For details of the nominations see *Matrix* 82).

Letters between the two sides in this controversy have been released. We don't have the space to reproduce the letters in full, but will summarise the main points:

On 2 May 1989, Mark L. Olson & Rick Katze, representing Noreason Three, wrote to Robert Beese, who was dealing with the matter on behalf of his wife P.J. Beese and to Todd Cameron Hamilton. They stated that there was a block vote "consisting of about 55 ballots" of which "about 25 were accompanied by new supporting memberships paid for by postal money orders purchased at a single post office in three lots with sequential numbers. These ballots showed a great deal of similarity among themselves."

This similarity is not necessarily significant. From experience handling the Hugos for *Conspiracy* 87 I know that people whose nominations are similar in one category are liable to make similar nominations in other categories. Nor is the fact that the nominations were accompanied by new supporting memberships remarkable, this is actually encouraged. However, the sequential postal orders does seem fairly unequivocal.

Olson and Katze say they had offered to give Beese information needed to identify the perpetrator, "but we understand your reluctance". They accept that the majority were probably friends of Beese and Hamilton who were simply trying to be helpful. At the same time they rejected the idea of pursuing an investigation themselves since the participants would be likely to see this as a threat to Beese and Hamilton and "would be very unlikely to cooperate".

They propose therefore to write to these people including a letter from Beese and/or Hamilton "explaining how the suspicion that has fallen upon them has hurt them and asking that they cooperate". Noreason would make it clear that "we plan no action against any of the 25, [or] against the perpetrator(s)". They go on: "We believe that this ... stands the best chance of definitively clearing your wife and Todd Hamilton of anything.... We are certainly willing to consider modifying this plan to ... address your concerns".

There seems to be clear evidence of some attempt at ballot rigging, and Noreason seem to be making every effort to exonerate Beese and Hamilton; which makes the response from the pair, who take the extraordinary step of responding to a private letter with a letter copied to numerous *SF* news magazines and organisations, surprisingly belligerent. The Noreason letter, they say, "offers no more satisfaction than any of our many conversations. It is obvious you have absolutely no sense of justice or fair play. We feel we can no longer stand quietly by and trust you to rectify the unseemly situation you have created."

They describe as questionable Noreason's refusal to either validate or invalidate ballots "that you, in your sole judgement, decided were questionable", and refused to conduct an investigation themselves because "we found the prospect of questioning anyone on the reasons for the choices they made in a secret ballot to be abhorrent.... Your letter proposes an even worse situation in that we would be performing this inquiry in front of the entire Noreason Three committee for your further 'analysis' and any action you might choose to take."

They accuse Noreason of "usurpation of powers beyond those granted by WFSF" in that the committee "has scrutinized the nominating ballots to determine who nominated whom.... Your claim to be protecting the sanctity of the ballots is beyond belief, especially when committee members readily leak supposedly privileged yet still inaccurate information."

They do not specify what this information might be, nor in what way it is inaccurate.

Part of the job of Hugo administrator is to check ballots to ensure that the votes are legal within the terms laid down

by WFS. Voting twice, voting when not a member of the convention, and several other situations must be guarded against if the vote is to be fair. And should any suggestion of illegality be found, particularly when only one person is in charge of the Hugos, I would have thought it natural that the first step would be to take the problem to the full committee.

Nevertheless, Beese and Hamilton accuse Noreason of establishing unacceptable precedents, including the power "to use any means necessary to cause the removal from the ballot of any nominee they do not personally feel is worthy of such a nomination, regardless of how the members voted", and the power "to disregard the requirement that all members be given an equal voice in the Hugo awards process." They go on to assert that Noreason "has taken the position that we are guilty unless we prove ourselves innocent.... you chose to condemn us without even lifting a finger to check the facts." (This doesn't seem to sit comfortably with the fact that they themselves seem to have been blocking most of the options for investigation open to the committee.)

Beese and Hamilton take the position that the committee had acted because they decided "that our work couldn't merit a nomination". They go on: "your committee members we spoke to confirmed that it was your intent not to give either of us any warning of the charges levelled against us. You wanted to ensure that we 'got what was coming to us' with no chance to defend ourselves." If this is so, then the charge is indefensible. But Beese and Hamilton make no mention of the consecutively numbered postal orders, instead they insist: "you couldn't conceive of, and weren't willing to admit that, the ballots might have been cast by honest members attempting to nominate according to the rules.... Your refusal to accept the explanation offered for the ballots you still question is cowardly in the extreme." They demand: 1) "a full, unequivocal public apology", 2) reinstatement of their nominations, 3) a "unequivocal public statement" that their Campbell nomination "was never in question", and 4) an issue of corrected Hugo ballots, complete with copies of the apology and "an explanation of the wrongdoing of Noreason Three".

Oison responded to these demands on 8 June 1989. 1) "We do not see that the committee needs to apologize", 2) "We removed you from the ballot in the first place at your urgent request", and "any further change to the list of nominees is impossible", 3) "We agree that your nomination for the Campbell Award was not dependent on the money order ballots and are pleased to say so publicly.", 4) "This request is answered in the above three points." He also reiterates that "we have no evidence that you were parties to the money-order-ballot fraud."

The committee also issued a statement which responded to charges that the secret ballot had been openly discussed in committee. "When the facts on the bloc voting were presented to the committee, the debate was conducted almost entirely without naming names."

Paul Kincaid

#### TIME/WARNER MERGER

One of the longest running of all take-over battles has finally come to an end with the successful merger of Time Inc and Warner Communications. The \$13.9 billion deal finally went through when the Delaware Supreme Court refused an application by Paramount to block it. Paramount has now withdrawn its hostile \$12.2 billion bid to buy Time.

The merger of Time, whose publishing empire includes the magazines *Time* and *Life* and *TIME-LIFE BOOKS*, with Warner which includes the Warner film company and the Warner publishing empire, will create the world's biggest media giant. Nevertheless, parts of the massive entertainments and communications empire may have to be sold off to finance the takeover, and a number of other companies, including Rupert Murdoch's News International, are said to be waiting to snap up anything that comes on the market.

#### NBA UNDER THREAT FROM EC

While we are still awaiting the report of the Office of Fair Trading on the fate of the Net Book Agreement, it seems that this last bastion of Retail Price Maintenance may be under threat from another source.

The Net Book Agreement is the price-fixing agreement by which publishers can dictate what price can be charged for their books. Pentos, which owns the Dillons chain of bookshops, has challenged the agreement because they want to be able to discount the prices of certain books in their stores. The Office of Fair Trading has been enquiring into the matter under Sir Gordon Borrie, and the result may be a referral to the

Restrictive Practices Court. The Publishers Association, other book sellers (including W.H. Smith and Waterstones), and many leading authors including William Golding, Hammond Innes, Penelope Lively, Monica Dickens and the British branch of PEN, oppose the ending of the NBA on the grounds that it could force small booksellers and some publishers out of business.

Whatever the result of the enquiry, however, the government may have to end the NBA. Under a European directive, they have to review all restrictive practices legislation before the EC trade barriers are dropped in 1992. Should the Publishers Association win their battle against Pentos, however, the Department of Trade and Industry have assured them that there will be a "thousand year" before EC regulations are fully implemented. Which may, ironically, mean that the NBA will be in force for longer than it might have been if Pentos had not launched their campaign against it.

#### BLAKE'S 7 HOAX

Someone using the name of *Samantha Grant* has perpetrated a hoax based upon the *Blake's 7* series. In autumn 1987 she turned up in New Hampshire claiming to be working on a pilot for a spin-off from the series to be called *The New Breed*. She claimed to be an English actress who had had bit-parts in the series, and had the backing of John Nathan Turner, producer of *Dr Who*, for this new venture. A local nightclub donated its premises for such a thing, where 500 people tried out for the 10 parts. A rock group, a limousine company, a photographer and a hair salon all donated their services. Then Grant disappeared, leaving massive unpaid bills, and when Turner and the BBC were contacted they denied ever having any knowledge of her.

#### BRITISH LIBRARY TO CUT STOCK OF BOOKS

Since 1662, every publisher has been required to deposit one copy of every publication with the British Library. This "legal deposit privilege", made law in the 1911 Copyright Act, means that the Library now has a stock of some 18 million books. But though the books are free, the cost of storage is £1 per book per year; and despite moving into their new premises at St Pancras in 1993, the Library's storage space will be filled within 10 years. So the Library is to change its practice. From now on reprints, where there are no textual alterations to the first edition, will not be kept; they won't accept gifts if they already possess a copy, or if the material is of no historical or specialist interest; they won't take certain limited circulation material; duplicate material will be disposed of; and rarely requested works will be stored outside London. In addition some works, especially local material, will be kept instead at the other copyright libraries, the National Libraries of Wales and Scotland, and the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Trinity College Dublin.

#### AWARDS

The Stoker Awards, given by the Horror Writers of America, have been announced. The winners were:

BEST NOVEL: *The Silence of the Lambs* - Thomas Harris  
 BEST FIRST NOVEL: *The Sulting* - Kelley Wilde  
 BEST NOVELLETTE: "Orange is for Anguish, Blue for Insanity" - David Morrell  
 BEST STORY: "Night They Missed the Horror Show" - Joe R. Lansdale  
 BEST COLLECTION: *Charles Beaumont: Selected Stories* - Charles Beaumont  
 LIFE ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS: Ray Bradbury, Ronald Chetwynd-Hayes

The nominations for the Prometheus Award, given by the Libertarian Futurist Society, have been announced. They are:

Brightsuit MacBear - L. Neil Smith  
*David's Sling* - Marc Stiegler  
*Falling Free* - Lois McMaster Bujold  
*Farside Cannon* - Roger MacBride Allen  
*Jurassic Side* - Shelly Reuben  
*Moon Lisa Overdrive* - William Gibson  
*Moon of Ice* - Brad Linaweaver  
*A Splendid Chaos* - John Shirley  
*To Sell Beyond the Sunset* - Robert A. Heinlein  
*Voice of the Whirlwind* - Walter Jon Williams  
*The Fool's Progress* - Edward Abbey

Dr Stephen Hawking, the Cambridge mathematician and author of *A Brief History of Time* (which has been excluded from this year's Hugo shortlist - see last issue) has been named a Companion of Honour in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

Other honours: a knighthood for Rex Harrison, whose long career on the stage and in films includes starring roles in the film versions of the humorous fantasy *Bye Bye Spirit*, and the children's fantasy *Dr Oodlittie*; Andre Deutsch, the publisher in this country of Stanislaw Lem, and Ian Holm the actor who appeared in *Alien* and *Time Bandits*, have both been named Companions of the British Empire; while Penelope Lively, the Booker Prize Winner who has also written books for children including the fantasy *The Driftway*, has received the Order of the British Empire.

#### NEW ANTHOLOGIES

Recently departed Vector Editor David V. Barrett has announced the contents of his anthology, *Digital Dreams*, to be published by NEW ENGLISH LIBRARY in 1990. The contents are:

"Bronze Casket for a Mummified Shrew-Mouse" - Gerry Kilworth; "Digital Cats Come Out Tonight" - Ben Jaques; "What Happened at Cambridge IV" - David Langford; "The World of the Silver Writer" - Anne Gay; "IdeaDEB" - "World enough" - "Time" - Terry Pratchett; "The Great Brain Legend" - Josephine Saxton; "The Quenderghast Bullian Algebraic Calculator" - Alex Stewart; "The Mechanical Art" - Andy Sawyer; "Last Came Assimilation" - Storm Constantine; "Virus" - Neil Gaiman; "Measured Perspective" - Keith Roberts; "The Coleridge Bombers" - Paul Beardsley; "The Real Poop" - John Grant; "Where He Went" - Paul Kincaid; "The Lord of the Files" - Ray Girvan & Stephen Jones; "Speaking in Tongues" - Ian McDonald; "Twister of Words" - Michael Fearn; "The Reconstruction of Mingsu" - Phil Manchester.

There may also be one or two additional stories included at a later date. This contents list is remarkable for the number of new writers included. Jaques, Beardsley, Fearn and Manchester are all represented by their first professional sale - Manchester's story is his first-ever attempt at fiction.

Meanwhile, three new British anthologies have emerged in short order this summer.

SIMON & SCHUSTER present *Interzone: the 4th Anthology*, which actually defies the idea that this is a collection of the best stories from the magazine by including three original stories. These are: "The Bead Woman" - Rachel Pollock; "Toxine" - Richard Calder and "The Guegna Datum" - S.M. Baxter. The reprinted stories are: "The Growth of the House of Usher" - Brian Stableford; "City of Peace" - Lisa Goldstein; "The Cutie" - Greg Egan; "The Time-Lapsed Man" - Eric Brown; "The Enormous Space" - J.G. Ballard; "Tommy Atkins" - Barrington J. Bayley; "Stop Evolution in Its Tracks" - John Sladek; "Before I Wake" - Kim Stanley Robinson; "Bill" - David Langford; "Mirrors and Burnstones" - Nicola Griffith; "Famous Monsters" - Kim Newman and "Driving Through Korea" - Ian Lee.

LEGEND have taken the bold step of producing two original anthologies at the same time.

The first of these, *Tarot Tales*, edited by Rachel Pollock & Caitlin Matthews is, as the title suggests, a collection of stories inspired by the tarot, which Pollock describes, in her introduction, as "A machine for constructing stories". The contents are: "The Lovers" - Gwyneth Jones; "Rambrants of Things Past" - Sheila Finch; "The Horse of Iron Etc" - M. John Harrison; "The Goddess of the Land" - Caitlin Matthews; "The Ship of Night" - Cherry Gilchrist; "The Persistence of False Memory" - Robert Irwin; "As it Flows to the Sea ..." - Storm Constantine; "Hanging the Fool" - Michael Moorcock; "The Emigrant" - Josephine Saxton; "Cave Pirates of the Hollow Earth" - Peter Lamborn Wilson; "The Tenth Muse" - John Matthews; "The Wind Box" - Scott Bradfield; "Snake Dreams" - Gerry Kilworth; "False Prophecy" - Jacqueline Lichtenberg; "The Devil's Picturebook" - R.J. Stewart; and "Knower of Birds" - Rachel Pollock.

At the same time they have published *Dark Fantasies*, subtitled "New tales of psychological and supernatural horror", edited by Chris Morgan. The contents are: "The Will" - Brian Stableford; "Usurper" - Gerry Kilworth; "Life Line" - Stephen Gallagher; "Charley" - A.L. Barker; "Candle Lies" - R.M. Lanning; "Tales from Weston Willow" - Ian Watson; "The Facts in the Case of Mickey Valdon" - David Langford; "Shine For Me" - Frede Warrington; "Lifelines" - Christopher Evans; "Dropping Ghyll" - John Brunner; "Don't Get Lost" - Tamith Lee; "Archway" - Nicholas Royle; "Being an Angel" - Ramsey Campbell; "Interesting Times" - Chris Morgan; "Skin Deep" - Lisa Tuttle; and "Three Degrees Over" - Brian Aldiss.

And the first, and biggest, of the best of the year anthologies has emerged. *Best New SF 3* edited by Gardner Dozois and published by ROBINSON, contains 28 stories in 596 pages, as well as a list of "Honourable Mentions" that contains a further 203 titles, makes you wonder how Dozois finds time to edit a magazine as well. The stories actually published are: "Surfacing" - Walter Jon Williams; "Home Front" - James Patrick Kelly; "The Man Who Loved the Vampire Lady" - Brian Stableford; "Pesches for Mad Molly" - Steven Gould; "The Last Article" - Harry Turtledove; "Stable Strategies for Middle Management" - Eileen Gunn; "In Memoriam" - Nancy Kress; "Kirinyaga" - Mike Resnick; "The Girl Who Loved Animals" - Bruce McAllister; "The Last of the Winnebagoes" - Connie Willis; "Love in Vain" - Lewis Shiner; "The Hob" - Judith Moffett; "Our Neural Chernobyl" - Bruce Sterling; "House of Bones" - Robert Silverberg; "Schrodinger's Kitten" - George Alec Effinger; "Do Ya, Do Ya, Wanna Dance" - Howard Waldrop; "The Growth of the House of Usher" - Brian Stableford; "Glacier" - Kim Stanley Robinson; "Sanctuary" - James Lawson; "The Dragon Line" - Michael Swanwick; "Mrs Shummel Exits a Winner" - John Kessel; "Emisary" - Stephen Kraus; "It Was the Heat" - Pat Cadigan; "Skin Deep" - Kristine Kathryn Rusch; "Dying in Hull" - D. Alexander Smith; "Distances" - Kathie Kaja; "Famous Monsters" - Kim Newman; and "The Scalehunter's Beautiful Daughter" - Lucius Shepard. That's nine of the Hugo short fiction nominees, and nine of the Nebula short fiction nominees (including two of the winners). But, despite Brian Stableford having the signal honour of appearing twice, it's another poor showing for British writers, though Dozois does seem to be noticing *Interzone* now.

#### PEOPLE

Anne Gay has sold her first novel, *Mindbait*, to ORBIT. It is due to be published as one of the first of ORBIT's new hardback line during 1990.

Geoff Ryan's two-part story, "Love Sickness", which appeared in *Interzone* last year, has been expanded into a 150,000 word novel with the new title *A Child's Garden*, which will be appearing from UNWIN later this year.

Christopher Priest has sold his new novel, *The Good Woman*, to BLOOMSBURY.

John Brunner reports that he has just sold a far-future novel, *The Haze of Stars*, to BALLANTINE in the US. He has also sold "At the Sign of the Rose" to a three-story collection set in one of Robert Silverberg's alternative worlds; "A Break in the Ring" to a collection edited by Silverberg and Martin Greenberg built around a painting by Vincent D'Infate; and "The First Since Ancient Persia", a novelette set in South America, to Amazing. He also says: "Jim Ben has approached me regarding an improbable collaboration which I may well agree to because it's so different from anything I ever attempted before..."

John Brunner

Mary Gentle's three book deal with BANTAM UK, reported last issue, will not only include her most recently completed novel, with the working title *Rats and Gargoyles*, but also two other novels whose working titles are: *The Architecture of Desire* and *1610: A Sundial in a Grave*. Meanwhile ORBIT will publish her collection, *Scholars and Soldiers* in 1990.

Long-time Newcastle fan, Ian Williams, has his first novel published this month. Called *The Lies That Bind* it is published by the FRONTLINES imprint of MACDONALD Children's Books.

Moebius, the French comics artist, is to be featured in an exhibition at the Natural History Museum, Kensington, London. The exhibition, "The Rock Festival", was first displayed in Strasbourg, France, and provides an exploration of the fascinating world of crystals in nature, art, science and science fiction. The Moebius Gallery forms part of this exhibition, and contains 60 original drawings linked to the world of crystals. It forms the first major UK exhibition of art by Moebius, and it's the first time that the Natural History Museum has staged such an exhibition featuring the work of a comic book artist. "The Rock Festival" runs from 16 July until 15 January 1990.

James Herbert, whose *Hunted* will be published in paperback by NEL on 3 August, is about to embark on a nationwide tour to publicise the book. His tour will take in London, Dublin, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Coventry, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Brighton. Unfortunately there are no dates or venues given, so keep an eye on your local press.



Stephen Lawhead, the American author of *The Pendragon Cycle*, another retelling of the Arthurian saga, is in Britain to celebrate the publication of the third volume in the series, *Arthur*. He'll be attending the BSFA London Meeting in August before going to speak in Birmingham the next day, and returning to London for a signing on the Saturday.

#### OBITUARIES

Jim Backus, the American actor who provided the voice for the cartoon character Mr Magoo, died on 3 July 1989, at the age of 76.

Donald Barthelme, American post-modernist writer whose work has been compared to John Barth, Thomas Pynchon and Italo Calvino, died on 23 July 1989, aged 58. His first novel, *1967*, was a surreal parody of *Snow White*; his most recent, *The King*, due to be published next year, features King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, and is set during the Second World War.

Mel Blanc, the American actor, died on 10 July 1989, aged 81. He who was most widely known for supplying the voices for a host of Warner Bros cartoon characters, including Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Tweety Pie, Sylvester and the Roadrunner. His most recent, and perhaps most famous role was supplying the voice of Roger Rabbit in the Steven Spielberg film, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*.

Phil Nichols has sent the following appreciation: "If, as Gehan Wilson has suggested, *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* was the swansong of the Hollywood cartoon, the death of Mel Blanc symbolises its final passing. More than any other individual, it was Blanc who fleshed out the stock of Warner characters, who gave them a solidity that extended beyond the flickering images who literally gave them the breath of life.

Mel Blanc was born in 1908 and began his career as a radio actor, with a leaning towards comedy characters. His range of voices - always distinctly his, yet always distinctly different - was much in demand in support of the top stars of the day, including Burns and Allen and Jack Benny. He broke into cartoons voicing Walter Lantz's Woody Woodpecker and a rapidly expanding range of Warner characters. Warner eventually ran down their stock of contract voice artists, and relied increasingly on Blanc alone to voice everything from drunken bulls to towns of Mexican mice.

Blanc's influence on the Warner cartoons went considerably beyond merely providing the voices. The simple fact of his being the only voice artist gave them a unity lacking in those of rival studios. He also led to Warner adopting a unique production method for their soundtracks. Instead of recording in a single take from beginning to end - which inevitably meant that no voices could overlap, and that the pace of the animation would be forced to follow the pace of the actor - Blanc recorded each character separately; the soundtrack would be built up of various layers, with voices overlapping and interacting at any chosen pace. This alone could account for the breathtaking pace of many of the Warner classics, such as the duck season/rabbit season argument from *"Rabbit Fire"* (1951).

Blanc's ability to originate voices - and his voices were always originals, never imitations - also helped shape the characters. Bugs Bunny's cool response to the most outrageous of intrusions was always the laid-back "What's up, Doc?" The really rather tiny Yosemite Sam became a literal big noise through Blanc's roughest throat-tearing roar. Even the unflappable Road Runner, relentlessly following a road to nowhere against all the odds had an appropriate catchphrase "Beep beep!" Blanc claimed that even when the characters visibly changed, the voices remained constant: "Bugs looks different, but close your eyes and he sounds the same as he did 30 years ago." And yet, as the characters developed visually, they came more and more to match Blanc's vocal characterisation.

Blanc's work beyond the cartoon world included numerous voice overs, a couple of films (*Neptune's Daughter*, *Kiss Me Stupid*), his own radio series (CBS, 1946) - and the (sometime) voice of Twiki, Buck Rogers's robot companion. Overall, his contribution to the world of fantasy film is immeasurable, if only because his realisation of so many thoroughly convincing characters remained, to the average film-goer or TV watcher, completely anonymous. From the demise of the Hollywood cartoon, its death (and, ironically, its preservation) by television, Blanc's characters remained superior; the voice may have become dryer, deeper, rougher, and the drawings weaker and jerkier, but Bugs remained Bugs, and Daffy was just as, well, daffy as ever. And although his son Noel Blanc is pledged to continue the family interest in voicing the great characters, one thing is for sure: cartoons can never be the same again."

Phil Nichols

Nigel Dennis author of literary fantasies including *Cards of Identity* (1955) and *A House in Order* (1966) his last novel, set in the third world war and winner of the Heinemann Fiction Award, died on 19 July 1989, aged 77.

Anton Diffring, the German actor who specialised in villainous rôles, including a leading rôle in Truffaut's *Fahrenheit 451*, died in Nice, aged 70.

Michele Lupo, Italian film director of spaghetti westerns and comedies, including *An Extraterrestrial Sheriff*, died on 27 June 1989, aged 56.

Ray McNally, the Irish actor who won an Oscar for his role in *The Mission*, and who starred in the near-future TV thriller *A Very British Coup*, died in Dublin on 15 June 1989, aged 63.

Laurence Olivier, the first British actor to be raised to the peerage, and acclaimed as the finest actor of this century, died on 11 July 1989, aged 82. Among his many rôles, from Shakespeare to Pinter, one of his most recent was as a hologram in the Dave Clark musical, *Time*.

Eric Peake, British TV scriptwriter who was responsible for many of the early episodes of *The Avengers*, died on 6 July 1989 at the age of 62.

Franklin J. Schaffner, American film director who made *The Planet of the Apes*, among other highly acclaimed films such as *Patton*, *Papillon*, *The Boys from Brazil*, *The Warlord* and the original TV production of *Twelve Angry Men*, died on 2 July 1989, aged 59.

William F. Temple, the British SF author, died in Folkestone on 15 July 1989, he was 75. His first novel, *Four-Sided Triangle* was published in 1949, shortly before he gave up his position as Head Clerk of the London Stock Exchange, and he published 7 more SF novels, the last of which was *The Fleishpots of Sansato* (1968); included among them was the Martin Magnus trilogy for children. He also wrote over 100 short stories, the first of which, "The Kossu", appeared in 1935. At the time he shared a flat with Arthur C. Clarke, and the two were among the founders of the British Interplanetary Society. He was the editor of the society's magazine, *Bulletin*.

When he learned of Temple's death, Arthur C. Clarke sent us this appreciation:

"Just three days ago (July 13) I received a letter from Bill Temple that he had started to write on June 14, and completed with great difficulty, over a considerable period, with several different pens. A note from his wife Joan reported that he was back in hospital yet again.

Because the letter had taken two weeks to reach me, and Bill's condition appeared serious, I phoned immediately. How glad I am now to my delight, Bill was back home, and I was able to have a brief but cheerful conversation with him. I guessed it might be our last, but did not suspect how soon this would prove to be the case.

The fascinating thing about Bill's final letter was that, apart from its sombre content, he sounded exactly like the same crotchety character I knew more than 50 years ago. For example: "... in the Intensive Care Heart Unit, having been rushed here at 90 mph by ambulance (my third time since Xmas). Must have been in a bed state - Mrs Thatcher doesn't permit just anyone lightly to enter her hospital - she'd rather the beds were kept empty." I'm happy to say that I was able to cheer Bill and Joan with Norman Cousins' endorsement of this same principle: "A hospital is no place for sick people." They thoroughly agreed, and I feel sure that Bill's last wish was never to make that ambulance journey again. It was fulfilled; he died peacefully, sitting in his chair, at home, on July 15.

In that last conversation, I was touched to receive the best - if not the only - compliment Bill ever paid me. He had just received my "science-fictional autobiography", *Ascending Days*, which contains a chapter devoted to the famous "Flat" we shared (with Maurice Hampton and, later, Joan Temple) at 88 Gray's Inn Road, in the years immediately before the War. "When I'd finished it," he said, "I went straight back to the beginning and read it again." I have never received a tribute I shall value more highly.

This is not the place to speak of Bill's contributions (as Editor of its *Bulletin*) to the early days of the British Interplanetary Society, or of his literary career, truncated by War, illness and sheer bad luck. But I recall that in the 1937-8 period most of us aspiring young writers looked up at him and his advanced years (he was already a mature 24!) with something like awe. And when he sold his novel, *Four-Sided Triangle*, to the movies, our admiration (and envy) knew no bounds.

Bill was the sort of friend every man needs, especially if - as in my case - he has occasional delusions of significance. I send my deepest sympathy to his devoted wife Joan, and to their children and grandchildren, who seem to have achieved much of the success which eluded Bill. I am indeed sorry that, by just a few weeks, the family missed the opportunity of celebrating a Golden Wedding anniversary."

Arthur C. Clarke  
Colombo, 16 July 1989

John W. Wall (Sarban), British diplomat and author, died on 11 April 1989, aged 78.

A career diplomat who served in the Middle East and North Africa, was Ambassador to Paraguay between 1957-59, and Consul-General in Alexandria between 1963-66; Wall wrote one fantasy novel and two collections of stories which he published under the pseudonym "Sarban". It wasn't until the early 1980s that Peter Nicholls and Mike Ashley independently discovered Sarban's true identity.

His novel, *The Sound of His Horn* (1952), established an immediate reputation as one of the key alternative histories of the post-war era, and certainly one of the most significant members of that sub-genre of tales in which Germany won World War II. In this book Nazi ideology and morality is represented by the Wild Hunt in which, under the supervision of German overlords, specially bred humans are used to hunt other humans.

The book format (in which the narrator tells his tale coolly by a fireside many years after the event) and many of its best effects, owe more to the traditional British ghost story than to fantasy or science fiction, and it was within this genre that Sarban was probably at his best, as demonstrated by his two collections of horror and ghost stories, *Ringstones* and *Other Curious Tales* (1951) and *The Doll Maker and Other Tales of the Uncanny* (1953).

#### PUBLISHING

Another victim of the publishing trade is EQUATION, THORSON's specialist imprint that has been bringing into print classic examples of the English ghost story. Their paperbacks have been successful, and they have just published their latest selection: *Bone to his Bone*, the Stoneground ghost tales of E.G. Swain; *The Black Reaper*, tales of terror by Bernard Capes; *Stories in the Dark*, tales of terror by Jerome K. Jerome, Barry Pain and Robert Barr; *The Magic Mirror*, lost supernatural and mystery stories by Algernon Blackwood; and *Dracula's Brood*, neglected vampire classics by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, M.R. James, Algernon Blackwood and others. These five books may, however, be the last from EQUATION. Their occasional ventures into hardbacks, notably such volumes as *The Illustrated Sheridan LeFanu*, have not sold well, and this failure is prompting THORSON to scrap the whole line.

But as one publisher goes down, another emerges. DUNSCAITH is a brand new publishing house which is, to quote its press release, "launching a provocative and innovative series of sword-and-sorcery fantasies using genuine mythology". Their first venture, published in both hardback and paperback, is *The Faceless Tarot* by Keith Seddon, editor of the short-lived SF magazine *Vortex* in the late-1970s, and Jocelyn Almond, author of a forthcoming book on *Tarot and Relationships*. Further titles are already planned for 1990, the first of which is a fantasy by "Raven Christchild".

ORBIT are to launch a hardback line in the near future. Many of the books already scheduled as "C-Format" paperbacks will now appear in hardback instead. It is the first venture into hardback publishing since the quiet demise of the MACDONALD hardback line a couple of years ago.

Rumours abound about the eventual buyer of GOLLANZ. No decision has yet been made, but the strongest rumours suggest that the buyer might be VIRGIN, who are known to be looking for a publishing outlet.

Meanwhile, GOLLANZ's SF editor, Malcolm Edwards, is rumoured to be setting up a small press in order to publish a special edition of a new book by Stephen King.

Meanwhile one purchase in the book world has now been confirmed. W.H. Smith, Britain's biggest retailer of books, has taken over Waterstone's, the second-biggest independent chain of bookshops. The purchase takes the form of a £40m merger between Waterstone's and Sherratt & Hughes, a subsidiary of Smith's, to produce a chain of 78 shops. Tim Waterstone, who founded the company, is expected to retain management control. He sought the merger as the only possible way of raising the capital for an ambitious programme of expansion launched over

the last 12 months, and this programme is likely to continue with a view to having a network of 100 stores.

TITAN are publishing *Mal the Psychic Girl* as a bi-monthly series of graphic novels. Written by Kazuya Kudo and drawn by Ryochi Ikegami, it is derived from one of Japan's most popular comic books.

#### NEW & FORTHCOMING BOOKS JUNE - AUGUST 1989

- Brian ALDIS *Man in his Time* (VGSF, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Gollanz, 1988) of collection list published as Best SF Stories of Brian Aldiss; *Cracken at Critical* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (Kerosina, 1987) of novel incorporating two early stories.
- Isaac ASIMOV *Robot Dreams* (VGSF, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Gollanz, 1987) of collection of robot stories.
- Isaac ASIMOV, Charles G. WAUGH & Martin H. GREENBERG (Eds) *The Mammoth Book of Golden Age Science Fiction* (ROBINSON, pbk, £4.99) 1st UK edn of collection of 10 novellas from the 1940s; *Monsters* (ROBINSON, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of reprint anthology of stories by Silverberg, Tenn, Zelazny, Farmer & 7 others; *Devils* (ROBINSON, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of reprint anthology of stories by Bloch, Farmer, Clarke, Sturgeon, Brown & 13 others.
- A.A. ATTANASIO *Radix* (GRAFTON, pbk, £4.99) 1st UK edn of 1981 Nebula award finalist.
- Clive BARBER *The Great and Secret Show* (COLLINS, hbk, £12.95) 1st edn of *The First Book of the Art*.
- Greg BEAR *Psychone* (VGSF, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn (USA, 1979) of horror novel; *The Forge of God* (LEND, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (Gollanz, 1987) of novel about alien visitors and the end of the earth.
- Chris BEEBEE *The Main Event* (ORBIT, pbk, £2.99) 1st edn of sequel to *The Hub*.
- Nancy Varian BERBERICK *Stormblade* (PENGUIN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of *Dragonline Heroes Vol 2*.
- Algernon BLACKWOOD *The Magic Mirror* (EQUATION, pbk, £3.50) 1st edn of selection of his "Lost Supernatural and Mystery stories".
- Octavia BUTLER *Imago* (GOLLANZ, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of *Xenogenesis III*; *Adulthood Rites* (VGSF, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Gollanz, 1988) of *Xenogenesis II*.
- Bernard CAPES *The Black Reaper* (EQUATION, pbk, £3.50) 1st edn of collection of Tales of Terror from unjustly neglected turn of the century writer.
- Orson Scott CARD *Red Prophet* (LEND, hbk, £11.95, pbk, £5.95) 1st UK edn of Vol 2 of *Tales of Alvin Maker*; *Seventh Son* (LEND, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (LEND, 1988) of Vol 1 of *Tales of Alvin Maker*.
- Jack L. CHALKER *Masks of the Martyrs* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of Book 4 of *The Rings of the Master*.
- John CLUTE, David PRINGLE & Simon OUNLEY Eds *Interzone: The 4th Anthology* (SIMON & SCHUSTER, hbk, £12.95) 1st edn of anthology that includes 3 stories (by Pollock, Calder & Baxter) never before published.
- Richard DALBY *Ed Dracula's Brood* (EQUATION, pbk, £3.99) 1st edn of selection of 24 "neglected Vampire classics" by Conan Doyle, M.R. James, Algernon Blackwood and others.
- Richard DALBY & Rosemary PARDOE Eds *Ghosts & Scholars* (EQUATION, pbk, £6.99) Reprint (Crucible, 1987) of collection of ghost stories in tradition of M.R. James.
- Joe DEVER *The Omega Zone* (BEAVER, pbk, £2.99) 1st edn of *Freeway Warrior 3*.
- Philip K. DICK *The Broken Bubble* (GOLLANZ, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of another mainstream novel.
- Chris DIXON *Winter in Aphelion* (UNWIN, pbk, £6.99) 1st edn of 1st novel by new British fantasy writer.
- Gardner DOZOIS *Ed Best New SF 3* (ROBINSON, pbk, £6.99) 1st UK edn of monumental Best of Year anthology.
- David EDWARDS *The Diamond Throne* (GRAFTON, hbk, £12.95) 1st UK edn of Book 1 of *The Elenium*.
- Philip Jose FARMER *Dayworld Rebel* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Grafton, 1988) of sequel to *Dayworld*.
- Edward L. FERRAN & Anne JORDAN Eds *The Best of Modern Horror* (Viking, hbk, £14.95) 1st UK edn of collection of 14 stories from F&SF by King, Aldiss, Bloch, Gallagher, Pangborn, Tuttle, Aickman, DeGard, Watson and others.
- D.G. FINLAY *The Killing Glance* (ARROW, pbk, £4.50) 1st edn of omnibus of horror quartet, *The Watchman Chronicle*.
- Alan Dean FOSTER *Glory Lane* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of novel about an alien discovered in a ten-pin bowling alley.
- Christopher FOWLER *Roofworld* (ARROW, pbk, £3.99) Reprint (LEND, 1988) of highly praised horror novel.
- Craig Shaw GARDNER *An Excess of Enchantments* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of Verse the Second in *The Ballad of Wuntvor*; *Slaves of the Volcano God* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of 1st part of new trilogy.

Sheila GILLULY *The Crystal Keep* (HEADLINE, pbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of sequel to *Greenbriar Queen*.

Andrew M. GREELEY *Angel Fire* (LEGEND, hbk, £11.95) 1st UK edn of "A Heavenly Fantasy"; *The Final Planet* (LEGEND, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Legend, 1988) of sf novel.

David HALLAMSHIRE *The Alien's Dictionary* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st edn of collection of humorous definitions.

Lyndon HARVEY *Riddle of the Seven Realms* (CORGI, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of fantasy novel.

Simon HAWKE *The Argonaut Affair* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of 7th part of Time Wars series.

Gilbert HERNANDEZ *Uman Diastrophism* (TITAN, pbk, £6.95) 1st UK edn of a Heartbreak Soup graphic novel.

Jaimie HERNANDEZ *Ape Sex* (TITAN, pbk, £6.50) 1st UK edn of a love & Rockets graphic novel.

Douglas HILL *Galactic Warlord* (PAN PIPER, pbk, £2.25) & *Deethwing over Veynas* (PAN PIPER, pbk, £2.25) Reprints (Gollancz, 1979 & 1980) of 1st 2 books in Last Legionary Quartet, children's books.

Richard KADREY *Metaphage* (VGSF, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Gollancz, 1988) of highly acclaimed cyberpunk novel.

Gerry KILWORTH *Cloudrock* (UNWIN, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Unwin, 1988) of highly praised SF novel.

Dean R. KOONTZ *The Mask* (HEADLINE, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Coronet, 1982, as by Owen West) of horror novel.

Mercedes LAKEY *Arrow's Flight* (LEGEND, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of sequel to *Arrows of The Queen*.

Hugh LAMB Ed. *Stories in the Dark* (EQUATION, pbk, £3.50) 1st edn of selection of ghost stories by Jerome K. Jerome, Barry Pain & Robert Barr.

Stephen LAWHEAD *Arthur* (LION, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of 3rd book in *The Pendragon Cycle*.

John LEE *The Unicorn Dilemma* (ORBIT, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of sequel to *The Unicorn Quest*.

Brian LUNLEY *Hero of Dreams* (HEADLINE, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of novel set in Cthulhu myths.

Anne McAFFREY *Dragonsdawn* (BANTAM, pbk, £6.95) Reprint (Bantam, 1986) of prequel to the Dragon series.

Michael MCCOLLUM *Antares Dawn* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of SF novel.

Sharyn MCGURB *Blindos of the Death Sun* (PENGUIN, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of crime novel set at SF convention.

Wendy N. MCINTYRE *Dreamscape* (VGSF Classic 33, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Gollancz, 1978) of Hugo & Nebula Award winner.

Victor MILAN & Melinda SNODGRASS *Runespear* (NEL, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of novel combining Nazis and Norse myth.

Chris MORGAN *Dark Fantasies* (LEGEND, hbk, £11.95, pbk, £5.95) 1st edn of orig. anthology of stories by Stableford, Kilworth, Langford, Brunner, Lee, Campbell, and 10 others.

James MORROW *This is the Way the World Ends* (LEGEND, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (Gollancz, 1987) of highly praised apocalyptic novel.

Peter MORWOOD *The Warlord's Domain* (LEGEND, hbk, £11.95, pbk, £5.95) 1st edn of "A 4th volume of Alban Fantasy".

Douglas MILES *Derivell* (PENGUIN, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of Book 3 of *The Moorshire Trilogy* from the Forgotten Realms adventures.

Don PARKINSON *Starsong* (PENGUIN, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of "A Science Fiction Love Story".

Windy & Richard PINI *The Secret of Two-Edge* (TITAN, pbk, £7.95) 1st UK edn of the 6th and final book of *The Complete Elfquest*, graphic novel.

Frederik POHL *The Coming of the Quantum Cats* (VGSF, pbk, £2.99) Reprint (Gollancz, 1987) of parallel worlds novel.

Rachel POLLACK & Caitlin MATTHEWS Eds *Tarot Tales* (LEGEND, pbk, £5.95) 1st edn of orig. anthology of stories based on tarot by Gwyneth Jones, M. John Harrison, Moorcock, Saxton, Bradfield and 11 others.

Christopher ROWLEY *The Vang - The Military Form* (LEGEND, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of sequel to *Starhammer*.

Fred SABERHAGEN *Berserker's Planet* (VGSF, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of 3rd book in *Berserker* series.

Pamela SARGENT *Venus of Dreams* (BANTAM, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of Vol. 1 of new trilogy.

Keith SEDDON & Jocelyn ALMOND *The Feebleest Tarot* (DUNSCAITH, hbk, £9.90, pbk, £3.95) 1st edn of fantasy based on Tarot from new publisher.

Bob SHAW *Killer Planet* (GOLLANCZ, hbk, £8.95) 1st edn of Shaw's 1st book for children.

Guy N. SMITH *Night of the Crabs* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.99) & *Crab's Moon* (GRAFTON, pbk, £2.99) Reprints (NEL, 1976 & 1984) of horror novels about invasion by crabs.

James V. SMITH *Beastmaker* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of novel of genetic horror.

Brad STROCKLAND *Moon Dreams* (HEADLINE, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of fantasy novel.

E.G. SWAIN *Bone to his Bone* (EQUATION, pbk, £3.50) Reprint (1912) of *The Stoneground Ghost Tales* by acknowledged master of the genre, plus 6 new stories in the series by David Rowlands.

Keith TAYLOR *Barb* (HEADLINE, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of Irish fantasy.

Joan URE *Plague 99* (METHUEN, hbk, £7.95) 1st edn of novel for children about a plague that has made London a ghost town.

Jack VANCE *Big Planet* (LEGEND, pbk, £3.50) 1st unabridged UK edn of novel that first appeared in 1952; *Durdane* (VGSF, pbk, £3.99) 1st edn of the Durdane trilogy complete in one volume.

Margaret WEIS & Tracy Hickman *Triumph of the Darkward* (BANTAM, pbk, £3.50) 1st UK edn of *The Darkward Trilogy Vol. 3*.

Ian WILLIAMS *The Lies that Bind* (PURNELL, pbk, £2.50) 1st edn of 1st novel for young adults.

Tad WILLIAMS *The Dragonbone Chair* (LEGEND, hbk, £14.95, pbk, £7.50) 1st UK edn of Book 1 of *Memory, Sorrow and Thorn*, epic fantasy series.

David WINGROVE *The Middle Kingdom* (NEL, hbk, £13.95, pbk, £7.95) 1st edn of Book 1 of 7-volume *Chung Kuo* series, by former Victor editor.

Joan WOLF *The Road to Avalon* (GRAFTON, pbk, £3.99) 1st UK edn of Arthurian novel which won Romantic Times Award for best historical novel.

William F. WU *Cyborg* (ORBIT, pbk, £2.99) 1st UK edn of Isaac Asimov's Robot City, Book 3.

Jonathan WYLIE *The Lightless Kingdom* (CORGI, pbk, £2.99) 1st edn of *The Unbalanced Earth*, Book 2.

#### MISCELLANY

How's this for a special memento of Neil Armstrong's moonwalk? As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of that epic event, a new company has been set up called *Fleet Street Mementoes*, offering pages from *The Times*, *The Sunday Times* and *The Financial Times* as printing plates, silvered or gilded and mounted in a high quality frame. The front cover of *The Times* featuring the famous photograph of Armstrong on the Moon is the first to be offered in a limited edition of 2,000 - yours for a mere £250.

## Media News

Compiled by John Peters

NEITHER DIRECTOR, PAUL VERHOEVEN OR PETER WELER WILL BE involved in the planned *ROBOCOP* sequel. Verhoeven is currently working on the SF thriller, *TOTAL RECALL*, which stars Arnold Schwarzenegger, Ronny Cox, Sharon Stone and Michael Ironside. He will later be working with the Disney organisation on a dinosaur film. Weller, still to be seen in *LEVIATHAN* and signed to star in Robert Cormann's *FRANKENSTEIN UNBOUND*, was unlikely to return to the robot suit anyway, so Orion are now actively looking for a new director and actor for *ROBOCOP II*.

Stuart Gordon, director of *RE-ANIMATOR* and the soon-to-be-seen *ROBOCOP*, has cast Peter O'Toole, Jeffrey Coombs and Billy Dee Williams in his remake of *THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM* - it will be shot in London and Italy. Meanwhile, Gordon's producer on *RE-ANIMATOR*, Brian Yuzna, is to make his directorial debut with *RE-ANIMATOR II*, followed by *SOCIETY*.

It has been nearly twenty years since film-maker Roger Corman has directed a film, and news has just been released that he is to make *FRANKENSTEIN UNBOUND* for Warner Brothers. The film has been on the cards for more than four years, and it

deals with God persecuting Dr Frankenstein for creating life without a soul. Peter Weller will be the one under persecution. Corman is also planning to produce a remake of his classic, *THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH*, and his production company is also planning *PARADISE*, *FULL FATHOM FIVE*, *TRANSYLVANIA TWIST* and *HATCHET*.

It seems that Philip K. Dick is going to make it to the screen again, following the success of *Blade Runner*. His short story, "Can Remember It For You Wholesale", is being filmed as *Total Recall*, directed by Paul Verhoeven who made *Robocop*.

Vampires are very much in vogue again, and chasing *FRIGHT NIGHT II* for the box office jugular is *THE AWAKENING*, in which a "dead" vampire returns from the grave to hunt down criminals - it stars Moon Zappa (daughter of Frank), Tom Savini and Michael J. Pollard. *SUNDOWN* is a three million dollar vampire-western dealing with a bunch of vampires who retire to a town in the American south-west, where they have to fight a group of active vampires to survive. It stars David Carradine, Bruce Campbell and John Ireland, directed by Anthony Hickox and due for release this winter. George Hamilton returns as Dracula in *LOVE AT SECOND BITE*. Lastly, *TO DIE FOR* finds a vampire falling in love.

Continued overleaf...

Continued from previous page

with a more than willing victim who bares her neck for the last munch. Meanwhile, acclaimed novelist Anne Rice (*Interview With A Vampire*, *The Vampire Lestat*, *Queen of the Damned*) has scripted a TV movie, **HELLO DARKNESS**.

Home Box Office, the US cable station, have asked five top directors to participate in **THE DIRECTORS' CUT**. **ALIEN**, **ALIENS**, **BLADE RUNNER**, **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS** and **HEAVEN'S GATE** will be introduced by their directors, James Cameron, Michael Cimino, Franz Oz and Ridley Scott, who will show substantially different versions of the films we are familiar with. Each film will be earlier or longer versions to those shown in the cinemas.

The US TV scene is its usual mixture of unadventurous imagination - NBC has announced plans for a **POLTERGEIST** series for 1990, though it won't feature any characters from the films. They are also planning a **PHANTOM OF THE OPERA** mini-series, to cash in on the Lloyd Webber musical and all the other films due next year - but perhaps more interestingly, they plan to make Shirley Jackson's *The Lottery* into a telefilm... Lorimar have renewed **FREDDY'S NIGHTMARES** and **FRIDAY THE 13TH: THE SERIES**, **THE HITCH-HIKER**, **RAY BRADBURY THEATRE** are all set to continue...**TALES FROM THE CRYPT** is being revived while **THE TWILIGHT ZONE** has been cancelled yet again...**TALES FROM THE CRYPT** has an impressive array of film directors signed for its initial set of episodes; they include Robert Zemeckis, Richard Donner and Walter Hill; sfx will be by Kevin Yagher. While Laurel Entertainment's **MONSTERS** has also been renewed, they are joining with Columbia TV to make a pilot version of **CREEPSHOW**, to continue in the same vein as the Stephen King-scripted films. Universal, meanwhile, are planning to rework **INVASION OF THE BODYSNATCHERS** into a TV pilot movie with a series to follow. CBS-TV have ordered a further 12 episodes of **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST**, but only as a replacement for whatever flops in the new schedules. CBS-TV have also signed Wes Craven to produce a new comedy show, **THE PEOPLE NEXT DOOR**, which will star Jeffrey Jones as a cartoonist who can bring his drawings to life. Finally, while **ALIEN NATION** did little to excite the cash registers, producer/writer Kenneth Johnson is reportedly adapting the film for 20th Century Fox TV. Johnson was the creator of the original V TV movie, though he little to do with the execrable series that followed - and confirming that an alien never knows when to lie down, Warner Brothers are looking into the possibilities of reviving V itself.

David Carradine plays a bionic-armed bounty hunter in **FUTURE FORCE**, and will fight mutants in **WARRIORS**. Husband and wife team Jeff Goldblum and Geena Davis star in **EARTH GIRLS ARE EASY** - Goldblum being one of a trio of furry aliens who want to get down and get with it on the California party scene. Russ Tamblyn and Lily Waggner (*Wonderwoman*) star in a sword-and-sorcery spoof **DEMON SWORD**. There will be a **HALLOWEEN V**. rae Dawn Chung, Schwarzenegger's companion in **COMMANDO**, is to make **THE BORROWER**, in which an alien crashlands on Earth and searches for replacement parts for his body. While **DICK TRACY** has finally begun production - with James Caan and Jack Nicholson signed for guest roles - Sean Young has left the cast and been replaced by Glenn Headley. This is the second major film in succession that Young has been forced to leave - the first being **BATMAN** when she was injured in rehearsals. **MAD MAX**'s George Miller has a new film on release in the States - called **DEAD CALM**, it's yet another maritime thriller, but instead of monsters and mayhem, Sam Neill fights a 'Hitchcockian' psycho and mayhem. Miller produces and Philip Noice directs. Dustin Hoffman has joined the **DICK TRACY** cast as Mumbles. Warner Brothers have left the **BATMAN** sets standing so that they can exploit them more fully in future sequels and a possible high-budget TV series. Danny DeVito as The Penguin, and Robin Williams have both been signed for **BATMAN II** which started shooting in May. Rock group U2 are considering the Royal Shakespeare Company's offer to write the music for their stage version of the little-seen Kubrick/Burgess classic, **A CLOCKWORK ORANGE**. Simon Dutton has been announced as being the Simon Templar in a forthcoming **SAINT TV** series. Jim Belushi stars as Fred in the soon-to-be Spielberg-produced **FLINTSTONES**, with Rick Moranis as Barney Rubble. Director John Landis appears in John Carpenter's next film, **SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION**.

Michael Caine returns to TV in **DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE**, an Anglo-American mini-series that capitalises on the recently successful **JACK THE RIPPER** series which did very well in America. Terry Gilliam's next film will be **THE WATMOMEN**, based on the successful graphic novels. Mickey Rourke stars in what will be Gilliam's first non-original scripted film. Scripting will be done by Sam Hamm, with Gilliam collaborating with Charles McKean in the rewrites. Italian director/producer Dario Argento is to

collaborate with George Romero on a two-part anthology, **EDGAR ALLAN POE**. Filming starts in August with Argento responsible for **THE BLACK CAT**, and Romero an updated version of **THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH**. George C Scott stars in **EXORCIST: FIFTEEN YEARS AFTER** (it may become **EXORCIST: 1990**), based on Peter Blatty's novel *Legion*; Jason Miller returns as *Father Karras* - a neat trick seeing as he snuffed it in the first film. **OUTPOST** sounds very much like a distaff version of the Peter Hyam SF thriller *OUTLAND* - a woman sheriff, Joanna Going, is sent to a distant mining planet to bring law and order. Planned as a TV pilot film, if successful it will be turned into a high-budget series. Philip Jose Farmer's *Dayworld* series of novels is to be the basis for a new film called **DAYBREAKER**. Scripted by John Raffa, and financed by Castle Rock Productions, the story takes place on a future Earth divided into seven segregated societies which, due to overpopulation, only come to life one day of the week. Animator Ralph Bakshi's next project is **HOUD TOWN**, a TV movie.

Director John Hough has left the Robert Englund version of **PHANTOM OF THE OPERA** and has been replaced by Dwight Little. Disney are re-releasing **FANTASIA** in its original form to celebrate its 50th anniversary next year; the original narration and musical score will be restored. Disney are also planning a sequel to **MARY POPPINS** release 'sometime' in the 1990s. **THE RETURN OF THE INCREDIBLE HULK** was so successful when broadcast earlier this year in America that NBC have ordered another TV movie, this time including another of the Marvel comic characters, Daredevil, so watch out for **THE TRIAL OF THE INCREDIBLE HULK**. Meanwhile, another hero is returning - Tarzan is being revived by CBS-TV for a pilot TV movie, the twist this time being that he'll be in the concrete jungle of New York. It stars Joe Lara as the vine-swinging, Kim Crosby as cab-driving Jane, and Tony Curtis as her father. **THE LONE RANGER** is about to ride again under the direction of John Landis. **CHIMPUNKS ROASTING ON AN OPEN FIRE** should have the animal rights activists up in arms - it comes from New Vision. Sam Raimi has left the **EVIL DEAD** for a short while, to make **THE DARK MAN**, where a terminally injured man returns with supernatural powers. **PSYCHO IV** is likely to be a telemovie. Stuart Gordon's **THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM** has been delayed until later this year; meanwhile, he is to shoot a trilogy of terror shorts for HBO called **ASYLUM**. Sean Connery has joined the cast of **THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER**.

Sequels recently announced: **FLY III**; **GREMLINS II**; **CHILD'S PLAY II**; **TEXAS CHAINSAW III**; **LEATHERFACE: A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET V**; **THE DREAM CHILD** (is there anyone still actually alive on Elm St?); **HALLOWEEN V**; **TRANCERS II**; **FRIDAY THE 13TH, PART VIII**; **JASON IN HELL** (Neighbours again?).

Composer Philip Glass, whose collaboration last year with Doris Lessing on an SF opera, **THE MAKING OF THE REPRESENTATIVE FOR PLANET EIGHT**, had a mixed reception from critics and public alike, has tried again with a chamber opera, **THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER**. Its New York premiere was in July 14th at the Lincoln Centre. It may be performed in London next year, but what is technically the British premiere (described on promotional material as the Welsh premiere) occurs at St Donat's Castle, 9-11 August, as part of the Vale of Glamorgan Festival. Tickets £8 and £5 from St Donat's Art Centre (tel: 04465 4848). (Your intrepid editor is disappearing into the wilds of Wales to attend the second night - review next issue.)

**VESTRON VIDEO INTERNATIONAL** are releasing *Heart of Midnight* on video on 21 August. The film stars Jennifer Jason-Leigh, Frank Stallone, Peter Coyote and Brenda Vaccaro.





# FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION: A Discussion Document

by Rob Meades

## Introduction

Some time last Autumn, a group of us got to talking about the Science Fiction Foundation. I only dimly remember the conversation now; I recall that we were all aware of the existence of the Foundation, but merely that. We knew nothing of what it did, what kind of library it had, who it was run by, etc. And what's more, we knew of no-one who was involved with it. We were aware that the Foundation was based at the Polytechnic of North London, and it seemed reasonable to assume that the SFF wasn't being showered with pennies by an under-funded educational body. All of which led to the conclusion, in my mind, that an ailing SF resource was being neglected by fandom.

I resolved to find out more and here are my thoughts on the SFF, its current status and what we as fans might do for it. All the opinions expressed are mine; none are the responsibility of the Science Fiction Foundation or its paid or voluntary staff. However, I am indebted to Joyce Day, part-time secretary at the Foundation, Ted Chapman, retired Principal Librarian at the Polytechnic and helper at the Foundation, and John Clute, member of the Foundation's elected Council for the information and assistance they gave me in the lead-up to preparing this report.

## History and Current Status

The Science Fiction Foundation was set up in 1970 as a central office for information on science fiction. George Hay, one of a group of concerned writers, approached the North East London Polytechnic (now the Polytechnic of East London) and the Foundation was offered a home in the Department of Applied Philosophy (actually a general studies department). Dr George Brosan, director of the Polytechnic at the time, became its first president. Despite the connection with the Polytechnic, the Foundation is an independent organisation intended as a central resource for those interested in SF, particularly editors, writers, critics, teachers, librarians, and others with a professional interest in the genre. Membership is by invitation only, though the facilities of the Foundation are open to all; it currently has around one hundred members.

The Foundation is directed by an elected Council of about 30 persons and enjoys the patronage of Arthur C Clarke and Ursula K Le Guin. Its stated aims are as follows:

- To promote a discriminating understanding of the nature of science fiction to the public at large, and especially to the media.
- To disseminate information about science fiction.
- To provide research facilities for anyone wishing to study science fiction.
- To investigate the usefulness of science fiction in education.

The two main features of the Foundation are its library and its journal, *Foundation: the review of science fiction*.

The library is available for reference use only and is housed in its own room within the Polytechnic general library. It is therefore only available during weekdays in term time when there is someone there to supervise it. At its core is a collection of 5,000 volumes (3,500 titles) donated by the BSFA in 1972. Additions to this nucleus have brought the library up to 12,000 volumes, making it the largest SF library in Britain. There is a collection of more than 750 critical works, though my notes don't make it clear whether this is included within the figure of 12,000 volumes.

As well as this main collection, some specialist collections are retained by the Foundation, notable among which are the Science Fiction Writers of America deposit, a collection of Russian SF belonging to Alan Meyer, and the papers of the Flat Earth

Society. The Foundation currently houses the library of John Clute, though this is soon to be returned to John.

The journal *Foundation* has gone from a fanzine-style format at its launch in April 1972, to a 100+ perfect bound A5 volume. It gains contributions from major authors and critics and is established as one of the chief critical organs in SF. Around 1000 copies are distributed and it is published three times a year.

During the 70s, the Foundation enjoyed the services of a full-time administrator at senior lecturer grade, a research assistant and a full-time secretary. Currently, it has one part-time secretary, who works out of hours to maintain the Foundation even in its present reduced state. The library has been severely affected by recent trends in the economy. It has a single card catalogue for the whole collection, which has been degraded continuously over the years, and has very limited journal holdings.

The Foundation has, in the past, organised tuition of SF studies, arranged provision of lecturers for a range of occasions, put together a season of films at the National Film Theatre, set up an Arts Council lecture tour with Mark Adlard, Brian Aldiss, Peter Nicholls and Bob Shaw, arranged several exhibitions and assisted with a memorial evening for Philip K Dick. The Foundation has made its own programme for the BBC's Open Door series and has provided speakers for radio and TV broadcasts. Colin Greenland was writer-in-residence at the Foundation for 2 years with the aid of an Arts Council grant.

Now that the Foundation is run by one part-time staff member and other spare-time workers, its abilities are necessarily limited. It is still open to all, but visitors must make the most of what limited help is available. The Polytechnic currently pays for heating, accommodation, and some ancillary expenses, in addition to the wages of the part-time secretary, Joyce Day. However, with education funding in its current state, no-one can be sure of the Foundation's future. The journal *Foundation* currently manages to just sustain itself.

## What Can Fans Do?

What can fandom do to assist the Foundation? In my first correspondence with Ted Chapman, it was suggested that provision of a computer to assist with letter writing and cataloguing might be a good step. Recently, David Wingrove has kindly donated a computer to the Foundation, though this is not wholly compatible with other models in use. I have no doubt that fanish expertise in computing, if kept under control, might be used to good effect here.

This, I think, should set the tone for any fund-raising performed by fandom in general - aim to donate an item to the Foundation, rather than a sum of money with no clear application. Talking of money, there is the problem of how funds are held for the Foundation.

John Clute has suggested setting up the Friends of the Science Fiction Foundation. The legal niceties involved in setting up such an organisation have yet to be worked out, but the aim is to provide a body which can assist the Science Fiction Foundation by:

- Providing an interface with fandom in general.
- Publishing and providing information on the Foundation and its state aims to the media, educational establishments and the public in general.
- Assisting the Foundation with tasks that its current state does not allow it to undertake, for instance, by acting as an agency in passing on enquiries made of the Foundation to appropriate contacts in fandom or elsewhere.
- Securing donations of funds, books, equipment etc.

The Friends would act as a bridge between the expertise within the Foundation and the knowledge base of fandom as a whole, allowing one to reinforce the other. It should publish a quarterly newsletter for circulation amongst fandom and Foundation members, through which contact can be maintained. More frequent meetings, though difficult to arrange in the already crowded London schedule, might be arranged to allow discussions to take place between interested parties.

Friends of the Foundation aside, fandom can be most helpful to the Foundation in that it provides a pool of bodies; people who are interested and willing to help. The Foundation's staffing levels (limits it severely; it can no longer take on the kind of work that could help to pull it out of the hole it is in. The managed help of fanish hands in, for instance, cataloguing the library, collecting donations of books, or providing expertise in particular areas, could be of immense help. Unco-ordinated, though well-intentioned help might be of more hindrance than it is worth, so again I believe the Friends has a function in bridging the gap.

An idea that occurred to me during a visit to the Foundation library was that when renewing their book-lists, fans might lodge their old list with the library. Given the rather cramped conditions that the Foundation library must be kept in, a source of further material, provided on a strictly voluntary basis, could prove invaluable.

In the past, the Foundation has done some work for the media. Though the record shows a poor history of any payment appearing for such services, some publicity in the right quarter might bring in valuable revenue. The proviso must always be not to overload the already strained resources at the Foundation, but to assist in any work that is generated. Again, Friends of the Foundation could provide a channel for co-ordinating effort in publicity and assistance from fans to cope with the effects of that publicity. What is the going rate for, effectively, consultancy work of this type (and where else could it be done anyway)?

The Foundation has a large reference collection, though this is currently not complete, due to lack of funds, and an increasing number of publications in the field. Another job that the Friends might undertake is to catalogue the collections and publish them. The Foundation has no facilities to produce publications of its own, apart from the journal, so fanish help might once again come into its own.

The journal Foundation is the most obvious flagship by which the Foundation is known world-wide. There are always a few

hundred copies left over from each printing, so scope is available for an increase in circulation. This might be a simple and effective way of raising funds and publicising the Foundation all in one go.

Finally, books. The Polytechnic buys no books for the Foundation; indeed, for quite some time it bought no books, even course-related books, for its own library. 12,000 books in one small room, however, makes for quite a crowd. That's not to say that book donations would not be welcomed as they will always fill gaps in collections, etc, and can otherwise be used as swaps for badly-needed volumes. Fanzines and a considerable magazine collection are also incorporated in the Foundation library.

## Conclusion

This report consists of my thoughts on the Foundation, intended as a basis for further thinking. It is by no means complete in its scope - ideas, comments, criticisms etc, will be well received. Remember that the Foundation:

- a) is understaffed and underfunded, and therefore cannot cope with any work over and above what it does at present.
- b) is, while in letter and spirit independent from the Polytechnic, very much dependent on it for accommodation and finance.
- c) Needs co-ordinated help from volunteers who have a love of science fiction and a desire to see the only national resource in SF survive.

Comments should be addressed to: Rob Meades, 75 Hecham Close, Walthamstow, London, E17 5QT. Telephone 01-531 1703

The Science Fiction Foundation is located at: Barking Precinct Library, Polytechnic of East London, Longbridge Road, Dagenham, Essex, RM8 2AS. Telephone 01-590 7722, ext 2177

If you wish to use the SFF, as a member of both courtesy and convenience to yourself (it's a long way to go to find it's shut), contact Joyce Day to arrange a suitable time to visit.

If you have any thoughts on how the BSFA can assist the SFF, please relay them to Maureen Porter at the editorial address. And don't forget, we are planning to hold a discussion on Friends of the Foundation at the BSFA London meeting on August 17th, at the Plough, Museum St. If you can't get along, please send your comments to Maureen Porter, and she will take them to the meeting.

## Competition Corner

By Roger Robinson

### ANSWERS TO COMPETITION 82

Firstly, I'd like to thank all 21 entrants for their comments on the competition, but more especially for the amusement they gave me. Although I asked for only 5 types per entry, almost everybody gave 5 first choices and lots of alternates. Indeed, some of these I considered better than their first choices. As there were so many entries, I will not be able to indicate who sent which titles, but I hope that contestants will be able to recognise their own.

From a total of over 290 "titles", there were surprisingly few duplications. The recipient of the largest number of attacks was, probably predictably, Frank Herbert - who apparently wrote *Dune*, *Dune*, *Dune*, *Dune*, *Dune* (the whole series in one book) and got a fellow author to do number 2001 in the series entitled *A Spice Odyssey*.

There was quite a bit of school-person humour, especially with the Ace Double by Wyndham/Martin who wrote *Jizzie/A Dong For Lya* but failed at the censor's hand, and the duo of *Today We Choose Faces* and *Stolen Faces* which met with the same fate.

As I expected, there were many theme entries including the quintology set in a convention - *Behold the Fan*, *A Winter's Aie*, *The Forever Bar*, *The Demolished Fan* and *The Fan Who Fell to Earth*. Cookery, also dear to most fans' hearts, was well represented with *The Sheep Cook Up*, *The Scene That Never Came Down*, and *The Devil's Wok* among quite a few others.

Some of the more bizarre entries were *Rendezvous with Mama*, *Ladies From Hull*, *B* is for *Andromeda*, *The Lino*, *The Witch and the Wardrobe*, *Alien* (and the sequel, *Aliens*), and one I especially liked - *PAYE and Gomorrah*.

Lots of entries gave explanations and/or plot synopses to add credence to the titles. Prime examples were:

- the P K Dick travel book, *VALL/ISE*
- the decline of the tie maker, *The Tootle Eclipse*
- the true story of Sherar, *Hot Horsh*
- the CIA/FBI secret, *Philip K Dick is Read Aias*
- an ecological fantasy about the Green Party's election victory, *Green Ayes*
- Douglas and Richard Adams' interstellar collaboration *The Hutch-Niker's Guide to the Galaxy*.

To sum up, honourable mentions to John Brunner, A P Mills, P T Ross and Ian Sales. Runner-up was Steven Cain (and not just for the longest list), but the winner was Dave Wood. I include below his entry in full (all writs to him and not me!).

1. **STOLEN FACES** by MCHHLL BSHHP  
(A novel in the John Norman tradition  
"Creates high excrement" *Locus*  
"I was moved" Paul Konkeid Vector)
2. **THE VOYAGE OF THE SPACE BEADLE** by \* \* VAN VAGT  
(He rose from humble beginnings to Supreme Town Crier of the known Universe)
3. **THE JAGUAR SHUNTER** by LKCHNS SHHPHND  
(Cyber-yuppies fight for world dominance hard-wired to their car phones - then along comes the enigmatic Jaguar Shunter to turn their Utopia into a living Hell!)

Continued overleaf ...

# THE PERIODIC TABLE

## Convention News Compiled by Maureen Porter

Courtesy of Chris O'Shea's invaluable (filofax-sized) convention guide, *Connotation*, I can tell you that all the information he gave me last time about the Oxford Union bid is now redundant, as they have dropped out of the race (double-bookings on facilities is rumoured to be the reason - for all its plethora of venues, Oxford colleges etc are always well booked-up). They are now considering whether to organise a convention the weekend before Christmas 1990. Contact: Adrian Cox, St John's College, Oxford, OX1 3JP if you think this is a good idea. Shift it forward a couple of weeks, and I think it would be. Mind you, I have inside knowledge about Oxford just before Christmas...

Rumours for future Eastercon bidding looks like this. A Scottish-based bid for 1992, possibly near a large golf course. Given that 1991 is also in Scotland, I think this has problems before it starts. A London based committee is rumoured to be trying out life beside the seaside - please not that hotel in Brighton, not without an inaugural lynching. A 1993 committee is attempting to head for everyone's favourite knitted tax haven - no, I don't mean Guernsey - and I know that there is a possible bid to gladden the hearts of all Scousers in 1994.

Well, that's this century more or less taken care of - don't forget Millennium, c/o Malcolm Reid, 55 Cedarwood Avenue, Newton means, Glasgow, G77 5LP - what about next century?

Lastly, but by no means least, *Eastcon*, the 1990 Eastercon, has come up with an interesting approach to con organisation. The committee is holding twice monthly meetings (2nd and 4th Wednesdays) at the Skinner's Arms, Judd St, nr Kings Cross, from 7pm onwards for all interested parties. Meetings will have set agendas, beginning with ops and publications, before ending with a free-for-all programming sessions. If you're interested in being involved (and you don't need to be a member of the con yet in order to attend), go along to The Skinner's Arms.

News has also come in, thanks to D J Bevan, of Cymrucon '89, to be held on October 28th, at the Roath Park Community centre, Ninian Road, Cardiff, the fifth in a series of Welsh cons originally conceived by Lionel Fanthorpe. Appropriately, Lionel is one of the guests, along with Brian Stableford and Adrian Cole.

Continued from previous page

4. **THE BLACK CLOUD** by FROD HAYLE  
(One of the few novels to feature a truly extraordinary dull alien intelligence)
5. **THE POISSON BELT** by C CANNON DAVLE  
(French scientists, aware of man's dwindling food supplies, construct huge fish farms in space)

and for good measure, I add Dave's sixth choice

6. **ENEMA MINE** by BARRY LONGYEAR  
Constipated Astronaut stranded on an uninhabited planet meets alien medic...  
"Bung-ho yarn" Ken Lake, Vector  
"Devastating - it tore at my bowels", Ellison)

## COMPETITION 83 Authorial Acrostics

The dictionary defines an acrostic as 'a puzzle in which the first letters of the answers spell out another word. What I would like you to do is to make up one sentence where the initial letters of each word spell out the name of an author. If possible, the sentence should describe the author or their work.'

To keep it to manageable proportions, choose one of the following authors - Brian W Aldiss, L Ron Hubbard, Ursula K Le Guin, Samuel R Delaney, Harlan Ellison or William Gibson. As an example, Alfie Bester might be described as 'A Large Friendly Intelligent Entertainer, Bringing Extraordinary Sensations To Every Reader'.

The usual £5 book token to the best entry received by ??????????. All entries to Roger Robinson, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex, RM3 0RG.

and from the world of comics, Mike Collins, Alan Grant, David Lloyd, David Roache and Bryan Talbot. The cost is £6.50, and you'd better get your skates on as membership is limited to 350 places. All cheques or POs should be made payable to Cymrucon '89, and the person to contact is D Bath, 5 Fairwater Grove West, Llandaff, Cardiff, CF5 2JN.

## Convention Roundup Compiled by Maureen Porter

Please enclose an sae when writing for information, and please mention the BSFA. Most cons run on a tight budget and an SAE is always appreciated. If you are running a convention or know of one which I've missed, please send information to the editorial address. Entries should ideally include dates, site, membership rates, guests, contact address and some indication of the con's theme. All listings are free, and will continue until the convention has taken place. Entries are correct, to the best of my knowledge, by the BSFA cannot take responsibility for any inaccuracies.

Please consider writing a review for *Matrix* should you attend any of these conventions.

### 1989 CONVENTIONS

**UNICON** - Unicon, 1989, 11-13 August, Queens University Hall of Residence and Student Union, Belfast; Guests: Terry Pratchett, Harry Harrison; Membership: Attending £6, supporting membership £3. Accommodation: £6.50 per night, £3.50 with NUS card. Cheques should be made payable to Queens University of Belfast. Contact: 34 College Park Avenue, Belfast, BT7 1LR

**FINNCON 89** - 12-13 August, Old Student House, Helsinki, Finland; Guest: John Brunner. Contact: Toni Jermann, Viikiläntie 4-6 D 103, 00410 Helsinki, or Juhani Hinkkanen, Minna Canthinkatu 18 A 19, SF-00250 Helsinki.

**SCAM** - 12-13 August, Coventry, as part of Coventry festival. Guests include Simon Bisley, Tony Bennett, Phil Elliott, Glenn Fabry, Neil Gaiman, Ian Gibson, John Higgins, Julie Hollings, Bryan Talbot. Events include mart, film, theatre, auctions, signings, workshops, debates. Contact: SCAM, c/o Belgrade Theatre, Belgrade Square, Coventry, CV1 1GS. Tel: 0203 632325

**FANTASTIKA** - 17-20 August, Stockholm, Sweden. Guests: Martin Tudor and others to be announced. Free to non-Scandinavians. Contact: Kaj Harju, Russinvägen 43.1, S-123 59 Farsta, Sweden.

**LIVERPOOL COMIC MART** - 19 August, Bluecoat Concert Hall, School Lane, Liverpool. Comic, film and fantasy mart. Doors open noon.

**RUBICON IV** - 25-28 August, Chequers Hotel, Newbury. Membership: £5. Contact: Krystyna Osborn, Bishop's Cottage, Park House Lane, Reading, Berks RG3. Small relaxcon, very laidback.

**HONEYCOMBE** - 25-28 August, Wiltshire Hotel, Swindon. Membership: Attending £18. Contact: Daniel Cohen, 48 Gurney Drive, East Finchley, London, N2. Media/Dr Who con

**REC-CON** - 25-28 August, Hilton National (formerly Dragonara Hotel), Leeds. Membership: Attending £20, day membership £5. Contact: Alec Lewis, 230 Dyas Ave, Great Barr, Birmingham, B42 1HS. Trek con, plus all night horror programme.

**GREENWOOD III** - 26-27 August, Shepperton Moat House. Contacts: Mr & Mrs Bougourd, Bracknell, Grand Bouet, St Peter Port, Guernsey, CI. Robin of Sherwood convention.

**NOREASCON III** - The 47th Worldcon; 31 August - 4 September, Boston, MA; Guests: Andre Norton/Betty & Ian Ballantine/The Stranger Club; Contact: Colin Fine, 28 Abbey Rd, Cambridge, CB5 8HQ

September 1989 - a possible relaxcon to be held in Scarborough. For further details, contact: Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, YO12 5RQ

**PORTHEIRCON '89** - The Annual Six of One (Prisoner Appreciation Society) Convention; 1-3 September, Portmeirion, N.W. Wales. All outdoor events free (Small hotel toll to non-residents), inside events solely for Six of One members. Contact: Six of One, PO Box



60, Harrogate, HG1 2TP or PO Box 172, Hatfield, PA 19440, USA.

**FRENCH NATIONAL SF CON** - 7-10 September, Albert Camus Cultural Space, Toulon, France. Contact: Editions Antares, La Malagie, Chemin Calabro, 83160 La Valette-du-Var, France.

**UFORIA 2** - 8-10 September, Owens Park, Manchester. Guests include Ed Bishop and Gerry Anderson. Membership: £25. Contact: Katie Runciman, 87 Arran Way, Corby, Northants, NN17 2ER. Weekend accommodation and meals package for £48.70. Con dedicated to Anderson's UFO series. Charities supported include International Rescue and Great Ormond St Hospital.

**PREFAB TROUT** - 22-24 September, Swallow Hotel, Glasgow. Membership: £10 attending, £5 supporting. Guests: Iain Banks, Angus McAllister. Contact: Malcolm Reid, 55 Cedarwood Ave, Newton Mearns, Glasgow G77 5LP. General con.

**FANTASYCON XIV** - 6-8 October, Midland Hotel, Birmingham. Guests: Thomas F. Monteleone, Stephen Laws, Brian Lumley. Membership: Attending £14 (£12 for BPS members), supporting £5.00. Contact: 15 Stanley Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DE.

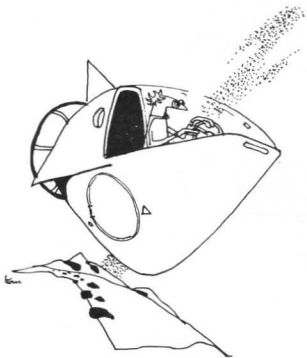
**STL CON** 3-5 November, Hatfield Polytechnic. Guest: Iain Banks. Membership: £5 attending, £1 supporting, cheques payable to HPSU. Contact: PSIFA, Students' Union, Hatfield Polytechnic, College Lane, Hatfield, Herts AL10 9AB. This is another of Hatfield's shoestring cons, i.e. done on the cheap. I've not been to one, but a good time is generally to be found here, I'm told.

**NOVACON 19** - Annual Brum Group con, 17-19 November, Excelsior Hotel, Birmingham. Guest: Geoff Ryman. Membership: £10; Contact: Bernie Evans, 7 Grove Avenue, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 7UY. General con.

**CONNECTION** - 17-19 November, Amsterdam, Holiday Inn Crown Plaza Hotel. Membership: £11. Contact: Rob Houwerijl, Bonaplein 39, 1094 SC Amsterdam, Holland.

(Thanks to René van Rosenberg for this info.)

**TV89** - 25-26 November, Birmingham. Membership: £12 attending, £7.50 for one day. Contact: 9 Titford Road, Oldbury, Warley, West Midlands. "The ultimate experience in television conventions". Charities supported: Children in Need.



## 1990 Conventions

**PIGCON** - February. One day convention organised by the Imperial College Science Fiction Society. Contact: ICSF Society, SU, Imperial College, London W1.

**CONZBILE** - 2-4 February 1990, Great Northern Hotel, Peterborough. American guests: Frank Hayes and Terri Lee, British guest: Mike Whittaker. Membership: £13 (£12 for veterans of Conzble), £5 supporting. Contact: Conzble, 93a Park Road, Peterborough, Cambs, PE1 2TR. A second flogging con, following on from last year's success, possibly to become an annual event.

**EASTCON** - 1990 British SF Convention/Eastercon, 13-16 April, Birmingham, Clarendon Convention Centre; Guests: Iain Banks, Ken Campbell, Nigel Kneale, Anne Page, SMS; Membership: Attending £20, supporting £9. Contact: 15 Maldon Close, Denmark Hill, London, SE5 8DD.

**ELYDOR** - the annual Easter meet convention, held at Shepperton Moat House. I don't know who, how, or much as it seems to be a well-kept secret. I've reason to believe that contacting Richard and Marion Van der Voort, at the Sign of the Dragon, 131 Shen Lane, London, SW14 8AE may help. If anyone feels like letting me know about this convention, I'd be dead keen to hear from you.

**INCLINATION** - 25-28 May 1990, Chequers Hotel, Newbury. Membership: £8.00. Contact: Richmond Hill, 51 James Road, Exeter, Devon, EX4 4LS. Small, highly participatory con, especially intended for those who would like to have fun but are a little nervous of all those people.

**FANDERSON 90** - 26-27 May, 1990 Mount Royal Hotel, Marble Arch, London. Guests: tba. Membership: attending £25 (£22 to Fanderson members), supporting £12. Contact: Barbara Heywood, 50 Albion Road, London, N16 9PH. For fans of Gerry Anderson programmes.

**CONJUNCTION** - 27-29 July, 1990 New Hall, Cambridge. Membership: attending £10, supporting £3. Contact: 25 Wycliffe Road, Cambridge, CB1 3JD. Role-playing/games convention, covering rpg, historical enactment and PBM gaming. This con is apparently being run in a traditional SF convention style rather than the standard "one-day cattle market", and I quote.

**CONFABULATION** - 27-30 July 1990. Greenmount College, Antrim. Guests include James White, Mike Price (crypticist), Hugh Macsett. Membership: £6.00 attending, £4.00 supporting. Contact: The MAnse, 2 Newtownards Rd, greyabbey, BT22 2QG, NI.

**CONFICTION** - The 48th Worldcon; 23-27 August 1990, The Hague, Holland; Guests: Joe Haldeman/Wolfgang Jeschke/Harry Harrison/Chelise Quinn Yarbro/Andrew Porter; Registration: Attending £40, Supporting £16, Children £9 (if they will be under 14 in 1990); Contact: Colin Fine, 28 Abbey Rd, Cambridge, CB5 8HQ.

**CONDIEGO** - 30 August-3 September 1990. 1990 NASFiC, held when the Worldcon is out of the USA, Marriott Hotel, San Diego. Guests include Samuel Delany, Ben Yalow. Contact: PO Box 15771, San Diego, CA 92115, USA.

**HOLDOCK** - 31 August-3 September, 1990. Stakis Norfolk Gardens, Bradford. Guest: Joe Haldeman. Membership: £25 attending, £12 supporting. Contact: PO Box 626, Bristol, BS99 1TZ. The 30th UK Star Trek convention.

**ARMADACON** - 10-11 November, 1990, Plymouth. Guests include Anne McCaffrey, Adrian Cole, Brian Lumley. Contact: Armadacon, 4 Glenaele Avenue, Mennemae, Plymouth, PL3 5HL.

## 1991 CONVENTIONS

**RECONNAISSANCE** - 22-24 February, 1991 Cardiff Park Hotel, Cardiff. Membership: Attending £15, supporting £8. Contact: 5 St Andrews Road, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 2DY.

**SPECULATION** - 29 March -1 April, 1991. Annual British National Science Fiction Convention/Eastercon, Glasgow, Hospitality Inn. Guest: Robert Holdstock. Membership: £15 attending, £10 supporting. Contact: 35 Bulter Road, London, N17 9BH.

**OHION V** - 29 August-2 September 1991. The 49th World SF Convention, to be held at the Hyatt Regency, Chicago. Guests: Neil Clements, Richard Powers, Martin Harry Greenberg, Jon and Joni Stopa. Details from PO Box AK3120, Chicago, IL 60690, USA. Membership remains as \$75 throughout 1989.

## CONTRIVANCE - 1989 Eastercon

"A Note on Contrivance" by K V Bailey

Matrix has asked for "plenty of comment" on the recent Eastercon. Apart from giving full marks to St.Helier's Hotel de France for everything from the friendliness and helpfulness of the staff (a large Portuguese component) to the excellence of its banquet fare, I wouldn't feel sufficiently qualified or experienced to generalise, but there was one trend quite conspicuous in Contrivance's programme which I certainly think worth comment: what one might call the 'Green' element. To be more precise, there was a succession of topics and sessions exploring relationships between city and landscape; between aliens (this often including or focussing on terrestrial animals) and human; and between humans and environment. All of this was highlighted by Mike Harrison's fell-walking and rock-climbing reminiscences and his outstanding reading of *The Gift*; by Jack Cohen on *The Privileged Ape*; by Peter Garratt's expertise on catceen consciousness and Anne McCaffrey's on that of horses, cats and dragons. Even some of the verse finding its way into the poetry workshop had ecological colouring.

This 'Green' aspect was only one facet of a pretty varied range of interests and activities, but it was one appropriate to the convention's location on an island, the home of the rescue and conservation 'zoo' which Gerald Durrell put into the care of the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust - a cause to which Contrivance made a substantial donation; and an island much concerned that very weekend about the loss of a shipment of poisonous chemicals to the bottom of the Channel - a threat to creature-life and human livelihood throughout the islands.

I suppose I am myself now so conditioned to island life as to be surprised at the way mainlanders during drinks-chat enthused over Jersey - so quiet, uncrowded, environmentally good. From the standpoint (mine) of the more pristine island of Alderney, Jersey seems noisy, traffic-ridden and maybe a little brash - though admittedly remaining a lovely island, its weather and variety of coast and landscape fully rewarding those families extending the weekend into an Easter holiday. (Children, all of whom seemed to be enjoying themselves, were well in evidence at Contrivance.) Someone suggested, a shade ironically, why not a (mini) Aldercon. But incoming planes only seat 12, and some of our scattered hotels do not sleep many morel which is perhaps why Alderney is blessedly, as its modest publicity claims, still "a world apart".

## SOL 3 - 28-30 April, Liverpool

by Glenn Edwards

THE DATE WAS FRIDAY 28TH APRIL, THE PLACE WAS LIVERPOOL AND the convention was SOL3. At least, it would have been if the Adelphi Hotel, where the convention took place, hadn't given our room away! It's hard to divorce the two as a lot of what went wrong with the convention was the fault of the hotel, which, among other things, had a flood on the Friday afternoon, losing some 15 rooms they could ill-afford, as they also had several tourist parties, most notably a Japanese group, which made spotting George Takei more of a challenge.

Regardless of the hotel, the convention turned out to be extremely interesting, with Guest of Honour George Takei giving two talks and getting extremely involved in the convention. He is not one of those guests you see for the one talk, and never again. Indeed, it was hard not to notice him around the hotel, especially with his most distinctive laugh. Terry Pratchett was there, of course, and gave a most interesting but under-attended talk. The fellow isn't quite as good a speaker as Bob Shaw; most notably, he had trouble with holding his hand-mike, but content-wise, he is as amusing.

The rest of the convention was extremely well-organised, with all the standard things you would expect to find: art show, book room, a good fancy dress show (apart from one group of three, who spent about five minutes reading speeches to the judges, it seemed like five hours). The other items I cannot comment on, as I did not attend them, apart from spending all Sunday in the video room, watching *Star Trek T.N.G.* series 2.

To sum up, apart from the Adelphi Hotel, the convention was a success, and I would definitely recommend the next one when they get around to it, though the committee has decided not to run another one for a while. The convention is well worth a visit even if you are not a Star Trek fan, as there are plenty of other events to keep you interested.

## ICONCLASH - 16-18 June, Leeds

By Nicholas Mahoney

I OFTEN SAY 'YES' WHEN I KNOW I SHOULDN'T. IN THIS CASE, I REALLY ought to have said, 'Don't you think you should find somebody who's enjoying the convention?' I would venture to say that the vast majority of those attending did enjoy it, certainly, there weren't large numbers of people suffering about how terrible or boring it was. They were more likely to be saying 'Christ, it's hot!' or 'Phew, I could use a cool drink.' Purely personally, I scanned the convention programme a number of times and thought, 'Christ, this looks boring.' I didn't actually spend much time going to programme items, so maybe they weren't. Get a load of this: *Let's Build a Universe*, *The Quasi-Obligatory Comics Panel*, *Shared Worlds and Braided Novels*, *Bjorn K Standfirm*, *Fantasy and Magic*. It all sounded about as welcome as an episode of *Neighbours*.

Among the events I did attend were the poetry items. As little as a year ago, I would surely have been among those stifling a yawn, but now I'm even writing the stuff myself, so who can tell? Steve Sneyd reckons the best way to get rid of door-to-door salesmen is to say "Ah, we were just having a poetry workshop, would you care to join us...?" In the hands of such people as Andy Darrington and Cardinal Cox, poetry suddenly seemed dangerously non-boring and heretically stimulating.

A first for any convention was the joint effort of Britain's rising SF small-press in marketing themselves in the dealers' room. The editors of *Back Brain Recluse*, *Works*, *The Scanner* and *New Visions* were all plying their wares, as were the friendly 'enemies' of *The Gate*. Even if you exclude fanzines, there's an awful lot going on in the British SF zine scene just at the moment. Long may all the present participants prosper.

In this, my fifth exposure to CONCENTRATED fandom, I found the usual CONVENTIONAL ecstasy walking hand in hand with a rather determined streak of disappointment. It's not that I didn't have a good time - far from it, I had a wonderful time - it's just that, for the first time, the convention wasn't firing on all cylinders. Some aspects of the organisation of the con were obviously inept and created a bit of bad feeling in one or two quarters, but there was very little or nothing that created any lasting bad feeling, and none of it is worth recounting here.

I think it is particularly significant that there were three streams of parallel programming for only 200 or so people. This was quite deliberate in that the committee wanted to create the sort of atmosphere in which no-one would be afraid to get involved, and in this they probably succeeded, but at a price. According to the 3 principle, only 3 of the convention's attendees will be interested in the programme at any one time. With three programmes, you don't have to be a mathematical genius to realise that some programme items are barely going to 'happen' at all. With the exception of the entertaining GOH speeches of Peter Morwood and Diane Duane, the events, as far as I know, rather small, bitty and hardly worthy of the word 'event'. Each to his own, the one programme, 300-person *Mexicon III* created a marvellous 'family' atmosphere of shared experience in which an item discussing the merits and demerits of the convention, right at the end, could be meaningfully participated in by all present. *Iconoclasm* was, I'm sure, a more distinctively unique experience for each attendee, but for me at least was rather frustrating. There was plenty of choice, but the slightest disappointment left me thinking I was missing something. *Iconoclasm* did not specialise, it tried in vain to please everybody and that, as we all know, is totally impossible.

by Valerie Housden

I ARRIVED AT THE GRIFFIN HOTEL IN LEEDS AT 10 PM ON FRIDAY night, to find that my room was not yet ready. Indeed, I was lucky to be staying at the hotel at all; many fans who had booked a room there were being referred to other hotels. The committee already looked decidedly frazzled in the heat. The design of the convention badge did not appear to allow for normal-length names - the last four letters of 'Valerie' were omitted. The membership desk disclaimed all responsibility. Moral: always fill in the line labelled 'Badge name'.

On Saturday morning I went looking for coolness, and found it in the Granary Wharf market under the railway arches. Bliss! Back at the stifling hot convention, Peter Morwood began his GOH speech with a hilarious send-up of the New Testament and then invited questions from the audience. Did I hear aright? In his next novel the Russians invade the Republic of Ireland? I

Continued on opposite page...

# MEDIA REVIEWS

**THE CAVES OF STEEL**, based on the Isaac Asimov novel, starring Ed Bishop, Matt Zimmerman. BBC Radio 4, 24 June 1989

reviewed by John Peters

IT ISN'T OFTEN THAT THE BBC PRODUCES SCIENCE FICTION PLAYS ON the radio (and even less on TV), so it was a complete surprise to see this, one of Asimov's classic books, listed in the radio schedule. As usual, the BBC have mounted a lavish production - one that should have appealed to many because of the strong cast. Ed Bishop and Matt Zimmerman may not be household names as such, but both have been involved for years in British TV and radio SF shows, especially those of Gerry Anderson.

Bishop played Elijah Bailey, a New York cop who has to find the murderer of a Spacer - a human colonist from another planet. To do this, Bailey is teamed up with a Spacer detective, a humanoid robot called R Daniel Olivaw. Because Terrans have an abiding hatred of robots, their pairing has its fair share of tension, aided by the insular nature of the Terran people. This New York is a city buried deep underground - well away from the sunshine and has a strong communal culture. While investigating the murder, Bailey and Daniel become bonded in the traditions of Kirk/Spock, and any number of TV cop shows. In some ways, I wonder if the scriptwriters of **ALIEN NATION** read **CAVES OF STEEL**, because the former also has a teaming of human/alien police officers, along with its resultant tensions and hatreds.

While this production is undeniably entertaining, it does fail to explain just WHY Man has burrowed underground, and also why they hate robots so much. A great deal of the novel's subtext has been lost in the translation to the microphone, understandable when you consider they had only 85 minutes to do the book justice. Apart from some rather fruity 'Bronx' accents, and a tendency to make Bailey sound like a cross between Mike Hammer and Philip Marlowe, it's an entertaining enough play, but it concentrates on the standard tenets of a thriller, and could easily have been extended to two or three episodes which would have allowed a detailed inspection of the main themes of Asimov's novel, overpopulation and xenophobia.

**HELLBOUND: HELLRAISER II** Starring Claire Higgins, Ashley Laurence, Kenneth Cranham. Directed by Tony Randall.

reviewed by John Peters

WHICHEVER WAY YOU LOOK AT, **HELLBOUND** WOULD HAVE TO BE something spectacular to beat the impact of its predecessor, Clive Barker's **HELLRAISER**. I'm not sure that it does - and more annoyingly, I find it difficult to put my finger on what caused the failure. **HELLBOUND** tries to be both a film for old fans and an introduction to the new - so it wastes time in recapping the original in a few brief but confusing minutes before getting on with the first visit of the Cenobites. As always, the Cenobites are repulsively realistic, and that could be a problem for this time around they are on screen longer, and let's face it, the more you see a monster, the less frightening it becomes.

Hell is a place of labyrinths and tunnels, and while it isn't Dante's Inferno, it has a nice time in MF's rejects. Barker's hell is a solitary place, and ultimately a boring one because it is so irritatingly mundane. Only the players of the game inhabit this hell, and as each one gets bumped off in an

increasingly gory fashion they return without rhyme or reason to fight again. To be sure, the hell depicted is impressive - a vast surreal landscape one minute, a shoulder-scraping tunnel the next. Yet, that isn't enough, for as disconcerting as the shifts between Hell and reality are, they explain little of the plot.

**HELLBOUND** continues directly after its predecessor, with Kirsty being taken to a mental hospital for observation. While there she sees the image of her father pleading for a release from Hell. He's still there at the end of the film, though Uncle Frank, and especially Julia, have done their best to lower the tone of the neighbourhood. Whether the censor's scissors have dealt a deadlier cut than any Pinhead could inflict is debatable but **HELLBOUND** is a confusing sequel, excellently shot, with a high standard of acting (especially Clare Higgins), yet it failed to excite or deliver what was expected.

**MOONTRAP** starring Walter Koenig, Bruce Campbell. produced and directed by Robert Dyke. Parkfield Video

reviewed by John Peters

IT'S 1969, Armstrong and Aldrin have landed on the Moon, and unknown to them and Man, alien robots have invaded it, and hidden themselves deep underground. 1969, and a routine shuttle mission discovers a derelict alien ship approaching Earth. Astronauts Grant (Koenig) and Tanner (Campbell) investigate, finding nothing but a metallic sphere. And that's when the proverbial you-know-what hits the fan.

This is quite a good film, despite the over-enthusiastic hype that it is the 'SCI-FI event of 1989!'. Set among the familiar technology of today and yesterday, with nary a 'War Factor 5, cap'n' in sight, it pretends to be nothing more than a high-speed adventure with aliens (good - makes a change), nasty self-building robots (boo-hiss) and Boy Scout heroes. All in all, this story could have come from a '50s **AMAZING** and be one hell of a page-turner.

The sets, particularly the lunar ones, look very good, and apart from some shaky model work here and there do invoke that 'sensu-wunda' that films seem to have lost lately. It is a shame that Parkfield haven't released this theatrically as it is a lot of fun and could have attracted the family as a whole (it's PG) rather than the diehard Star Trek fans, lured just by Koenig's name on the Marquee. While Bruce Campbell gives his usual amiable performance, I was very surprised at how well Walter Koenig took the leading role - and apart from a cheeky nod to 'the Captain's log' at the beginning of the film, there was no hint of a Russian accent.

While it may not be an **ALIEN(S)**, **MOONTRAP** has a lot going for it, and if you want a video, one the kids can watch as well, then this one fits the bill admirably. Mind you, I still don't know where the robots or the human civilisation on the moon came from.

**THEY LIVE** directed by John Carpenter.

reviewed by Colin Bird

JOHN CARPENTER'S LATEST LOW-BUDGET MOVIE WAS INSPIRED BY A short story by Ray Nelson, called *Eight O'Clock in the Morning*. In the movie's impressive first half, we follow drifter John Nada as he seeks work in Los Angeles, and eventually settles in

Continued overleaf ...

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can't wait! One of *Iconoclasms* themes was con-running, and there were workshops on the subject, with special emphasis on small conventions, and at least one silly role-playing game, *Garlic and Gophers*. I have yet to fathom out how I became a Pernicious Punter. The *H&G's* Hoteliers won.

Plans for the cabaret were well-advanced when disaster struck - loss of power in all the thirteen-amp sockets in the main con hall. Tech Ops immediately declared the cabaret cancelled. We flunkers explained that while a PA system would be very nice, it was not absolutely vital. Power was eventually restored and the show went on. By now the committee were looking deep-fried. At the Slave Auction (proceeds to the RNIB), I clubbed together with two others to 'purchase' a matched pair of male slaves, who were kept busy for the rest of the evening keeping me cool with fans courtesy of Oxfam.

Sunday began with turkey readings. GOH Diane Duane contributed a story from the *Sunday Sport* about killer bees flying in from Celsis, last seen heading for the South Coast. As

these vicious swarms can only be stopped by nuclear attack, the suggestion that this should be done over a certain hotel in Brighton was enthusiastically welcomed.

This was a small, fun convention at which I met old and new friends, was asked by lots of con-runners (alright, two) to talk on 'Why Filk is so popular' at their conventions (can't I just sing?), and spent a lot of time in the bar. The three-stream programme seemed a little too full for such a small con, the hotel was not the most helpful or suitable (the bar staff were very friendly, no complaints there), and the weather, for which I hold the committee entirely responsible, was too hot. I'm also not convinced about the wisdom of putting the art show in the dealers' room. Many pictures needed to be seen from a greater distance than was available. But there was plenty of excellent filking, and in rooms larger than a broom cupboard! At the end of the closing ceremony, Steve Glover, looking par-boiled, announced that there would be another con in Leeds in June 1990, in a hotel other than the Griffin. Oh gosh, I seem to be going to rather a lot of cons next year.

# LOCAL FANOMENA

## The Clubs Column

By Keith Mitchell

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE PRINTING A LOAD OF WRONG INFORMATION FOR generating a response from people. Despite doing my best to get last issue's listings up to date, time and entropy had caused a few errors to slip in. Fortunately, people have been good enough to put me right, and in the meantime, I hope I didn't lead anyone down the garden path.

Most of my correspondence has been corrections to the listings, and I have just published these as amendments at the end of the column. However, there has been news from various quarters too. My apologies to Sue Thomason, who I wrongly listed as the contact for the probably now-defunct York group. She has not had any contact with the group for over a year and a half - if anyone has, I would like to hear from them.

The South Hants SF Group is going strong, as attested by co-founder Jeff Suter who, with Ric Cooper, got things going in 1981. The group seems to be a pretty holistic and cosmopolitan outfit, members ranging from hard-core written SF fans across gamers, comics and fanzine fan, to convention organisers, from as diverse origins as Leeds, London, America and Belize. The group does, however, apparently suffer from being male-dominated, though not through any deliberate intent on the part of its members. Female members are sought "... not because of any grubby thoughts, but because we need a fuller, richer group."

Jeff describes the meetings as loud, frenetic, anarchic and fun, but activities include outings to the cinema and trips further afield, talks from authors and fans, and in the past, the groupine *Real Soon Now*. The pub where the meetings are held twice a month is just five minutes from the railway station in Portsmouth - see below for details.

More activity in central Scotland - FORTH, the Edinburgh group, recently celebrated its official 10th birthday. Veteran member Jim Darroch, sole attending survivor of the first meeting, declined to be drawn on any celebration plans, but it looks like we may get around to marking this event sometime in the next month or two. Watch this space.

Event of the year for FORTH so far must have been the Edinburgh Science and Technology Festival, when the meeting on a night of the Festival's book fair attracted quite a few Glasgow fans and some authors. This event and its organisers have got quite a long way to go before it becomes as interesting as a convention or any of Edinburgh's other

festivals, but it certainly lived up our Tuesday night to have over 20 people, including authors John Brunner, Duncan Lunan and Angus McAllister along.

On a slightly more active note, another group around Edinburgh is *The Landing Party*, also known as the Edinburgh and South East Scotland Star Trek Appreciation Society. Mark Stewart and friends started this up about 6 months ago, and there are now about twenty members. While the name of the group suggests Star Trek, Mark describes the group as a general SF club, although things are very much more media-oriented than at FORTH. Blakes 7 and Dr. Who are also popular amongst members.

The Landing Party's main activity is a monthly meeting which varies in venue - the June meeting was in Fife, and the meeting on 26th August will be in East Lothian. For July, advantage is being taken of the Dr Who stage show being in Edinburgh - Colin Baker will be attending a dinner organised by the society. The group also produces a quarterly zine, and ambitious plans include role-playing meetings, and "a cartoon video (some day)".

Too late to include in last issue's column, I heard from Jessica Yates about the Northfarthing Smial of the Tolkien Society. "Smials" are Tolkien fans' answer to the local group, and although there are many round the country, this is the only one I've heard from. I have included details of this London group's meetings ("Pinnemoots") at the end, but if you want to know more about the Tolkien Society or your local Smial, send an SAE to the Secretary, Debi Haigh-Hutchinson, at 27 Barnborough Street, Leeds, LS4 5 2QL.

What follows are the amendments to last issue's listings. Once again, I must apologise to anyone who was inconvenienced by any of the inaccuracies. My thanks to both (separately) Simon Ounsley and Mike Ford for the update on the Leeds group, and to both Steve Rothman and Dave Langford for their letters on Reading activities.

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Town:        | Edinburgh Area  |
| Group:       | The Landing Party<br>(Edinburgh & South East Scotland Star Trek Appreciation Society) |
| Last update: | July 89   |
| Meets on:    | Monthly   |
| Contact:     | The Membership Organiser<br>11/4 Meadowfield Court<br>Edinburgh EH8 7NA               |
| Contact:     | Mark Stewart; 031-657 2017  |
| Comments:    | Membership £2 per year. Over 18s  |

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a shantytown for homeless people. This opening section leads you almost into another film. 'I believe in America states the hero - Carpenter clearly falls to share this conviction as begins an exhorting attack on the legacy of Reaganomics. The cops soon move in to bulldoze the shacks away, and the squatters are chased and beaten in a chillingly effective sequence based on a real incident, where yuppies complained that a shantytown was 'unsightly'. Having proved his social conscience Carpenter begins to unveil his 'aliens-amongst-us' story with his usual visual aplomb.

When Nada (Spanish for 'nothing') finds some mysterious sunglasses after the raid, he takes a pair. In the movie's best moment he finds the glasses reveal the world in its true colours - black and white. He begins to realise that hideous aliens have been controlling us for years, in a conspiracy involving planetary asset-stripping. The vision of skeletal aliens wearing suits and carrying briefcases, wheeling and dealing to exploit the earth's resources, is blackly comic.

Sadly, *They Live's* second half fails to mine the satiric vein inherent in the vision that paranoias have been right all along. The film degenerates into formulaic slapstick/action sequences as Nada (played by ex-wrestler Roddy Piper) starts blasting away with a shotgun. Carpenter indulges his penchant for macho heroics; this culminates in an extended brawl between the two heroes which has no place in this movie. The ragged plot collapses altogether as the heroes wander into the alien's control centre and proceed to eliminate a global conspiracy with a few bullets into the machines which broadcast the invaders' propaganda material.

On the plus side, Roddy Piper is surprisingly effective (despite several cheesy one-liners) and Carpenter's electronic score is as atmospheric as ever. The effects are

well-executed and the low budget is only apparent in a few scenes. *They Live* contains enough invention to make it worthwhile, but it's rapidly becoming a cliché that Carpenter is capable of much better than this.

**VENGEANCE THE DEMON** starring Lance Henriksen. Directed by Stan Winston. CBS/Fox Video.

reviewed by John Peters

**VENGEANCE THE DEMON** aka **PUMPKINHEAD** is the directorial debut of Stan Winston, and it's a shame that it had to sit in the shelf for over a year before being finally released in video. Lance Henriksen (**ALIENS** and **NEAR DARK**) plays Ed Harley, a father whose young son is killed in an accident. Tortured with grief, he pays a witch to set a demon on the teenagers responsible - a demon thirsting for revenge. That thumbnail sketch barely outlines what is a taut, gripping plot, well-filmed and getting its shocks from atmosphere and tension rather than flayed bodies and exploding heads. Winston's experience as an SFX specialist certainly works here, and though he wasn't directly involved in their creation, he has adroitly used them to the film's advantage. The blue-lit forest is one of the most menacing pieces of countryside I've ever seen, and Pumpkinhead himself is impressive as he stalks each victim. The acting from all concerned is certainly of a high calibre, Henriksen's especially, and the young boy who plays his son in what could have been the usual 'Fairy Snow'-type kiddie role. All in all, **VENGEANCE THE DEMON** deserved better treatment from its original distributors - it does need the cinema screen though, and despite CBS/Fox's excellent print, some of the excitement and horror is lost on the small screen.

## Continued from previous page

Town: Leeds  
 Group: The Leeds SF Group  
 Last update: July 89  
 Meets on: Every Fri, 8:30 pm  
 Meets at: Griffin Hotel (Raffles Bar), Boar Lane  
 Contact: Mike Ford  
 27 Stanmore Crescent  
 Leeds LS4 2RY  
 Tel: 0532 753663  
 Contact: Sarah Dibb & Dave Mooring  
 0532 741004  
 Comments: Venue may change shortly due to perennial noisy disco problems.

Town: London  
 Group: Tolkien Society - Northfaringth Smial  
 Last update: May 89  
 Meets on: 1st Saturday  
 Meets at: Bricklayers' Arms  
 Gresse St, off Rathbone Place  
 Contact: Jessica Yates  
 14 Norfolk Avenue  
 London N15 6JX  
 Tel: 01-802 20501

Town: Portsmouth  
 Group: South Hants Group  
 Last update: June 88  
 Meets on: 2nd and 4th Tuesday, 7pm  
 Meets at: Electric Arms (lounge)  
 Fratton Road  
 Contact: Mike Chester  
 38 Outram Road  
 Southsea  
 Hants  
 Tel: 0705 754934

Town: Reading  
 Group: GLOMERULE  
 Last update: July 89  
 Meets on: Every Monday, 9pm  
 Meets at: ICL Club  
 53 Blagrove st (opposite BR station)  
 Contact: Steve Rothman  
 49 Burney Bit  
 Pamber Head  
 Basingstoke  
 Hants RG26 6TL  
 Contact: Dave Langford  
 94 London Road  
 Reading RG1 5AU

## ADDITIONAL SHIPPETS

compiled by Maureen Porter

Ian Bell accosted me at Iconoclast with news of a new SF group in Hull. It meets at Ye Olde White Hart, 25 Silver St, Hull, on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. There is a small charge of 50p to cover room hire. Contact: Ian Bell, 42 Walgrave Street, Hull, HU5 2LT

I also picked up a flier for *Octarine*, a new science fiction and fantasy humour appreciation society. It is devoted to humorous science fiction and fantasy in all its forms, and isn't devoted to any one author or TV series. In the same way, it is not an attempt to usurp the position of any other fan group; "we aim to work in peaceful co-existence with all existing and future SF groups".

"The mainstay of *Octarine* will be a quarterly zine, *Tales From the Broken Drum*, containing reviews, convention reports, interviews, original fiction, etc. In addition, members will initially receive a badge and a membership card. Once the society is established enough, we hope to set up a merchandising division, supplying badges, t-shirts and the like, and possibly organise national or regional meetings. The membership fee is likely to be £4 p.a."

If you are interested in joining *Octarine*, please send an SAE to the address below.

*Octarine*, 6 Claude Street, Dunkirk, Nottingham, NG7 2LB

## SCIENCE NEWS

Compiled by John Peters

## SPACE

A new planet has been discovered. Astronomers at Armagh Observatory in Northern Ireland have found evidence for a planet orbiting the star known as Gliese 890, which is some 65 light years from Earth.

They noticed that something was repeatedly eclipsing the active atmosphere of the star, but had no appreciable effect on the light from the whole star, and wasn't massive enough to have any gravitational effect on Gliese 890. The only object with these properties is a planet.

The new planet could be up to 10 times the size of Jupiter, and orbits less than a million miles from the star. Its year would be 10 hours, and the surface temperature would be 1,000 times hotter than Mercury. Most metals would be molten, so it is assumed that it is a dead planet.

Gliese 890 is visible in the constellation Aquarius with a small telescope.

British scientists have discovered new evidence that Mars may have supported some form of life. A meteorite thought to have been ejected from Mars thousands of years ago, and preserved in pristine condition in Antarctica, has been found to contain a high proportion of organic material. However the scientists, at the Planetary Sciences Unit of the Open University, have not been able to identify the molecules, and until more sophisticated analysis is carried out it is impossible to be sure that this organic material was actually produced by living organisms.

In a further cost-saving measure the Soviet Union has begun re-using its unmanned spacecraft. Last year's *Photon 1*, on a materials-processing mission, was originally used in 1987 on a similar mission. Based on the Vostok-type that launched Yuri Gagarin into orbit in 1961, this "new" system has been nicknamed "mini-shuttle" by the Soviets.

On a recent electronic survey, scientists were surprised how well the *Glottio* cometary exploration probe had stood up to travel in interplanetary space. Launched in 1985 to explore the approaching Halley's Comet which was successfully completed in 1986, *Glottio* was never intended to be re-used, but after inspection, it was discovered that half of its instrumentation still worked well, and some others functioned partially. *Glottio* will approach within 22,000 km of Earth this July, and if its equipment is still functioning and funds are available from the ESA, it will be sent to meet another comet, Grigg-Skellerup, which is due in 1992. This is the first time that a long distance probe has been redirected or re-used after completing its mission.

President Bush has committed NASA to sending a man to Mars early in the next century. Vice-President Dan Quayle is to head a committee that will prepare blueprints for the establishment of a permanent Moon-base as the first step in the Mars mission.

Meanwhile, NASA are facing a \$1 billion cut in its requested 1990 budget and this has placed the construction of the Freedom space station into doubt. The new NASA administrator, ex-shuttle pilot Richard Truly has said that the budget cut could mean cancellation or a radical redesign of the new station. Combined with the news that Freedom could cost \$250,000 an hour to operate when built and operational, it seems that America's first purpose-built space station may not get the funding it requires.

The search for a British astronaut who will go into space aboard a Russian shuttle, has produced some 14,000 applicants by the closing date.

The Hubble Space Telescope launch has now been delayed until early next year after being pushed aside by a Department of Defence military shuttle flight. Meanwhile, the new shuttle orbiter, currently under construction as a replacement for *Challenger*, has been named *Endeavour* by President Bush. It should be ready for operations in 1992.

## COMPUTERS

Leading microchip manufacturer INTEL have introduced a new microprocessor chip that will revolutionise desk top computers. The 486, with its 1.2 million transistors, will give a desk top

Continued on Page 24

# WRITE BACK

WELCOME TO THIS ISSUE'S LETTERS COLUMN, AN INTERESTING MIXTURE of thoughts and comments. No more Desert Planet Books after all, I'm afraid. I've enjoyed reading them, but left to itself, this one would run and run. Apart from that, I suspect there is likely to be a flood of lists of books any self-respecting SF fan ought to have read. Before launching into the lettercol, just a reminder that letters should reach me by

Friday 15th September

My editorial querying the status of SF as an academic subject drew some responses, as I'd hoped it might.

Susan Thomas  
11 Roelcliffe, West Bridgford, Notts, NG2 7FY

I believe that it's very important that SF should be subjected to vigorous academic criticism. True, only a small percentage can be called 'serious literature', partly because it has always been primarily a literature of ideas, often produced by scientists rather than literary practitioners, but more because of the enormous quantity of pulp SF produced today. There is, however, (we writers would like to think!) a large number of publications which warrant serious critical attention.

It's also important to note that contemporary critical theory facilitates a very complex understanding of fiction and can uncover fascinating sub-texts which have a strong appeal to writers working in a genre so dedicated to ideas. On the other hand, it is true that the technical vocabulary of semiotics is somewhat daunting - discourse, icons, langue, signification etc - but it is possible to make useful observations without alienating the readership with this esoteric language. Indeed, it's essential that we learn to do so. Roland Barthes demonstrated in the fifties, for example, that it's possible to uncover cultural assumptions and at the same time to be entertaining and readable...

I think it can only revitalise the academic community to be exposed to the often radically different approach of SF, and likewise it must be beneficial to serious SF writers to have their work stripped of its science and examined solely for its literary substance. And thinking about that, it might be useful for writers to look outside the genre at the work of contemporary authors whose post-structuralist approach brings them to the very borders of SF. I'm thinking here specifically of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Italo Calvino. So many mainstream writers today are preoccupied with the nature of fiction itself that they are nudging philosophy and SF off their perches. Read Calvino's *If in a winter's night a traveller...* and you'll begin to understand the very nature of fictional reality - without even having left the planet!

Ken Lake  
115 Markhouse Avenue, London, E17 8AY

I'm a bit perplexed by your critical comments. I think the gods that SF has escaped from the strait-jacket of New Wave: surely the major task of all fiction is to communicate, be it ideas, gimmicks or emotions, and surely the artificialities of the New Wave seriously endangered that communication by turning storytelling into word-juggling.

Of course you can't judge George Eliot and Philip K Dick by applying the same criteria to them: you can't even compare Dick and Heinlein thus, as their aims and intended readerships are so different. 'Horses for courses' is an essential part of any critical apparatus: does this work fulfil its own ends?

Chris C Bailey  
52 Druids Walk, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 7TF

About the worthiness of science fiction as an academic subject - I'm all for it! This stems from the fact that I think that in doing this, it will bring a much-needed 'facelift' to the genre. It will, in my opinion, bring prestige and recognition, not to mention much more publicity to the amateur and professional writers alike. Last, but not least, it will endeavour to enlighten the students involved with the SF course they are doing. You never know, it could produce some extremely good future writers of science fiction and fantasy.

C E Nurse  
49 Station Road, Hasby, York YO3 8LU

The greatest value of the academic approach to subjects, in my opinion, is its rigour. As a general rule, academics are clearer

thinkers than 'yer average person'. It doesn't mean that their subjects or standpoints are particularly valuable or interesting, but when combined with some sort of open-mindedness, it can be great. It is possible to cut through all the slush and noises of everyone and their own personal opinion, to present and extrapolate a theory, to examine and arrange the facts, to compare and be aware of what has been said and thought before. Thus I see no inherent contradiction in the academic study of SF. Whether 'literary' study would be as valuable as historical/sociological study I am not sure, nor am I convinced that the academics who teach it necessarily know what they ought to know about the genre/field. My cynicism rises from the feeling that, despite all claims, 'being an academic' is still a form of business, and each teacher must to some extent be a salesman of his own subject. Sometimes one can make greater 'profits' selling a subject one doesn't really believe in.

I also asked what function people thought a book review should serve:

Derroll Pardo  
Flat 1, 36 Hamilton Street, Hoole, Chester

I don't think there are two sorts of review so much as two purposes for which reviews are used. One is to inform the reader sufficiently of the contents of the books and of the opinion of the reviewer on those contents, to allow a decision on whether the book is worth buying. The other is to assess a book against the background of other books, and society in general, and offer some kind of reasoned opinion on its intrinsic value. A particular review may serve either or both of these purposes. Now, in the BSFA, there is a natural home for both of these kinds of review: the first in *Paperback Inferno* and the second in *Vector*, so perhaps reviews for the BSFA tend to be more polarised in one direction or the other than is usual elsewhere. This is fine: but what you should not expect is that all reviews must automatically serve both purposes. And really, the two types are directed at different readerships anyway. The first type is for people who might or might not want to buy the book but have not yet done so. The critical sort of review is always more interesting (at least, I've always found it so) if you've read the book first before getting to the critical analysis.

Chris C Bailey

I personally think that when people review novels, short stories etc, they should try to give an accurate account of what the author is trying to 'put across', i.e. the 'so-called moral of the story' (if possible). An example of what I mean could be, for instance, Frank Herbert's classic novel *Dune*, the 'moral' in this (fantastic) story is that of CONSERVATION; yes, that's what I said, conservation of our irreplaceable planetary resources. Another example (from *Dune*) could be that of being more 'CIVILISED' and 'CO-OPERATIVE' with, and towards our fellow human beings, instead of the constant fighting and bickering which we still see around us today.

Also, giving a reasonable (though not too detailed) insight into the 'plot' etc, of the particular novel/short story being reviewed. Obviously you should give your review a bit of 'excitement' as it were, by perhaps including a piece of the story line or describing a particularly 'juicy bit'.

Mike Brain  
2 Paddock Way, Higher Kinnerton, Chester, CH4 9BA

What I want from a review is an honest opinion (why else trouble to do a review?), but also a plot summary that's not a blurb cover note. Paperbacks are relatively expensive, given other commitments to our disposable cash, and just looking at the list in PI 78, I've read only three of them.

Sue Thomas

With regard to reviewing style - the answer must surely lie in the type of reader. I would agree that generally we want most reviews just to tell us whether or not the critic considers that the book is worth reading. But if we want an in-depth assessment, we turn to a critical article in which different criteria are applied. This is where we find out how a particular book works in terms of style and structure. I don't believe that it is the business of a critical article to pass judgement, but rather that it should expose the guts of the piece as one would take a car engine apart to see the nature of its construction.

So it depends on the demands of a particular readership - a relatively short appraisal, or a lengthy and detailed analysis.

Ian Sales' letter in last issue also generated a fair amount of comment. We begin with a spirited defence of David Eddings from Jessica Yates:

Jessica Yates  
14 Norfolk Avenue, South Tottenham, London, N15 6JX

I would like to defend David Eddings' *The Belgariad* against Ian Sales' criticisms. He equates this with *The Dragonlance Chronicles* or "some clichéd sword-and-sorcery saga". I know there's a lot of poor fantasy being produced, but I don't think that Eddings' work comes into that category. Eddings has made the best-seller lists, along with Terry Pratchett, because he offers an enjoyable read, spiced with humour, and sends up the clichés of sword-and-sorcery.

I know I'm not qualified to compare Eddings with Dragonlance, as I haven't read anything by Weis and Hickman, but having browsed through a couple of titles, I don't feel encouraged to buy them. Eddings, however, really engages my interest and I am even enjoying *The Malloreon*, though I regret that he has become the victim of publicity hypes and book auctions.

I don't know if Ian Sales has read *The Belgariad*, but should he really hold it up to ridicule if he hasn't (like the people who insult Tolkien, having laid down *The Lord of the Rings* after reading the first page)? After being recommended to read it by other members of the Tolkien Society, I finally made time for the whole quintet two years ago, and was so enthralled that I finished it within the week. I then recommended it to two other friends, one teenager, one young adult, who had not heard of it, and the result was the same: complete absorption and refusal to engage in any other leisure activity until the epic was concluded.

Adult fantasy doesn't be all that bad if the bookshelves offered the best and only the best; but the public-at-large aren't going to buy boring books indefinitely, and I believe that Eddings sells for his story-telling, optimism and the sense of fun he shares with his readers. Moreover, unlike many mainstream down-market best-sellers, he wins his audience over without exploitative sexual bouts.

Matthew Freestone  
Grosvenor Lodge, Sotherton Lane, Sudbrooke, Lincoln, LN2 2QJ

In response to what Ian Sales said about D&D, I would like to reply that it is not the game itself which is at fault, it is the players. D&D is supposed to be a game of the imagination and while I would agree that its presentation (the huge catalogues of monster-types, for instance) does encourage a hack-and-slay attitude, it is by no means necessary to play the game that way. In my last campaign, I tried to re-interpret some of the sub-Tolkien myths on which the genre is founded - a sort of Post-Modernist D&D. That the idea didn't work has more to do with impending exams than inflexibility in the rules.

Anyway, it seems to me that much of what Ian bemoans in his letter can be put down to that lack of imagination which causes gamers to hack and slay rather than role-play. It requires so much less of people to move from *Belgariad* to *Malloreon* to *Elenium* ad infinitum than to try something new. Similar things could also be said about television and pop music, where Sturgeon's law is clearly an under-estimate.

The problem with these commercialised series is that they obscure the good SF. This hinders the treatment of SF as a serious literature because, when judging SF, critics look at it as a genre, bad books and good together, whereas when looking at the mainstream books, they ignore the rubbish and concentrate only on the literature.

Thus it seems to me that, in order to improve our media image, we would have to try to integrate SF more into the mainstream of literature. Clearly, if this were possible, we would lose some of our identity as a genre. Personally, I would rather remain eccentric.

Daniel Buck is very concerned about the image and status of SF readers:

Daniel Buck  
4 Bower St, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8SD

We're the 'UFO lot' and maybe we should stay that way. Official strikes are increasingly difficult to effect; moves are afoot to outlaw unofficial strikes; how long before it will be forbidden to even think about freedom? Surely this spells the end for the other worlds of SF? Our only defence lies in being branded harmless freaks, a bit funny in the head! If we showed any

intelligence or thought, the strong arm of the law would descend on us. If *Matrix* continued to print subversive letters like this, it would have to become an underground publication!

On a more serious note, the publishers are playing right into somebody's hands. With today's youth addicted to 'smash and bash' of the worst kind, they are being brainwashed with trash. The powers-that-be have it all their way; if television fails, they'll destroy any intellectual capabilities with popular 'literature'. The amount of rubbish on the shelves has driven me out of the new-book shops. On my occasional foray to find the latest in the *Mission Earth* saga (addictions are hard to break, you always hope they will return to the same standards of the first volume), I disturb most buyers by moving aside the piles of blockbusters in search of any author I recognise as worthy, only to find that they haven't bothered to stock the latest work.

As long as there remains a group of people like ourselves, with a real commitment to SF, we can weather these days of formula novels and come out at the end with a wealth of ideas and unpublished works. It's then that we must improve our image when people can join us easily, without having to make too much of an effort. Patience is a virtue. Remember, many great figures in history suffered persecution before coming to glory. Our time will come if we just keep reading and writing.

P.S. Perhaps I have overstated the case slightly, but I'm afraid sometimes it's the only way to make people stop and listen.

Martin Stacey responds to Steve Palmer's Soapbox in *Matrix* 82.

Martin Stacey  
Department of Computing Science, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, AB9 2UB

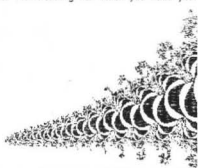
I agree with Steve Palmer that it would be good to see more sane, positive alternatives in SF stories (as well as better characterisation etc.). But I found his article wildly over-the-top at best, and perniciously wrong at worst. It reads as if Palmer regards technology (as if it were a single entity) as a destructive masturbation aid. This doesn't seem to me to help serious analysis of the relationship between technological change and personalities and societies, which is one of the things SF is about. Palmer also seems unable to recognise human values when he sees them; or he hasn't read the same William Gibson I have.

There are plenty of examples of ravaging right-wing, technology-obsessed SF, but I don't think the field as a whole lacks concern for humanity or the environment. (Surely a more plausible explanation for weak characterisation is limited authors doing the best they can.) The real problem is that SF is appallingly ethnocentric. Far too much SF simply projects late twentieth century North America into the future, and the North America of the affluent urban technocrats who write it. Perhaps this is what bothers Steve Palmer. (A particularly annoying offender is David Brin whom, on balance, I like.) And almost all the rest of SF draws its vision from western societies. I see very little concern with the future of other human cultures, or with how these cultures might contribute to the future of humanity, and this is what SF needs.

And that about wraps it up for this time. Remember that the next deadline is:

FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

I would like to apologise, at this point, for any worse-than-usual lapses in production values, typing etc. A slight argument with a pavement landed me in the local Casualty department. Accordingly, I'm now sporting a cracked bone in my left wrist, and plaster to the elbow. Yes, I know I'm right-handed, but it's amazing how much you need your left hand for.



# SOAPBOX

## Why Scientists are Idiots

by Cecil Nurse

IN KEEPING WITH THE IDEA OF A SOAPBOX, WHICH ONE TENDS TO mount in a state of irritation if not drunkenness, I would like to give vent to a certain amount of bile on the subject of scientists, that is, these faceless rational men (and women, no doubt) who claim to be the arbiters of truth, and the faceless rationality which they claim to represent. Specifically, I wish to present four instances of the ways in which the scientific world-view creates moral idiots of the people who believe in it.

1. The major problem is, of course, the belief that 'scientific knowledge' is value-free. This completely discounts the vehemence and bitterness with which theories which are about to be superseded are defended by their adherents, despite the obvious fact that a theory is not a fact, and thus cannot be 'defended' on purely empirical grounds. One might argue that the eventual success of the new theory (this is presumed, and is called the progress of science) proves the basic commitment of science to truth, but I can be equally seen as just another manifestation of the doggedness of the old guard: namely, the desire to be 'right' and to be seen to be right, whether or not it is in fact true. This is not a moral problem in the areas of chemistry or physics, but is is when the 'scientists' of the soft sciences are involved. To put it another way, the 'rational' exploration of those subject matters known as sociology, psychology, anthropology etc is equally subject to this dynamic, and the claim by the scientists/experts that they are dealing with 'facts' and that 'facts' are value-free creates a massive moral blind spot. A scientist, by definition, cannot question his own morality and values, because they are not part of his subject matter.

2. The second major problem is, again of course, the belief that scientific knowledge is valuable in itself. This creates the peculiar situation of the means justifying the ends, that is, if a scientist is studying a particular area of information, then that 'knowledge' is worth having and thus the research worth doing. This may have been fine in the days of the Enlightenment when any and all scientists were members of the aristocracy and the gentry, learned men able to choose their areas of study as their humanity directed them. Now scientists do not choose their subjects, being entirely dependent upon funding from interested parties, upon the presence of departments in universities which will tolerate their investigations (having first taught them how to think), and upon particular kinds of employment in industry and government. By not addressing the question, the decisions as to the relative values of knowledge, i.e. whether to fund this or that, suppress or advertise a particular finding, are made by others who are not scientists. Nevertheless, the publicised product has the full cachet of scientific authority because the man who did it is a scientist. In other words, it is put across as truth by a man who has taken no responsibility for ensuring that it is truth except in the narrowest sense.

3. The third problem was exemplified for me by an Open University programme on Developmental Psychology: namely, that scientists become estranged from their subject matter as an inevitable function of their scientific investigation of it. In

this programme, psychologists told me that 'children think differently from us' (from who? from adults), and were investigating their behaviour as though they (the psychologists) had never been children, as if they could not imagine what could be going on in their heads. They were studying 'the development of children' as if children were a different species, and implicit in their regard was the purpose: if we understand how they think, we will know how best to make them think like us. In other words, the presumption was that the child's way of thinking was 'incorrect', and they painstakingly teased out 'errors' of logic and interpretation as 'evidence'. The same attitude can easily be traced in all other scientific study of the human species, whether it be of psychotics, criminals, primitive tribes, male or female sexuality, immigrants, or the general public. There are two major consequences of this estrangement: one, that the study of, and the formulation of theories about and interpretations of, the data is done by people who have lost all sense of community within their subjects; two, this inhumanity is reflected in the ways this knowledge is used, everything from how to educate children better to how to motivate employees to how to sell a particular product or policy more effectively.

4. The fourth problem lies in the dominance that scientific 'effects', or statements that claim to be scientific, have in any debate. This is not a problem among scientists per se, because they know when their colleagues are talking drivel, and can certainly resist with their own version of rationality. It is when it gets out into the general populace that the damage occurs, because they not only believe it, they will deny their own ability to question it or think about it. The man with a little bit of knowledge is the most dangerous in this context (who said that?) because he will say that what he believes is scientific and rational, never having subjected himself to the true rigours of 'scientific enquiry' and thus not believing that there can be any other way of thinking about it. As a result, 'scientific' values have been applied to areas where the values of philosophy - wisdom, humanity, morality - should take precedence, and all attempts to reinstate them are condemned as unscientific and irrational.

What has been forgotten is that science and rationality are ways of looking at the world, are process and not just some static body of truth. The fruits of the scientific mentality have been co-opted for other purposes while still retaining its sex appeal. The result is that we live in a mad world, where on the one hand, unbelievable atrocities are committed by supposedly rational people, and on the other, irrational crimes and cults create terror in the hearts of men. I believe this is due to the inherent moral weakness of the scientific world view, and to the wilful refusal of scientists to confront the questions that their research and knowledge have raised. All you lot out there who think the Creationists are ignorance and stupidity incarnate, think about what they're trying to tell you! Turn your rational scientific minds onto this phenomenon of the human world: why is it happening? Why UFOs? Why religious fundamentalism? Let me give you one possible answer: they have seen the world that science has built, and it is a Horror.

Continued from Page 21  
computer the power and memory comparable to a mainframe system.

The ATARI FOLIO is a new hand-held computer which should be in the shops by now. Smaller than a paperback book, it has a full qwerty-style keyboard, an 8-line, 40 character screen and runs from 3 standard batteries which should last for 6 weeks. Not merely a substitute for an electronic 'Filofax', the FOLIO is intended as a portable personal computer which can be linked up to an owner's home machine to download accumulated information. Instead of floppy discs, credit card-sized plug-in modules can either extend the 128k memory or introduce added software to that already stored permanently in the memory.

### MISCELLANY

A new space rocket has gone into space to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the first Moon landing - a replica of the moon rocket that featured in Tintin's *Destination Moon* by Hergé. The rocket is made of epoxy and stands 157 centimetres high, and the engineer who turned Hergé's detailed blueprints into reality it was 'an aerodynamic nightmare'. Nevertheless, the rocket was designed to reach an altitude of 2,000 metres in 25 seconds, and the launch on 21 July from Kourou in French Guiana cost £3,000.