

NUMBER 25

\$1.00

AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS

Volume 3 Number 5

JULY/AUGUST '81



CANBERRA CONFERENCE ON AUSTRALIAN SF It's Past Present and Future



From left to right; David Grigg, Lee Harding, George Turner, Wynne Whiteford and Damien Broderick at the conference on SPECULATIVE FICTION: THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT held in the A.D.Hope Building, Department of Humanities, The National University, Canberra July 18th to 19th 1981

Writers, readers, librarians and academics were amongst the seventy or more attendees at the conference, organised by ANU Librarian Colin Steele as part of the Humanities Research Centre programme.

A comprehensive report commences on page three.

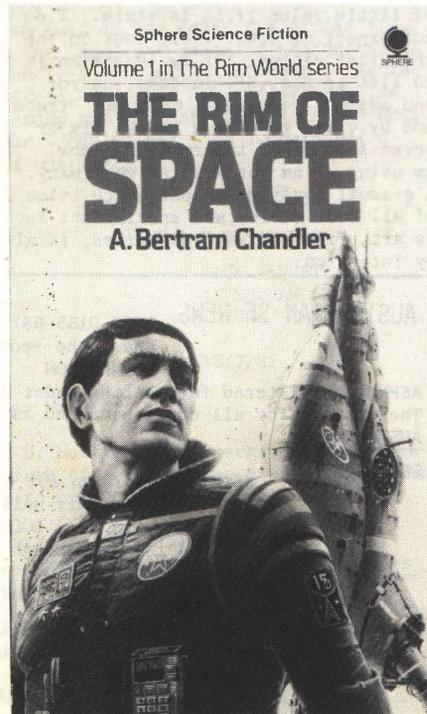
AUSTRALIAN PROFESSIONAL NEWS

DAMIEN BRODERICK was runner up in the ninth annual John W.Campbell Memorial Award, with "Dreaming Dragons". The winner was Gregory Benford for "Timescape". Damien has confirmed that Pocket, who did Dragons in the USA, will publish a new novel, "The Judas Mandala". He will be attending The World SF Convention in Denver next month.

JACK WODHAMS has been having quite a deal of success recently with his writing, according to his agent Paul Collins. "Big Time Operator" has been taken up by Martin Greenberg for his anthology "Incredible Locked Room Mysteries". (A profile on Jack appears in this issue.) PAUL COLLINS and WYNNE WHITEFORD have sold a story, "Occupation Thaumaturge" to OWLFLIGHT in the USA.

Following publication of "The Rim of Space" by A.BERTRAM CHANDLER in Sphere, all the Ace titles in the series are due to be reprinted in the USA. We presume that Sphere will be publishing the rest of the series also. Captain Chandler we remind you is the Guest of Honour at the 1982 World SF Convention, to be held in Chicago.

Angus and Robertson are to publish a new TPB edition of "Out of the Silence" by ERLE COX, first published 1925.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ARTHUR C CLARKE has sold a new novel, 2010: ODYSSEY TWO, a sequel to "2001: A Space Odyssey", for a record advance in excess of a million dollars. Clarke did announce his retirement after the publication of "The Fountains of Paradise", but he has apparently been bitten by the writing bug again. Ballantine are to publish it in the USA and we believe Hodder and Coronet in Britain. (Locus)

LARRY NIVEN and JERRY POURNELLE have sold a new novel "THE FOOT" to Fawcett. They reported that the advance was higher than the \$500,000 Robert Heinlein received for "Number of the Beast". It would seem that their triumph was short lived as Arthur Clarke has topped them. Negotiations were not completed, Locus reported in their August issue. Carl Sagan topped them all with his advance of \$2,000,000 for an as yet untitled novel. (Locus)

ROBERT HEINLEIN has completed a new sf novel tentatively titled FRIDAY (after the lead character). The final version runs 500 pages in manuscript and 131,000 words -- much shorter than his last few books. Heinlein recently celebrated his 74th birthday (July 7th). (Locus)



I have one basic problem at the moment and that is a lack of cash. Business has been bad at Space Age over the last few months and I have been putting too much time into ASFN, which has tended to induce me to neglect Spage Age Books, which after all is my bread and butter. While I have been working on the News I have been paying staff to do jobs I could be doing myself. To make matters worse I have been paying staff to type up material for the News. This I would not mind if we were doing well business-wise, but due to changes in trends in sales, the city of Melbourne slowly dying, increased running costs and lack of stock due largely to strikes and mail sitting on the docks for the last two months, we have problems.

Consequently I must consider the possibility of stopping publication of ASFN. Advertising has helped a lot, but as you will see there is very little in this issue. We have more subscriptions than ever, but I have been forced to increase the size of recent issues and we are just not getting enough revenue in to cover the cost of producing it.

Therefore I am forced to increase the subscription rate to \$6.00 and the cover price to \$1.00. Subscribers are virtually getting copies post free and this is all I can offer in the way of any advantage to them. It is costing close to \$1.00 to produce per copy.

I do enjoy producing the News and I am aware that many people do appreciate my efforts, but I do need to get my priorities straight. It will help me greatly if I can get some help from people who honestly would like to see ASFN continue. My problem is basically a matter of time and if I can get some help typing up reviews, letters and articles that I do not actually have to compose myself, it would leave me free to work on news and reports and put a bit more time into actually earning my bread and butter. I have appreciated the help of Daryl Mannell with his fanzine listing and the art work. Also my reviewers including Paul J., and of course what an even worse mess ASFN would be without the proofreading of George Turner.

I will ignore the rather unkind remarks by some readers regarding the misspelling of people's names in the last issue: that it was a deliberate "couldn't care less" attitude. It was quite simply caused by the fact that when writing up reports one does not always remember the correct spelling of some people's names. They are usually picked up when proof reading is done but mistakes are not obvious unless you know the correct spelling of the name in the first place. In other words it is entirely my fault. Needless to say more care will be taken on this in the future and I can only

tend my apologies to GREG HILLS, LEANNE FRAHM, MARC ORTLIEB, FRITZ LEIBER, SHAWNA MCCARTHY, MICHAEL TOLLEY, TONY JOLLYE, LEIGH EDMONDS, DERRICK ASHBY, DENNY LIEN and CATHERINE CIRCOSTA. In some place the spelling was correct and in others wrong. I hope I have not missed anybody else, but if I have I hope they will accept my apologies also and please let me know so that I can get it right next time.

It would help for a start if readers could indicate what they consider are the most important features of ASFN. News, reviews (these I will endeavour to reduce in size in many cases and we will concentrate on the newer and the more important titles), the letter column, convention reports and advance information, and of course the book lists. You can help me to decide what to drop, if anything, or at least reduce in size. One thing I am strongly considering is dropping the book list by publisher and only including reports on new books, the important ones, as news. I am also considering reducing the size and descriptions therein of Space Age Newsletter's sf&f listing. I would then produce an F&SF Checklist, which I have been threatening to do for some time, three times a year if possible, which would cover every f&sf and related book I can discover in minor detail.

This is more cost of course but I think that the people who want this information should be willing to pay for it. There are a number of overseas publications that give lists, details and reviews of new books being published, but not one of them can be relied on to cover every book. My intention is to compile this checklist, which will not take any more time than I am putting into the book list for the News and the SAB Newsletter now, but will not need to be produced to a tight schedule like ASFN, and I will be able to concentrate on getting ASFN out on time. The news content of ASFN is of little value if it is stale. I do not expect to cover every book in the checklist either, but my intention is to list as many SF, fantasy, horror and associated titles as I can trace and by cross reference to the six or seven sources of information I now am using, I am not missing very many. A gradual coverage, in part, each issue of all back titles and specialists such as art, film and various series, is also my intention.

It will help me greatly to make some of the decisions about content of the news, the checklist and so forth if you, my readers, will write to me and let me know your opinions.

Although I have mentioned them in the "Happenings" in this issue, it is unlikely this issue will be out before TOLKON and PHANTASTACON, but if it is, well and good. DENVENTION, this years World SF Con is being held in Denver, Colorado, USA, 3rd to the 7th of September. I had hoped to be there myself, to see perhaps Australia win the bid to hold the World Con in Sydney in 1983, but it is now most unlikely I will be make it. We have had a hard battle against Baltimore in the bid, but they have had the edge. Being on the spot, with adequate funds to spend on advertising and PR, has given them a decided advantage. The Australian committee however has come in for a bit of criticism, for not doing more and doing it better than they have. I could add my own criticism, but I do believe that even if we had put on the best ever bid, we would still have been up against it to win. Not that we have lost at the time I am writing this. A lot of people have done a lot to help us try and win this bid, Jan Finder, the Haldemans and many more, not the least myself with ASFN. I only wish I could have been at last year's and this year's World Cons, and I personally want to thank those people both here and overseas for their efforts.

You may have heard rumours that fans in Melbourne will be putting in a bid for 1985, in the event of us losing the 1983 bid. This may be so, they have not seen fit to take me into their confidence, so I do not know for certain. However as a world con has already been held in this city, Melbourne, I am inclined to favour Sydney for the second Australian World Con, whenever it is held. To be quite honest I believe that either city can put on a good and well run World Con. If it does come to opposing bids for '85, a bit of healthy rivalry will do no harm. Australian fans will flock to either city, although they most likely will support the city nearest to them initially. I simply favour Sydney because Melbourne has already had a world con. Whatever, if it comes to an Australia in 1985 bid, we will all get our act together.

MERV BINNS.

AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS

ISSN 0155-8870 is edited and published by MERVYN R. BINNS under the sponsorship of The AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION FOUNDATION

ASFN is registered for posting under Australia Post regulations category 'B'. The address for all correspondence is 305/307 Swanston, Melbourne, 3000, Victoria, AUSTRALIA

SUBSCRIPTION RATE: \$6.00 Australian for 6 issues. Please make payments to the editor Mervyn R. Binns. Air mail and overseas rates quoted on request. Our American Agent is LOCUS BOX 3938, San Francisco, CA 94119 (\$6.00 American is near enough and \$12.00 for Air Mail. Please remit to LOCUS or Charles Brown as above.) Our British agent is Gerold Bishop AARDVARK HOUSE, P.O. Box 10, Winchester, Hants., SO22 4QA, U.K.

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SPECULATIVE FICTION: THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

A CONFERENCE PRESENTED BY THE HUMANITIES RESEARCH CENTRE OF
THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY - CANBERRA

A REPORT BY MERVYN R. BINNS

With some reservations, I must truthfully admit, I journeyed to our nation's capital, Canberra, to the Australian National University to be exact, over the weekend of July 18th and 19th. I had been invited by COLIN STEELE, Librarian at the University, to take part in a conference on Australian Science Fiction. The conference was being organised by the Humanities Research Centre as part of a series of discussions.

The formal title of the conference SPECULATIVE FICTION: THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT, indicated to me the probability of long, boring discussions by people in the main who probably knew little about what they were talking about. How wrong I was!

The subject of Australian science fiction was most efficiently laid bare, in the very comfortable Reading Room of the Humanities Research centre, located in the A.D. Hope Building. The winter landscape of the ANU was bathed in bright sunshine for the whole two days of the conference. All Australian sf's problems were aired by speakers who knew exactly what they were talking about and who responded with great enthusiasm to questioning.

Over seventy names were included on the list of participants handed out with other details, which incidentally had been prepared as could be expected in a most efficient way, and although I did not actually count the heads in attendance, at a guess I would say there were around seventy people or more there.

No report that I can put together from the scribbled notes I have taken, could do justice to the conference. All I can say is that all those people who are genuinely interested in the advancement of Science Fiction writing and publishing in this country, who did not attend, missed the most significant and important symposium of the art yet held in Australia. I will attempt to give you some of the basic details, but I do hope that at some future date the full text of the conference may be made available by the university.

Michael Tolley from the Department of English at Adelaide University as Chairman of the first part of the programme, introduced Dr R. F. Brissenden I was reminded later, when I inspected a display at the University Library of Australian 'Speculative Literature', including an opened copy of a very early issue of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club's magazine *ETHERLINE*, which I had helped produce in 1953, that R.F. BRISSENDEN was a subscriber. Dr Brissenden's knowledge, views and appreciation of the genre were more than evident and his opening speech delighted the attendees, although it did not quite cover the subject, "The Image Of Australia, Past, Present And Future", that the organisers expected him to talk about. He spoke

largely about his own personal interest in Science Fiction.

Like many of us, his introduction to Science Fiction was through the pulps and comic strips - *ASTOUNDING*, BUCK ROGERS and SPEED GORDON (the Australian name for FLASH GORDON. Censorship?) As a country boy it was not easy to find the magazines, but a copy of *AMAZING* stories introduced him to the genre. *POPULAR MECHANICS*, and *FLYING ACES* later led to H. G. Wells and Kipling. "Out Of The Silence" by Erle Cox made a lasting impression. Even after getting his degree his interest in SF was still strong and he endeavoured to get his colleagues interested in it.

In the 1950's things started to happen in the SF field. *ASTOUNDING* reduced its size and improved. Fanzines were appearing and SF clubs came into existence. By the 1980's some critical interest was beginning to appear on the subject. Dr Brissenden found little time to read SF from here on and his interest waned. His main love, *ASTOUNDING*, had changed and L. Ron Hubbard's article, 'Dianetics', was an indication of this. He became disenchanted with SF. Perhaps the scientific advances of the 1950's also helped to temper his enthusiasm.

The basic motif in sf had always been space travel, taking the readers out of the normal world, enabling the writer and reader to look at our world from a different vantage point. Following the advent of space travel the emphasis began to change. SF has always seen itself as the fiction of the future, but it has relied on the most primitive story telling themes and is rooted in fantasy. In fact today's SF may owe more to Lewis Carroll than H. G. Wells, with much of it being both scientific and whimsical. SF owes much to the epic saga and this may explain the interest shown in Lord of the Rings by SF readers. (Fantasy and SF overlap in more than 50% of the books now being published. Ed.)

The label of 'Science Fiction' is somewhat inadequate. Science Fiction now becomes fact quite quickly. As a tool of futurology it helps us look at possible futures. A case in point is ecological subjects as covered in "Dune", "Monument", "Left Hand Of Darkness" and others.

Sociology is a subject well covered by SF. The literary value of SF however is still hard to assess. The principal importance of character in other literature does not necessarily hold for SF. There is less emphasis on narrative and human situations, as in the epic. People hunger for these aspects of story telling and the film "Star Wars" is a good example of this old epic style.

The literary value of SF is in many cases very thin, the writing of Arthur C. Clarke for instance. To justify SF

as literature we can judge it on how well it presents hypothetical human situations, with good examples being "Mission Of Gravity", which is a similar concept to "Gulliver's Travels" and "Case Of Conscience" by James Blish which clearly relies on the basic principle of society being more important than men. This is evident in most SF.

Touching briefly on the subject of Science Fiction writing in Australia, Dr Brissenden said that we will achieve an image of Australian life in our writing just as American images are evident in films such as "Alien" and "The Body Snatchers".

A short but interesting question time followed and a significant point was made by George Turner, when he said that when man landed on the moon the emphasis in SF changed from what man could do, to what man is.

The second morning session was chaired by MALCOLM PETTIGREW, who introduced VAN IKIN who spoke on THE AUSTRALIAN SPECULATIVE IMPULSE BEFORE 1950. He mentioned books from the last century such as "The Germ Growers" by Robert Potter from 1892, which dealt with aliens breeding plague germs; "The Last Lemurian" by G. Firth Scott, from 1898, dealt with the Queen of Lemuria who sucks the souls from her subjects, but is eventually destroyed by a volcano; "Anno Domini 2000; or Woman's Destiny", published in 1889, dealt with women ruling and a plot to gain the Emperor's throne. His palace was situated on the banks of the Yarra!

"A Woman of Mars; or, Australia's Enfranchised Woman 1927?", which apart from complaining about the way Frenchmen treat their women did little to explore the feminist point of view any more than did the previous novel mentioned; "Columbia" by "Clotilda"-1873, is a Utopian tale about an under-water country linked with the Pacific Islands, and is the oldest known in the Australian field; "Melbourne and Mars: My Mysterious Life On Two Planets" -1889, by Joseph Fraser, is a classical and dignified utopia, that perhaps other Frasers might take note of; "The Coming Terror: A Romance of the C20th" by Samuel Albert Rosa -1894, was about a more revolutionary utopia by a man who was a Sydney anarchist; "The Electric Gun" by Harold Johnston-1911, was an explicitly anti-socialist utopian novel, in which the son of Australia's leading socialist leads a revolt, armed with - you guessed it - the Electric Gun.

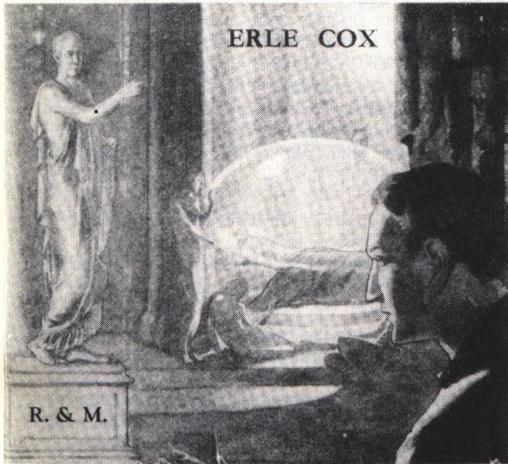
Other utopian novels mentioned were "A Visit to Blestland" by W.H. Gallier - 1896 and "A Visit to Topos, and How the Science of Heredity is Practiced There" by William Little, 1897. Some novels with a racial theme were "The Coloured Conquest" by Rata (Thomas

Roydhouse), 1904, "The Australian Crisis" by C.H.Kirmess, 1909, "Fool's Harvest" by Erle Cox, 1939 and "The Invasion" by John Hay, 19??.

OUT OF THE SILENCE
ERLE COX

OUT OF THE SILENCE

ERLE COX



R. & M.

Two landmarks in the field were Erle Cox's "Out of the Silence" (which incidently is being reprinted by Angus Robertson in a trade pb edition soon) and "Vandals of the Void" by J.M.Walsh. "Out of the Silence" was published in 1925 and covers such subjects as racial speculation, utopianism and scientific marvels. (This was one of my earliest experiences with sf, when I listened to it as a radio serial. I later read the book which was a little bit of a let down, but it still contained a sense of wonder element that despite it's inherent 'corniness' makes it an interesting read. Ed.) "Vandals of the Void" is a typical space opera with alien races, a federation of worlds, the interplanetary guard and marauding space pirates. As stylish as some of today's thrillers in it's own 1930's way.

Two other items of note from the 30's are "The Hidden Kingdom" by M.Lynne Hamilton - 1932, which is an updating of the lost kingdom theme and "The Woman On The Beast" by Helen Simpson, 1933, which is basically about mans desire to help his fellow man but committing the worst atrocities to do so. The last part of the book is set in Australia in 1999, when Australians are nomadic, Sydney is attacked by gas and The New Gospel is all the rage.

M.Barnard Eldershaw's "Tomorrow and Tomorrow" was published in 1947. VAN IKIN said that this novel could be regarded as good literature and perhaps unique in SF. It is set in the 24th century and the main character has written a book about the 20th century, which gives the author the opportunity to make comments on his own time as he saw it. The action of the novel takes place in the 24th century with the main character reading his book and discussing it.

In summing up early Australian sf Van said that it was in many ways juvenile, that it ignored such things as the existence of the aborigines, it gave the usual impression of an Australian adventurer, who is a tame womaniser and politically naive, and unsophisticated.

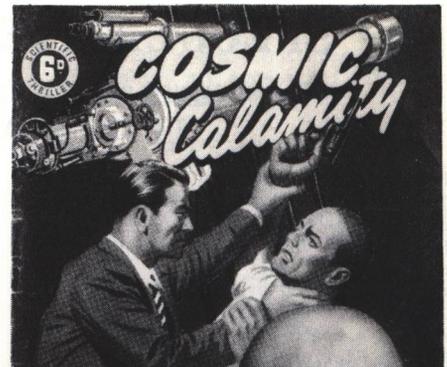
In other words it does not amount to much, but despite it's embarrassing aspects it is our heritage.

The afternoon session began with GEORGE TURNER talking about Australian Sf 1950-80. VAN IKIN was chairman. In his opening remarks GEORGE TURNER said that sf is just another type of writing which should be treated as such. The greatest influence on Australian sf he added, came from URSULA LE GUIN'S visit and the workshop she presided over in 1975. He said that he thought that DR PAUL LINEBARGER (CORDWAINER SMITH), although he created a unique world in his stories, which used a pseudo - Australian background, had no influence at all on Australian sf. Among major writers, DAL STIVENS and PETER CAREY have written fringe sf, but they have not influenced the main thrust of Australian sf production. With those comments out of the way he went on to give the history of sf writing in Australia since 1950.

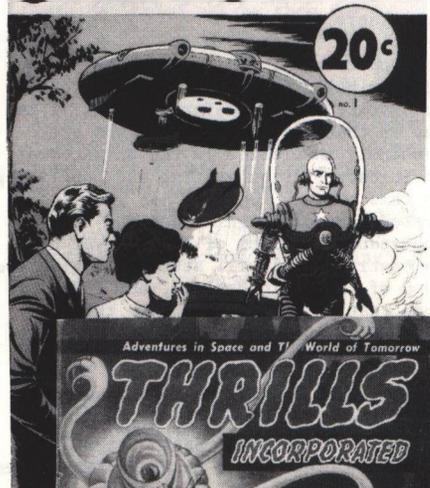
SF which originated almost entirely from overseas was pretty hard to get in the postwar years. Monetary restrictions were the main problem (British reprint magazines and those horrible novels by Vargo Staten were about all we could get. Ed.) Atlas and Page publishers were reprinting American sf, while VOLTAIRE MOLESWORTH was writing original novels for Currawong publishers. A "History of Australian Fandom 1935 to 1963" by Molesworth, which was recently reprinted by Sydney fan RON CLARKE, mentions the work Molesworth himself and other writers did in the context of the fan activities. He wrote about a dozen novels including "Blinded They Fly" and "Let There Be Monsters", as well as editing The Futurian Society's magazine.

THRILLS INCORPORATED may be regarded as the first Australian SF magazine. It was juvenile in presentation and indications are that all its contents were plagiarized (stories were rewritten with characters and authors names changed from overseas magazines. Ed.) Doug Nicholson made a valiant attempt to get a magazine going with FORERUNNER, but not enough interest existed to support an Australian pro-mag at the time. AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL and AUSTRALIAN MAGAZINE were publishing stories by authors like FRANK BRYNING and WYNNE WHITEFORD. Wynne incidently had his first story published in 1933. Paperback novels in magazine format were prolific but of little value during this time.

Our most prolific and best known SF author is CAPTAIN A.BERTRAM CHANDLER, who settled here after numerous trips from the UK as a ship's officer. His stories have been the most consistent in Australian atmosphere and content. The very popular author Nevil Shute wrote two novels, that must be regarded as SF, during the post-war period, "In The Wet" and "On The Beach". They concentrated more on the people than the science. JOHN IGGULDON produced a number of books also during this time. (I regard these as straightforward SF perhaps leaning more to the JOHN WYNDHAM style than NEVIL SHUTE as George intimated. Ed.)



POPULAR SCIENCE FICTION



In 1967 Bert Chandler's "GRIMES" series was doing very well in the USA in Ace Books. (All are being reprinted in September this year. Ed.) LEE HARDING was being published regularly in the British magazine *NEW WORLDS*, edited by JOHN CARNELL, while JOHN BAXTER, DAVID BOUTLAND, JACK WODHAMS and DAMIEN BRODERICK with others were achieving some success.

These writers were beginning to establish a movement away from the overseas types of sf. JOHN BAXTER'S "First Pacific Book of Australian SF" was welcome on the scene, but left something to be desired. It was basically in need of the criticism he gave it George said, but he would look at it in a different light now. (DAMIEN BRODERICK'S collection, "A MAN RETURNED", was published by Horwitz, who under the influence of American immigrant RON SMITH published sf books by Baxter, Boutland, Chandler and others. They were not impressed with the sales of their sf titles however and Horwitz did little to further the publication of sf in Australia. Ed.)

Also, in the late 1960's, JOHN BANGSUND started his magazine *AUSTRALIAN SF REVIEW* and in so doing moved the focus on Australian sf from Sydney to Melbourne. (The move started long before that. Ed.) From 1956 to 1967 Australian fan activities were as much in the doldrums as the professional aspects of sf. The lack of support for fan activities after the Fourth Australian Convention in Sydney in 1953, when Sydney fandom disintegrated, also had some bearing on the writing and publishing of sf in Australia. ASFR contained articles by Harding, Broderick, Foyster and Chandler, one of whose stories first published in ASFR was anthologised in an English collection, plus letters from overseas pros. ASFR was making its presence felt. Writers contributing articles and reviews wrote well and interestingly about what they read. By 1969 however ASFR was losing steam and BRUCE GILLESPIE'S *SF COMMENTARY* took over.

SF COMMENTARY featured contributions from such writers as STANISLAW LEM and FRANZ ROTTENSTEINER. A strong base for SF criticism in Australia was established by ASFR and SFC. Meanwhile RON GRAHAM published "VISION OF TOMORROW" in England, which for various reasons, complicated by Ron being here in Australia and the magazine being edited and printed in England, saw only ten issues and folded. (Ron was reported to have lost \$60,000 on this venture. For a while VISION provided an outlet for Australia's SF writing talent. Ed.)

In 1971 "The 2nd Pacific Book of SF" was published and it was a great improvement on the first collection. Following that, little was happening apart from the activities of LEE HARDING, who was rapidly establishing himself as a full time writer. In 1975 Melbourne hosted the WORLD SF CONVENTION, with the associated writer's workshop led by Ursula Le Guin. The Literature Board began to show their interest by helping to finance this workshop. The Convention itself was a delight to the fans but contributed nothing to

Australian SF itself. The workshop however, helped a great deal and kicked a number of writers into action, including PHILLIPA MADDERN. In 1977 KITTY VIGO organised a workshop with VONDA MCINTYRE, CHRISTOPHER PRIEST and GEORGE TURNER himself, which was a useful venture, but not as spectacular as the Le Guin workshop. A third workshop was held, led by TERRY CARR and GEORGE TURNER, which was notable mainly for the discovery of LEANNE FRAHM. Workshops can be costly, but we badly need another one soon, basically on editing.

So much for the development of Australian SF writing, but what about the publishing? Shortly after the 1975 World Convention PAUL COLLINS started 'VOID' magazine. After a few issues he switched to book format and received assistance from the Literature Board. Most, but not all of the stories were by Australian authors. The opinions vary greatly on the quality of the stories, but Collins has helped fill a gap. Besides publishing four collections of stories, "Other Worlds", "Envisaged Worlds", "Alien Worlds" and "Distant Worlds, VOID or as they are now called CORY & COLLINS, have published three novels, by WYNNE WHITEFORD, DAVID LAKE and JACK WODHAMS and they have more planned.

NORSTRILIA PRESS also came into existence soon after AUSSIECON, and their first publication was a critical review of the work of "Philip K. Dick: Electric Shepherd". They then published the stories resulting from the Ursula Le Guin workshop under the title of "The Altered I", edited by Lee Harding, the reprint rights of which were sold to Berkley in the USA. They then published "The View From The Edge" which was a collection of stories resulting from the second workshop with VONDA MCINTYRE and CHRIS PRIEST, edited by GEORGE TURNER himself, but the result was not as good as ALTERED EYE. ROB GERRAND then edited an original collection which was published by Outback Press, "Transmutations". (The other Norstrilia Press people by the way are CAREY HANDFIELD and BRUCE GILLESPIE. Ed.) "Moon in the Ground" was next; a prize-winning novel by KEITH ANTILL. They followed that with this year's DITMAR winner, "Dreaming Dragons" by Damien Broderick, which has also been published by Pocket Books in the USA and Penguin here. Their latest effort is "The Stellar Gauge" edited by MICHAEL TOLLEY and is a collection of essays on well-known sf authors. We must thank these two publishers for the current development of Australian sf. The Literature Board however supplied the fuel that was set alight by the Le Guin workshop spark.

Other features of the Australian sf scene that GEORGE TURNER touched on were the contribution of VAN IKIN'S magazine *SCIENCE FICTION*. Also the other fan fiction magazines *CRUX*, *NEXUS*, *OMICRON* and *FUTURISTIC TALES*. One of these, *CYGNUS CHRONICLER*, edited by NEVILLE ANGOVE, has potential as an outlet for local writers. Amongst the up and coming writers he said we should take special note of PETRINA SMITH, LEANNE FRAHM and PHILLIPA MADDERN. DAVID LAKE is of considerable note. CHERRY WILDER has impressed particularly with

her "Brin" novels. Amongst the established writers JACK WODHAMS has had notable success, WYNNE WHITEFORD has kept at it and A. BERTRAM CHANDLER has without a doubt been the most successful. DAMIEN BRODERICK, besides his Horwitz collection "A Man Returned", edited the best collection up to 1977, called "The Zeitgeist Machine", for Angus and Robertson. His novel "Sorcerer's World" was published by Signet in the USA in 1971. His most notable effort to date is no doubt "The Dreaming Dragons". Pocket, who published the US edition of *Dragons*, has also bought "The Judas Mandala".

LEE HARDING edited "Beyond Tomorrow" in 1976, which was a mixture of original stories by local and overseas authors, as was "Rooms of Paradise". The former published by the now defunct Wren publishers and the latter by Hyland House and Quartet in a joint venture. Harding has also done a number of juvenile SF novels and two radio serials for young ABC listeners. Three of the stories published in "Rooms of Paradise" were picked up by TERRY CARR for publication in his annual 'Best Of' collections. Harding's major achievement so far is "Displaced Person" which won the Children's Book Award for 1980.

Angus and Robertson publisher's contribution to the Australian SF is not insignificant. They published, George Turner reminded us, the two "Pacific Books of SF", "The Zeitgeist Machine", "Moon Baby" and "The Luck of Brin's Five".

A lot of other points were made by George in summing up and answering questions from the audience - fanzine's contribution to Australian SF; the backing of the Literature Board - not a lot to show but a good beginning; writers should write about what they know, speak with their own voice, forget all they know about overseas SF and write what they like; Literature Board funding is sparse but achieving positive results, Dr BRISSENDEN said; PAUL COLLINS has shown a growing ability as an editor, he is creating a market for young writers and giving them a chance to learn even if the stories themselves have little value; fanzine editors who want to publish better stories should ask established authors for stories and they should send back any stories that are not up to scratch; can we get more financial help from the literature board or other authorities? Possibly, but not for critical publications such as *SF COMMENTARY* or *ASF NEWS*; funds are hard to come by.

A very worthwhile session of the conference ended there. (GEORGE TURNER himself has made a great impact on Australian SF with his 'no holds barred' reviewing and criticism, his workshop activity and his own writing. Before tackling SF with "Beloved Son" he was a very well known figure in the literary establishment. He has a second SF novel, "Vaneglorry" due for publication in a few months and a third to be published in 1982. Ed.)

The second afternoon session had BRUCE GILLESPIE, editor of *SF COMMENTARY* and one of the founders of 'Norstrilia Press', speaking about

the 'Contemporary Perspective'. Bruce endeavoured to explain the position of Australian SF by likening the SF field to a plain in which overseas SF fills the area above the horizon and Australia below. The area above the horizon is full of activity, the area below is almost empty but slowly filling up with the efforts of Norstrilia Press, Cory & Collins, Wild & Woolley and others.

The publishing scene is growing but it has distribution problems. The audience is there but publicity is needed to let readers know that Australian SF exists. SF publishing is unlikely to get the backing that the film industry has received, and even then it has not produced any great films, so it may be some time before we see any great Australian SF.

Australian SF writers must learn to take criticism. It has been lightly criticised in the main, but friends must criticise friends. Do not soft pedal. Personally BRUCE GILLESPIE has been disappointed in PAUL COLLINS 'World' series and all the novels except WYNNE WHITEFORD'S. Speaking of the Norstrilia Press publications, "Moon In The Ground" he said received good reviews from the general press but not from SF sources.

The novel he said he would like to see would be one set in an alternate Australia, not the cliched one so often used and not just a different version of things as they are: "Woman of the Future" by DAVID IRELAND is similar to the type of fiction he would like to see. "Displaced Person" by Lee Harding comes close but could be improved; Australian SF may yet have something to offer; LEE HARDING commented that he has benefited from Bruce's and other reviews. DAVID GRIGG said he would like to see a lot more harsh, cutting reviews of his writing. JULIA CURTIS said reviewers must be honest because writers will learn from honest criticism. It may hurt at first but without it writers will never get anywhere. PETER TOLUZZI said that workshops should teach writers to take criticism. GEORGE TURNER added that no writers like misguided praise; they prefer appraisal from a reviewer who knows what he talking about. "Dreaming Dragons", for instance could take a great deal of critical attention, but the short review could do little more than encourage people to read it.

Short reviews are not the place to go into great critical detail on a book, but long critical reviews are merited if the criticism is viable.

The last session on Saturday dealt with THE PLACE OF AUSTRALIAN SF IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT - the speakers being MICHAEL TOLLEY, VAN IKIN, GEORGE TURNER and others. GEORGE TURNER said that Australian SF was not worth a tuppenny damn on the world scene. At best there are about a dozen authors who have even been noticed outside the country. Some talent has been found in the workshops, but more workshops are needed to teach criticism and editing. We should learn to recognise quality, as the main problem in Australian writing. Not the grammar and punctuation, that is ok, but the writers are unable to write from a personal point of view. They write like computers, cliché following cliché. They need to be told and we need to train editors to keep telling them.

MICHAEL TOLLEY did not agree with GEORGE TURNER. He said that there is too much criticism of Australian SF. "Stellar Gauge" he said is even being criticised for not being critical of the writers covered. Writers do not need to be original he said, they can copy other authors but produce original versions. This brought howls from many of the audience. He tried to justify this statement and said that it is easy to identify writers who read a lot of other people's writing. DAVID LAKE, who he said has been unjustly criticised here, is being compared to P. J. Farmer by overseas critics. WYNNE WHITEFORD'S style is very similar to overseas writing but in Australian settings and why not have ideas like CHERRY WILDER'S marsupials? Is DAMIEN BRODERICK'S writing related to CORDWAINER SMITH'S? LEE HARDING is perhaps Australia's H. G. WELLS. I was wondering at this stage if Michael was being serious and then he added that GEORGE TURNER clearly belongs to the anti-Pohl school and I realised he was pulling our legs. He added that he would be terrified to be writing in Australia now as the criticisms would be terrible to take.

VAN IKIN said that there is a lot of good things in Australian SF. GT and BG are attempting to make the point that

perfection must be achieved, but he does not expect this. He can read a story and enjoy it for what it is. Australian SF must try to be itself and "Dreaming Dragons" and "Displaced Person" are certainly showing an emergence of this aspect. "Dreaming Dragons" is somewhat tongue-in-cheek, anti-authoritarian and intrinsically Australian in attitude. It is a much better book than "Moon in the Ground" and uses Ayers' Rock much more effectively. It is a high-tech thriller, as Australian in its field as "Woman of the Future" and instantly Australian without effort. "Displaced Person" is meticulous in building themes and it is carefully put together on a sociological level. It clearly illustrates attitudes in Australia of the young, attitudes that are quite importantly Australian. If Australian writers are to be Australian they must do it effortlessly, they do not need to push it with Australian clichés. Considering that Australian SF has only been progressing since 1975, worthwhile strides have been made. Australia's position in the 'Global Context' now is to be itself.

ANNE BREWSTER compared Australian SF with Russian, and the third world countries. The social and political alienation themes do not appear in Australian writing, but the idea of being forced into another time and way of living is quite evident in both Australian and Russian SF. There is very little social awareness in Australian writing. It tends much more towards the personal level.

NORMAN TALBOT - The SF genre always had a bad name, but 90 % of everything is bad. Characterisation in SF is not necessarily bad, but it is handled differently and sometimes experimentally. If you must use 'Australianess', use it well, like PATRICIA WRIGHTSON does in her fantasy novels. Reviewers should review books as they come. A bit of humour in reviews should be more evident and point out the good points, not only the bad.

On Saturday evening the conference attendees were the guests of JEAN WEBER at her Canberra home. Everybody enjoyed the party and I would like to thank Jean on behalf of everybody for a good night.

Jean Weber's party.

Photos ASFN ©



On Sunday morning DR BRISSENDEN chaired the panel on the subject, DOES SF RECEIVE THE CRITICISM IT DESERVES? He introduced speakers who have contributed reviews to newspapers and the critical publications. He said in his introduction that we cannot force an Australian SF. It has been predominantly American up to now, but as more is written in Australia it will develop naturally. Let us hope that a future such conference does not just cover the Australian context. Conference organiser COLIN STEELE added that reviewers are the avenue for telling the general reader about books. They are the main source of information for libraries. The inference being of course that these reviewers have a great influence on what people will buy and read and what they will not.

GEORGE TURNER said that the problem with SF criticism in Australia (and in fact overseas, Ed.) is that most of the reviewers are writers themselves. They have these in-group ideas about the uniqueness of sf and criticise it as though it is something apart. This is wrong, as all the important themes have been dealt with in the mainstream. SF is not doing things that have never been done before as these writer-critics claim. Most reviewers praise the books mentioned, going against the principle that ninety per cent of everything is crud. In a year George said he can usually only add one or two worthwhile books to his permanent library shelves. Many books are praised for the good aspects only and their bad points ignored. An example of bad reviewing is "Capella's Golden Eyes" by C.D. EVANS which has been well reviewed, but its scientific concepts are false and it could have been set on Earth just as easily as it was set on another planet. Criticism should take a much sterner look at itself.

NORMAN TALBOT said that he disagreed with George Turner in that reviewers need not be good critics. He does not like reviewers who tell you the whole plot of the book, but they do not have to comment on the style and the prose either. In SF the ideas are important and should be looked at, but this does not mean that a book is good or important just because of what it is about. Reviewers have a harder job than literary critics because they have to say whether a book is good or bad in a few words, where critics usually have a lot of space to go into detail about good books at any rate.

DAMIEN BRODERICK said that reviews such as the Bester critique in 'Stellar Gauge' are justified. They liked Bester and they are entitled to say what they like about him. He said that he submitted some reviews to the National Times newspaper, but they were cut. What they and most newspapers want is just for the review to say that the books are a good read. They do not want to allow space for the reviewer to say why he does not or does like a book. If you criticise a book too harshly at any rate you may upset the publisher and not get any advertising. They like to

use the term SCI-FI and treat SF reviews as odd-spot interest. In the main SF gets the reviews it deserves as most of it is just escapist literature.

VAN IKIN, editor of *SCIENCE FICTION*, speculative fiction review magazine, said that he is interested in promoting SF. He tries to find something good in reviews of Australian books, but he writes for himself, not publishers. He attempts to aim his reviews at a wide range of readers, but he tries to make it clear at the start at what level a review is aimed and distinguish between just reviews and criticisms. This can be a problem at times.

DR BRISSENDEN then said that this idea of reviews and criticism being separate is a lot of rubbish. All reviewers are being critical. Extended reviews can give more detail but you cannot review one type of book with one hand and another type with the other hand. He uses the same standards for all literature, the basic critical requirements. Unless SF is judged as works of literature we might as well forget the whole business.

Points made in question time by various speakers included the observation of DR BRISSENDEN that newspapers need good journalists for reviewers, writers who will make the reviews themselves entertaining to read. GEORGE TURNER said that he was originally asked by THE AGE newspaper to do SF reviews, but he now reviews a wide range of books and looks at them all on the same level. When "Beloved Son" was reviewed by SF reviewers they missed the point of the story completely, but reviewers outside the field got it. JACKIE YOWELL, Penguin Books Editor, said that newspaper reviews are necessary to the trade to attract the readers who are not true initiated readers, those who will buy the books whatever. She also said that reviews should be more innovative. LEE HARDING said that criticism so far of Australian SF is too subdued and that further strong criticism is needed. Other people disagreed with Dr Brissenden regarding different levels of reviewing and criticism. Reviewers only need to give the basic details on a book, but critics need to give more details. This division is a necessary evil.

The next session was the PUBLISHER'S PANEL on SF in Australia. It was introduced by Brian Clouston and the first speaker was CAREY HANDFIELD of Norstrilia Press. He said that although SF publishing in Australia is very small it is hard to get it into the shops. They have a wide range of SF and there is a lot of competition. Australian SF needs more publicity. Books do not sell themselves despite what many people think. The prices need to be competitive with overseas books. Buying into overseas print runs or selling rights to Australian editions will help. We're at the stage now however when we can start to compete.

WYNNE WHITEFORD, representing CORY & COLLINS publishers, pointed out that Paul Collins has done more to put Australian SF on the map than anybody in Australia. He outlined the progress

of VOID publication (now Cory & Collins) and the books they have published. He said that Cory & Collins have a lot of energy and great potential. It was not easy to get stories worth publishing early on and many had to be completely rewritten.

PAT WOOLLEY of Wild And Woolley Publishers gave a brief history of her venture. She said they had a strange range of books and what little they had approaching SF did not sell well. 1500 copies was the best they could do of a DAL STIVENS book. (Not really SF at any rate - fantasy perhaps. Ed.) They had to set up their own distribution and they are now handling other small publishers both local and overseas. They expect the publishers themselves to do their own promotion. Their biggest step into the SF market is the science fiction/fantasy art/film title, "COLORVISION" by RON COBB. 8000 have been sold to the USA and it is selling very well in Australia. There is an opening for Australian SF publishers to produce books and sell them to big houses to print and distribute. They would do the editing and deal with the author but the big publisher would handle printing and distribution.

JACKIE YOWELL, Penguin Books editor was able to give the point of view of a major publisher and distributor. She said that SF did not sell in all that big a quantity.

PENGUIN, of course, have no distribution problems but it is hard to get booksellers to take larger quantities of SF. It is hard to promote paperbacks in general. Reviewers want hardcovers and we should be trying to create more interest in paperbacks by the press and media. We need to get more people to read SF but Penguins are not sure how to market their SF titles. They would prefer not to categorize titles. This brought up a problem that received quite a lot of discussion and widely differing views. JACKIE YOWELL said that she thought that 'labelling' restricted sales. Booksellers in particular were still against SF. Many librarians did not want to know anything about SF but others would take all they could get.

To add my own comments here, and I can only talk from the point of view of a bookseller who has sold SF and other books for the last thirty years, I insist that all types of books on sale or in libraries should be categorized. That is if you want to sell them, and that is what booksellers are in business for. Librarians may wish to hide their science fiction, because it might embarrass some of them having it on their shelves, but booksellers who are in business to make a profit make a big display of all the SF books they can get their hands on. After all, why should SF be hidden amongst the general books any more than mysteries, westerns or romance? The idea of categorizing by publisher went out with the T model Ford; or at least it did with the progressive booksellers. The name of the game is to help your customer find what he is looking for as quickly as possible and the better range he has to choose from the more he is likely to buy. If authors are

embarrassed about writing SF why don't they get out of the field? Apparently they do not feel they have made it unless they are accepted by the mainstream. This attitude is to me very shortsighted. I admit there could be very strong arguments put forward by some authors, but entirely to their own ends.

Over the lunch period on Sunday, a book signing session was held at Dalton's Bookshop in Canberra City. A good crowd of people attended. A good number of books were sold and the attending authors were kept busy signing books.

I chaired the final session on Sunday afternoon, which tended to become a little fannish and lighthearted. This AUTHOR'S PANEL gave the authors a chance to tell the attendees what they are currently working on. LEE HARDING was non-committal and gave no details on current work. He did say that he had enjoyed editing very much and that the anthologies he had done gave him great satisfaction. WYNNE WHITEFORD spoke mainly about his involvement with Cory and Collins. DAMIEN BRODERICK was not prepared to give anything away and quoted from the biographical book on various

authors, "Dreammakers" edited by Charles Platt. DAVID GRIGG said he has not had a great deal of time to devote to his writing recently, but by no means has he given up. GEORGE TURNER was the most vocal and he told us how he had been induced to write SF by JOHN BANGSUND. Writing SF is not simple. It presents a series of problems to be solved. He was not entirely satisfied with "Beloved Son", but it has established a background he can use for further novels. He wants to cover some of the most common themes from new angles. "Vaneglory", which is due to be published soon by Faber, deals with extended life, with emphasis on real biology and what it would be like to live three hundred years or more. "Yesterday's Men" will probably be published also by Faber mid 1982. Drawing on his own military experiences, GEORGE TURNER has written an SF novel about war, from the point of view of the boy next door who joined up. He said that most authors hardly ever convey the real military mind and he has endeavoured to avoid the stereotypes usually depicted.

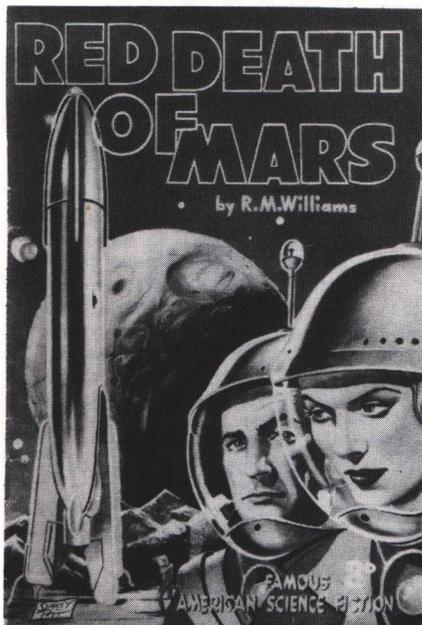
Before everybody shot off to catch their planes late in the afternoon a lively question time was held which was just too much for me to try and cover in detail. Some comments made included:- LEE HARDING replying to a question on possible films from Australian books, said that he had been approached regarding "Displaced Person" COLIN STEELE said that a problem to be dealt with is telling authors how and where to get their stories published. GEORGE TURNER said that we need a workshop on editing which could benefit authors also. (The Australian SF Foundation is currently investigating this possibility and a workshop will most likely be held early in 1982 Ed.) MICHAEL TOLLEY endeavoured to justify his earlier statements, saying that authors should learn from other authors

and improve their ideas. They should concentrate on problem solving rather than style.

A comment was made about the term 'mainstream', regarding what it means and how it came into existence. The general opinion was that it is a bad term invented by SF people in the USA to distinguish what is written by authors in the field from what is written by writers who do not usually write SF. This again brought up the subject of the SF ghetto and the efforts of a lot of people to break down this wall, which has been built largely by the SF people themselves. Quoting URSULA LE GUIN, JUDITH HANNA said all fiction is a metaphor for life. Perhaps SF has been a new set of metaphors. GEORGE TURNER said that general fiction had covered many subjects better than SF, such as alien contact in FENIMORE COOPER'S "The Pioneers", where the white man meets the American Indian.

Taking another angle on the difference between SF and other fiction BRUCE GILLESPIE said stories do not happen to people in SF. It relies more on situation and ideas. Characterisation though should be better in sf. This is the point, both GEORGE TURNER and LEE HARDING agreed; writers should attempt to focus on the characters just as much as they do on the place or the events. NORMAN TALBOT said that not all novels need have strong characterisation and GEORGE TURNER agreed, but although the plot is very important in SF this is no excuse to have poor characterisation. MICHAEL TOLLEY, finishing on a question that leaves us some food for thought, asked should science fiction continue to grapple with the problems confronting mankind rather than the individual?

So ended a very worthwhile two days discussion from which I hope Australian SF will benefit a lot and take a further step up the ladder.



A Malian Press small magazine featuring reprints of American stories and a cover by the outstanding sf artist STANLEY PITT. (Mid 1950s)

Obituaries

GEORGE O. SMITH, sf writer and former engineer, 70, was found dead in his Rumson, New Jersey home on May 27th from an apparent heart attack. Smith lived alone and had been dead at least several days.

George Oliver Smith was born April 9th, 1911, in Chicago. He spent one year at the University of Chicago in 1929. He became a radio engineer in 1935. His radio engineering background was quite obvious in his best known stories in the "Venus Equilateral" series. The first in the series "QRM--Interplanetary" was published in *ASTOUNDING* October 1942. Arthur C. Clarke said that Smith was "the first technically qualified writer to spell out (space stations) for communications." He acknowledged his debt to Smith for some of his own ideas on synchronous orbit communications satellites.

His best book was *THE FOURTH "R"* which was published by Ballantine in 1959, but readers will remember well stories such as *PATTERN FOR CONQUEST* (Gnome 1949), *NOMAD* (Prime 1950), *HELLFLOWER* (Abelard 1953), *HIGHWAYS IN HIDING* (Gnome 1956), *TROUBLED STAR* (Avalon 1957), *PATH OF UNREASON* (Gnome 1958), and *LOST IN SPACE* (Avalon 1959). Ballantine are due to publish a collection of his stories late this year. (SFC)

KIT PEDLER, 53 died suddenly of a suspected heart attack at his home near Canterbury, Kent, England, on May 27th. Christopher Magnus Howard Pedler, was a qualified pathologist. He began to write for TV with Gerry Davis in the 1960's, contributing episodes to Dr Who. When he started writing novels they dealt with scientific disasters; *MUTANT 59: THE PLASTIC EATERS* (1972), *BRAINRACK* (1974), and *THE DYNOSTAR MENACE* (1975). He lectured and appeared on TV talking about his scientific beliefs. (SFC)

LOU TABAKOW, well known fan and convention attendee died May 17th. He was 66. He had been confined to hospital with a rare disease for a few months prior to his death. He was a life long resident of Cincinnati, and a member and for the last 7 years head, of the Cincinnati Fantasy Group. (SFC)

ED CAGLE, another well known American sf fan died May 26th. He wrote letters & articles for fanzines and edited various zines himself.

A scholarship fund has been established in the late SUSAN WOOD'S name at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. It is being administered by DOUGLAS WURTLE who was Susan's teacher while she was at Carleton from 1965 to 1970. Further details can be had from Mr Wurtle at Department of English, Arts Tower, Carleton University, Ottawa ONT K1S 5B6 Canada.

(SFC)

SPECIAL NOTE: I WILL NOT BE ATTENDING THE WORLD CONVENTION IN DENVER, UNLESS A MIRACLE LIKE WINNING THE LOTTERY TAKES PLACE. MAYBE NEXT YEAR. I AM VERY SORRY THAT I WILL NOT SEE ALL MY FRIENDS OVER THERE IN THE USA. AGAIN THIS YEAR. Merv B.

BOOKS

PUBLISHED & ANNOUNCED

This column, this and future issues, will cover the highlights of what the publishers have published and announced. We will not attempt to cover every book, as this is taking up more space than we can allow. As noted in the editorial we hope to produce a separate publication which will list all titles by author, title, publisher and other details.

The following titles listed have been published or announced up to and including August 1981.

Art publisher ABRAMS (USA) have announced PHANTOMS OF THE IMAGINATION by A.M.Hammacher, which covers fantasy art and literature from Blake to Dali. They also have a title on the art of Walt Disney, WALT DISNEY'S TREASURY OF SILLY SYMPHONIES. Plus WITCHES by Erica Jong and two calendars, GNOMES FOR ALL SEASONS, and WALT DISNEY'S CLASSIC CALENDAR 1982. ABBEVILLE PRESS (USA) have announced another volume in their Walt Disney series, DISNEY ANIMATION.

ACE Books titles for June start off with Fantasy award winner Jessica Amanda Salmonson's TOMOE GOZEN, based on the mythology of Japan. SYSTEMIC SHOCK by Dean Ing is a post holocaust novel. A collection of sf war stories edited by Gordon R.Dickson was published called COMBAT SF. As part of their programme to reprint all of H.Beam Piper's works Ace have done LORD KALVAN OF OTHERWHEN. Gordon Dickson's double, ALIEN ART with ARCTURUS LANDING also was published in June, and in July they did his TIME TO TELEPORT with DELUSION WORLD. A new title by Arsen Darnay, THE PURGATORY ZONE deals with a future zen society. Reprints include titles by Andre Norton, Fred Saberhagen, Robert E.Howard and Fritz Leiber. August will see the small edition of NITROGEN FIX by Hal Clement. A new title by G.C.Edmondson is TO SAIL THE CENTURY SEA and is a follow up to THE SHIP THAT SAILED THE TIME STREAM, which is also reprinted. PARATIME! is a collection of H.Beam Piper's Paratime Police stories. The latest issue of DESTINIES, Volume 3 #2 edited by Jim Baen was also done in August along with reprints by Sheckley, Norton, Davidson, and Bellairs. Ace also announced a whole series of boxed sets.

ADVENT:Publishers Inc. published FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND by L.Sprague and Catherine Crook De Camp in July. It is a collection of writings, essays, poems and stories plus tributes to the authors by other writers. It is a joint publication with the Milwaukee Convention, X CON 5.

ALLISON & BUSBY have finally published, we believe after a long delay, A.Bertram Chandler's novels, THE RIM OF SPACE and WHEN THE DREAM DIES.

ARROW Books published THE TIME BANDITS by Charles Alverson, a book based on the new Monty Python movie, in their SPARROW series for junior readers. A

full adult edition will be published by HUTCHINSON. JUNIPER TIME by Kate Wilhelm was published in July and in August we see SIGHT OF PROTEUS by Charles Sheffield, plus reprints by Harry Harrison and P.K. Dick.

An April release in trade edition from AVON was A TREASURY OF MODERN FANTASY edited by Terry Carr and M.H.Greenberg. A new sf novel by SUSAN COON was a June release, THE VIRGIN, along with fourth in the series, WANDOR'S FLIGHT by Roland Green. Another fantasy is the first pb edition of Shirley Rousseau Murphy's THE CASTLE OF HAPE. In August we see the first pb edition of a book that is a collectors item in hc, THE BLACK WHEEL. It was an incomplete novel by A.Merritt which was completed by artist/author Hannes Bok. TALES OF PIRX THE PILOT by European author Stanislaw Lem is another August release.



BALLANTINE/DEL REY continue to be one of the most prolific producers of F&SF. New titles between June and August include: DRAGONSLAYER a fantasy by Wayland Drew, THE SEVEN ALTARS OF DUSARRA, a fantasy by Lawrence Watt-Evens, SPACE DOCTOR by Lee Correy, THE VAMPIRES OF NIGHTWORLD by David Bischoff, GIANT'S STAR by James P.Hogan, THE HOUSE BETWEEN THE WORLDS by Marion Zimmer Bradley, THEIR MAJESTIES BUCKETEERS by L.Neil Smith and STELLAR #7 edited by Judy Lynn-Del Rey. Reprints by Brunner, Tenn, Foster, McCaffrey, Silverberg and Sturgeon were evident. The 1982 J.R.R.Tolkien Calendar was due about now, with art work by Darrell K.Sweet.

BANTAM released two new sf titles in pb in June; UNDER THE CITY OF ANGELS by Jerry Earl Brown, about a Los Angeles that has sunk beneath the sea, and Jack Williamson's sequel to his 1950's book "The Humanoids", THE HUMANOID TOUCH. LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE, the Hugo nominee by Robert Silverberg was a July release along with Harry Harrison's last novel of the trilogy, STARWORLD. A new title in the Micronauts series by Gordon Williams, THE REVOLT OF THE MICRONAUTS was an August release with CENTURY'S END by Russell Griffin and THE NEBULA WINNERS 13 edited by Samuel Delany.

A.S.BARNES & CO. INC who specialise largely in cinema books, published early in the year WHO'S WHO OF THE HORROR AND OTHER FANTASY FILMS by David J.Hogan.

BEAVER Books, the Hamlyn Juvenile pb series, are reprinting THE WHITE MOUNTAINS, THE POOL OF FIRE and THE CITY OF GOLD AND LEAD by John Christopher in August.

BERKLEY publishers published in June, the terrible British original novel THE CABAL by Philip(Saul) Dunn, along with Charles L.Grant's sf novel A QUIET NIGHT OF FEAR. They also did a reprint of Piers Anthony's GOD OF THE TAROT and a fantasy, KING OF THE SEA by Derek Bickerton. July saw the second in the Phoenix Legacy series, SHADOW OF THE SWAN by M.K.Wren, BLAKELY'S ARK by Ian MacMillan and THE BERKLEY SHOWCASE Volume 4, edited by Victoria Schochet and John Silbersack. Barry Longyear's THE CITY OF BARABOO, plus OTHER STORIES AND ... THE ATTACK OF THE GIANT BABY by Kit Reed, NEW VOICES 4 edited by George R.R.Martin and a new printing of THE ONCE AND FUTURE KING by T.H.White are August titles. In hard cover BERKLEY/PUTNAM announced a collection edited by Frederik Pohl FREDERIK POHL'S FAVOURITE STORIES, but we believe it has been delayed till next year. Their hc schedule has been curtailed overall, but they intend to start a new trade pb series soon which will include GOD EMPEROR OF DUNE by Frank Herbert and DEMON by John Varley.

The publisher of mainly reference works, R.R.BOWKER published in June a new edition of ANATOMY OF WONDER by Neil Barron, which is a critical guide to SF. They also did HORROR & SUPERNATURAL LITERATURE: A core collection Reference Guide edited by Marshall B.Tymn.

Due for mid-1981 publication by CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS was THE LIFE AND WORKS OF DAVID LINDSAY by Bernard Sellin.

A May publication by JONATHAN CAPE was HELLO AMERICA by J.G.Ballard, which is set in a post energy crisis/disaster USA.

CORGI have three titles which are reprints of US editions; THE HIGH CRUSADE and THE HORN OF TIME both by Poul Anderson and AGENT OF CHAOS by Norman Spinrad.

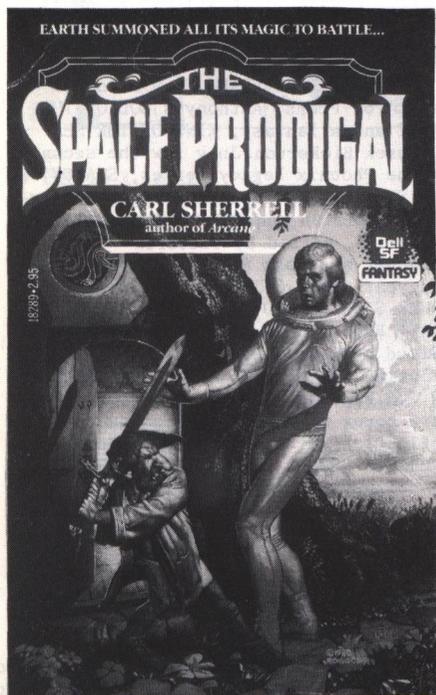
The June releases from CORONET were THE FACE by Jack Vance, the fourth in the Demon Princes series and CATFANG by Nicholas Fisk, in his 'Starstormers' series for young readers. August is Robert Silverberg month at Coronet with THE BOOK OF SKULLS and three reprints in UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY, SHADRACH IN THE FURNACE and THE STOCHASTIC MAN.

CORNERSTONE Books (USA) published last year a book by Robert Siegel entitled ALPHA CENTAURI and this year they have done his WHALESONG.

DAW titles from June to August include: BLOOD COUNTY, a horror novel by Curt Selby; THE MAGIC OF CAMELOT, a follow up to "A World Called Camelot" by Arthur H.Landis; THE ROBOT IN THE CLOSET, another tin man comedy by Ron Goulart; HORN CROWN by Andre Norton, a new fantasy; BANNERS OF THE SA'YEN, another world fantasy by B.R. Stateham; WAVE WITHOUT A SHORE, a new sf novel by C.J.Cherryh; THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES IX edited by Karl Edward Wagner, plus reprints by Clayton, Farmer, Dick, Phillifent and Alan Burt Akers.

The tail end of DELL Publishers sf publishing programme is SONGMASTER by Orson Scott Card and SPACE PRODIGAL by Carl

Sherrell. And we almost missed their June releases of KINSMAN by Ben Bova, AN INFINITE SUMMER by Christopher Priest and TIME MACHINE II, a sequel to H.G.Well's "Time Machine" by the late George Pal and Joe Morhaim.



In July ANDRE DEUTSCH (UK) published a collection of stories by Anne McCaffrey; THE WORLDS OF ANNE McCAFFREY.

The following titles have been announced by DENNIS DOBSON publishers (UK), but some may not be published till late this year or 1982. THE PRISONER #3 by David McDaniel, THE SPACEJACKS by Robert Wells, THE SPACE ANGEL by John Maddox Roberts, GIVE WARNING TO THE WORLD by John Brunner, SPACELING by Doris Piserchia, THE BEYONDERS by Manly Wade Wellman, THE LIFE BUYERS by E.C.Tubb, THE WORLD'S BEST SF 6 edited by Donald A. Wollheim, THE TIMEWINDERS by Colin Kapp, RIGHT-HANDED WILDERNESS by Robert Wells, OMEGA TO ALPHA by A.N.Raine, THE MINDS OF DELTA by Terry Cockburn and ZARTHOR'S BANE by Andre Norton.

DOUBLEDAY (USA) published in July and August the following bound volumes: TRANSFER TO YESTERDAY by Isidore Haiblum, UNIVERSE 11 edited by Terry Carr, TWELVE FAIR KINGDOMS II: THE GRAND JUBILEE by Suzette Haden Elgin, THE BEST OF TOM SCORTIA edited by George Zebrowski, AIR GLOW RED by Ian Slater, YOYAGERS by Ben Bova, BRINKMAN by Ron Goulart and WHISPERS III edited by Stuart D.Schiff.

DUTTON (USA) will publish BEST SCIENCE FICTION STORIES OF THE YEAR edited by Gardner Dozois.

EERDMANS Publishers (USA) have issued another two volumes in their pb series of George MacDonald's fantasies; LILITH and PHANTASTES.

Between May and June EYRE METHUEN (UK) published a non-fiction survey of the fantasy field simply called FANTASY, by Rosemary Jackson. They also did the first bound edition of the Arthurian story, HAWK OF MAY by Gillian Bradshaw. Followed by THE GOLDEN MAN by Philip K. Dick, again the first hc edition of

this collection of P.K.D.'s stories.

FAWCETT (Including Gold Medal & Crest) titles from June to August include: a new edition of NIGHT OF MASKS by Andre Norton, AND NOT MAKE DREAMS YOUR MASTER by Stephen Goldin, KEEPING TIME by David Bear, CATASTROPHES edited by Asimov, Greenberg and Waugh, FIRE AT THE CENTER by George W. Proctor, A WALK IN THE WOLF WOOD by Mary Stewart, THE SURVIVAL OF FREEDOM by Jerry Pournelle and John F.Carr (eds), GREEN MONDAY by Michael M.Thomas and an historical novel by Andre Norton, FOLLOW THE DRUM.

The June release by FUTURA/ORBIT books was a new edition of Ursula LeGuin's THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS and the novel of the film THE CLASH OF THE TITANS by Alan Dean Foster. PRIESTS OF PSI by Frank Herbert was listed for May along with "The Snow Queen" and "Ringworld Engineers" but has not been seen here yet. FIRESTARTER by Stephen King is an August release along with THE SENDAI another horror fantasy by William Woolfolk. Two more Joan Vinge books due are EYES OF AMBER and THE OUTCASTS OF HEAVEN BELT.

GALE RESEARCH CO. published in July a comprehensive volume by David Cowart and Thomas L.Wymer (eds) on TWENTIETH CENTURY AMERICAN SF WRITERS, in two volumes at \$116.00 (US).

The VICTOR GOLLANZ releases for early 1981 previously not mentioned, include: FIREBALL by John Christopher, a fantasy for young readers; LEESE WEBSTER, a story book for young children by Ursula LeGuin and illustrated by James Brunsmann; THE COOL WAR by Frederik Pohl; SCIENCE FICTION HALL OF FAME ed. by Arthur C. Clarke, the fourth in the collection of past Nebula Winners.

GRANADA - PANTHER Paperbacks from June to August: THE VERY SLOW TIME MACHINE by Ian Watson in it's first British pb edition along with a reprint of his THE EMBEDDING. In August Panther has mainly reprints by Bradbury, Asimov and Aldiss. The MAYFLOWER imprint list is all Michael Moorcock: SAILOR ON THE SEAS OF FATE, WARLORD OF THE AIR, THE ETERNAL CHAMPION and MOORCOCK'S BOOK OF MARTYRS. Some of these are reprints and the others new editions and first time publications by Granada.

American specialist and limited edition publisher DONALD M.GRANT has announced a very impressive list of titles. Those out or due immediately include: EALDWOOD by C.J.Cherryh, HEROES AND HOBGOBLINS by L.Sprague De Camp, which was originally announced by defunct publisher Heritage Press, THE WONDERFUL LIPS OF THIBONG LINH by Theodore Roscoe, YELLOW MEN SLEEP by Jeremy Lane and SCARLET DREAM by C.L.Moore.

GREGG PRESS library and collectors editions for recent months are THE GREEN BRAIN by Frank Herbert, BEYOND THIS

HORIZON by Robert A.Heinlein, THE DIPLOIDS by Katherine McLean and under the TWAYNE imprint a biographical, critical survey of FRANK R.STOCKTON by Henry L. Golemba.

The most prolific publisher of hc sf in UK has been ROBERT HALE, but word is that they will be cutting down from now on. Meanwhile titles announced for publication up to July include: THE FIFTH

SALLY by Daniel Keyes, WEAVERS OF DEATH by Ras Rymas, THE DEATH BEAST by David Gerrold, ASHES by Audrey Peyton, IF IT'S BLUE IT'S PLAGUE by L.P.Reeves, HOMO TELEKINS by Eric C.Williams, THE LUCIFER EXPERIMENT by Adrian Cole, THE ETERNITY MERCHANTS and THE FIVE DOORS by Jack Rhys, DEEP SPACE WARRIORS by Julia Riding, CHINAMAN'S CHANCE by Harry J. Greenwald, ESPER'S WAR by Roger Perry, THE LEVELLERS by Peter J.Grove, STAR GOD by Allen L.Wold, THE SPELL OF THE HANGED MAN by Rosemary Timperley, GENESIS II by David Wiltshire, THE MAN WHO KNEW TIME by Ronald A.McQueen, SHAKEHOLE by R.W.Mackelworth, A QUESTION OF REALITY by D.A.Barker, MARVELS OF SF by Isaac Asimov, THE ALUMINUM MAN by G.C.Edmondson, CALIFORNIA DREAMING by Nicholas Garlick, SCORPION by Neville Kea, THE SECRET SEA by Thomas F. Montealeone, and AN EXERCISE FOR MADMEN by Barbara Paul.

The only significant title from HAMLYN paperbacks is WATCHTOWER by Elizabeth Lynn. They have a number of fantasy and horror titles but no other sf. CROWN OF THORN is by Louise Cooper and WALBURGA'S NIGHT is also by her writing under the name of Elizabeth Hann.

A June title from HARCOURT BRACE (USA) is MORE TALES OF PIRX THE PILOT by Stanislaw Lem.

Two titles of interest from WILLIAM HEINEMANN (UK) are THE UNBORN, a scientific horror story by David Stobin and an 'historical fantasy' by Gore Vidal, CREATION.

MICHAEL JOSPEH published THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF RIDER HAGGARD edited by Peter Haining and MEDEA by Miranda Seymour.

JUNCTION BOOKS (UK) are given as the publishers of J.R.R.TOLKIEN: THE SHORES OF MIDDLE EARTH by Robert Giddings and Elizabeth Holland.

From WILLIAM KIMBER (UK) we see some fantasy collections including DEAD OF NIGHT edited by Peter Haining, JEWELS OF WONDER edited by Michael Ashley, a collection of heroic fantasy, and TALES OF DARKNESS by R.Chetwynd-Hayes. All hc.

ALFRED KNOPF (US) published THE HAUNTED COMPUTER AND THE ANDROID POPE, a collection of poetry by Ray Bradbury, in July.

ALLEN LANE published in April what might be called a fantasy adventure in CONGO by Michael Crichton, the author of "Andromeda Strain".

Two titles only from LEISURE books in the f&sf line; TIME QUEST #3: NEMYDIA DEEP an sf novel by William Tedford and WINGMASTER. also sf, by David Houston.

MACDONALD (UK) published THE EYES OF AMBER by Joan D.Vinge, an sf novel and DANSE MACABRE by Stephen King, which is a non-fiction survey of the fantasy and horror field.

MAGNUM paperback publishers published in May the book of the movie DEATHWATCH by D.G.Compton, which was originally called "The Continuous Katherine Mortenhoe" or "The Unsleping Eye". Philip K.Dick's collection, THE GOLDEN MAN was a June release along with Thomas Bontly's Faustian fantasy CELESTIAL CHESS. ICARUS by Peter Way is of passing interest.

WILLIAM MORROW (USA) published in April Leonard Wibberley's THE MOUSE THAT SAVED THE WEST. In their QUILL TPB series they published RADIX by A.A. Attanasio in August and the hc THE KEEP by F. Paul Wilson.

SIGNET/NAL from June to August titles include: THE LAST COMMUNION by Nicholas Yermakov, ISLANDS IN THE SKY by Arthur C. Clarke, THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SKY also by Clarke, FIRESTARTER by Stephen King, TODAY WE CHOOSE FACES doubled with BRIDGE OF ASHES, both by Roger Zelazny, SWORDS OF THE HORSECLANS by Robert Adams, and THE EVIL IMAGE: The literary art of terror from Daniel Defoe to Stephen King, a Meridian imprint title by Patricia Skarda and Nora Jaffe.

NEW ENGLISH LIBRARY paperbacks include: ZONE 4: SKY STRIKE by James Rouch, MICRONAUT WORLD by Gordon Williams, HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, FAIR WARNING by George Simpson and Neal R. Burger, WOLFCURSE by Guy N. Smith, CACHALOT by Alan Dean Foster, DRAGON'S EGG by Robert L. Forward, CONDOR MAN by Heather Simon and THE HAUNTING AT WAVERLY FALLS by H.C. Rae.

N.E.L. Hardcover titles include two occult fantasy novels, BEYOND FOREVER by Bradford J. Olesker and THE WATCH GODS by Barbara Wood. Three new editions of Robert Heinlein Novels saw the light in July, THE PUPPET MASTERS, MAGIC INC., and REVOLT IN 2100.

THE NEW ENGLAND SF ASSOCIATION published a collection of stories by Tanith Lee early this year called UNSILENT NIGHT.

ODDYSEY PUBLICATIONS latest pulp reprint volume in pb format is ACTION STORIES.

OVERLOOK PRESS did a new edition of the highly regarded early sf classic, LAND UNDER ENGLAND by Joseph O'Neill, in May in hc.

PAN Books output of sf is extremely limited now and we only have CLONE by Richard Cowper, WAR GAMES by Brian Stableford and the juvenile, in Piccolo series, DEATH WINGS OVER VEYNEA by Douglas Hill.

PELHAM Publishers released a new Nicholas Fisk juvenile, ROBOT REVOLT.

From PENGUIN and associate imprints we see: VICE VERSA by F. Anstey -fn, THE BOOK OF THE DUN COW by Walter Wangerin -fn, SEVEN STEPS TO THE SUN by Fred and Geoffrey Hoyle - sfn, HEROES AND VILLAINS and THE BLOODY CHAMBER, an sf(?)n and a fantasy collection both by Angela Carter, DR JEKYLL AND MR HOLMES by John Watson - a horror mystery n, a triple volume by Stanislaw Lem containing SOLARIS, CHAIN OF CHANCE and PERFECT VACUUM, SPLIT SECOND by Gary Kilworth - sfn, ISLANDS IN THE SKY by Arthur C. Clarke - sfn -rp, along with his OF TIME AND STARS, sfc-rp, THE ENNEAD by Jan Mark - sfn-j, RUSSIAN HIDE AND SEEK by Kingsley Amis - a future thriller, CITIZEN OF THE GALAXY by Robert Heinlein - another Puffin rp/n along with the Clarkes, and THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS by John Wyndham -sfn-rp.

PERIGEE books have done mainly illustrated novels and art books, so we presume INTER ICE AGE by Japanese author Kobo Abe will be an illustrated edition.

Limited and First Edition publisher PHANTASIA PRESS are doing MADWAND by

Roger Zelazny and OATH OF FEALTY by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle, both in limited \$35.00 US editions.

PLAYBOY paperbacks for the period are: NIGHTMARES edited by Charles L. Grant - hfa, IMAGE OF THE BEAST and A FEAST UNKNOWN both by Philip Jose Farmer - sfn-rps, THE SUNDERED REALM by Robert E. Vardeman and Victor Milan - sfn-rp, HORROR HOUSE by J.N. Williamson - hf-n, DOC SAVAGE by P.J. Farmer -fn-rp, THE DESECRATION OF SUSAN BROWNING by Martin Russell -hfn, NIGHT SCREAMS by Bill Pronzini and Barry Malzberg -hfn, and TARZAN ALIVE by P.J. Farmer -fn-rp.



POCKET BOOKS & TIMESCAPE Series starts off with the third in the Schrödinger's Cat series, THE HOMING PIGEONS by Robert Anton Wilson -fn, Vonda McIntyre's "Star Trek" effort, THE ENTROPY EFFECT -sfn, NEW DIMENSIONS 12 - edited by Marta Randall and Robert Silverberg - sfa, LIMB TO LIMB by John Russo -hfn, (THE JOY MAKERS by James Gunn -sfn, is cancelled) . LIFESHIP by Gordon R. Dickson and Harry Harrison -sfn-rp, WHEN MICHAEL CALLS by John Farris -hn, TIMESCAPE by Gregory Benford - sfn, TEN MILE TREASURE, a mystery novel, juvenile by Andre Norton, RETIEF OF THE CDT by Keith Laumer - sfn -rp, THE VOYAGE OF THE SPACE BEAGLE by A.E. van Vogt -sfn.rp, THE BEST SF OF THE YEAR ed. by Terry Carr - # 10 in series, A DREAM OF KINSHIP by Richard Cowper - sfn, AT THE EYE OF THE OCEAN by Hilbert Schenck -sfn, FANE by David M. Alexander -sci/fa n, THE CITY OF THE SINGING FLAME by Clark Ashton Smith -f&sf c, and a new translation of 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA by Jules Verne.

ST MARTINS PRESS (USA) published a non-fiction volume TWENTIETH CENTURY SF WRITERS edited by Curtis Smith. It has a cover price of \$65.00 US. They also published PATH OF THE ECLIPSE by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, a fantasy novel.

SECKER & WARBERG (UK) published an historical novel by Michael Moorcock in June, BYZANTIUM ENDURES and in May THE LAST DAYS OF AMERICA by Paul Erdman.

SIDGWICK & JACKSON (UK) published Charles Sheffield's non-fiction book on satellite surveys of the Earth, EARTHWATCH. In August they are doing number 36 in

the SF Special series, which includes in the one volume PRELUDE TO SPACE and CHILDHOOD'S END by Arthur C. Clarke.

SIMON & SCHUSTER published early in the year, before they started their "Time-scape" series, KING DAVID'S SPACESHIP by Jerry Pournelle -sfn (rewrite), and THE DREAMERS by James Gunn -sfn.

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY PRESS have recently published THE FANTASTIC STORIES OF CORNELL WOOLRICH Edited by Charles G. Waugh and Martin H. Greenberg, a facsimile reprint of the first issue of THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY & SF, April 1965, that Edward L. Ferman edited, and THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE edited by C.G. Waugh and M.H. Greenberg.

SPHERE Books releases for the period up to August include: THE RIM OF SPACE by A. Bertram Chandler, SOMEWHERE IN TIME by Richard Matheson, THE AVATAR by Poul Anderson, SCHRÖDINGER'S CAT by R. Anton Wilson, THE TUNNEL WAR and THE NORTH CAPE both by Joe Poyer, THE PRODIGY by Jay Livingstone, THE FUNHOUSE by Owen West, WARP 2: LEMMINGS ON THE EDGE by Neil Oram, MASTERS OF EVERON by Gordon R. Dickson, ZOMBIE by Peter Tremayne, THE DEVIL YOU DON'T by Ron Moody, and reprints of Gordon R. Dickson's DORSAI!, SOLDIER ASK NOT and THE TACTICS OF MISTAKE.

In STARBLAZE books WEB OF DARKNESS by Marion Zimmer Bradley is due along with WE ARE ALL LEGENDS by Darrell Schweitzer.

STARMONT Publishers issued in April a thick paperback, THE SCIENCE FICTION REFERENCE BOOK edited by Marshall B. Tymn. (This is a handy volume but some of the contributors would have done well to get their facts straight.)

A July title from TAPLINGER Publishers (USA), was ALIEN ENCOUNTERS edited by well known sf fan Jan Howard Finder. In their Writers of the 21st Century Series the volume on PHILIP K. DICK has apparently made it at last. It is edited by M.H. Greenberg and J.D. Olander.

The new sf imprint TOR which is being distributed by Pinnacle has some very good titles: FATHER TO THE STARS by Philip Jose Farmer -sfn(?), A TRANSATLANTIC TUNNELL, HURRAH! by Harry Harrison reprinted, WINNERS by Poul Anderson - f&sf - we presume.

June releases from TOWER Books were THE MARK OF THE DEMON, the second in John Jakes Brak series, and SKYCLIMBER, an sf novel by Raymond Z. Gallun.

The latest in their series of critical books on sf authors from FREDERICK UNGER publishers is URSULA K. LE GUIN, by Barbara J. Bucknall.

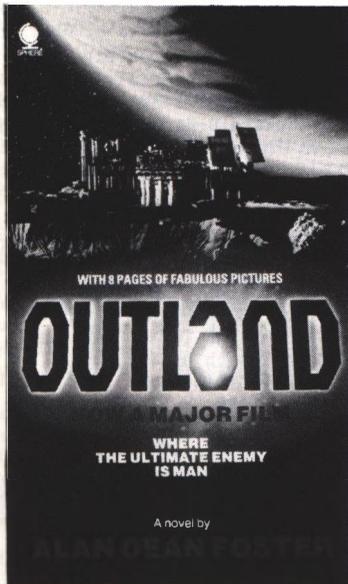
In the RANDOM HOUSE/VINTAGE series, Doris Lessing's SHIKASTA and THE MARRIAGE BETWEEN ZONES THREE, FOUR AND FIVE were due for August publication.

WARNER Books only association with f&sf now seems to be through film tie-ins and only their second book this year is CLASH OF THE TITANS by Alan Dean Foster.

Specialist publisher ROBERT WEINBERG published in June THE COMPLETE INDEX TO ASTOUNDING/ANALOG 1930-1980. A hard cover with a \$29.95 cover price. Their latest pulp reprint is INCREDIBLE ADVENTURES featuring Ray



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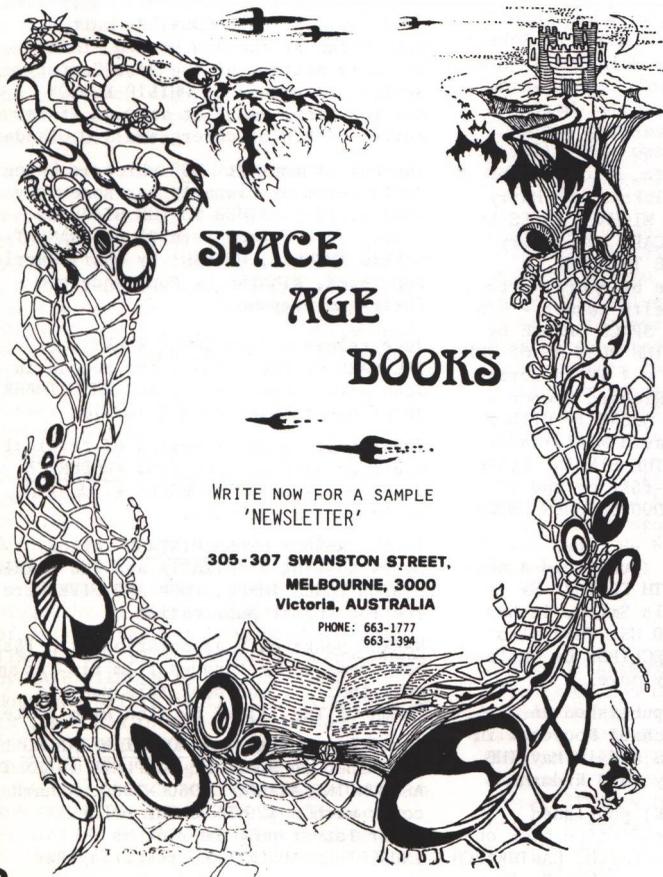
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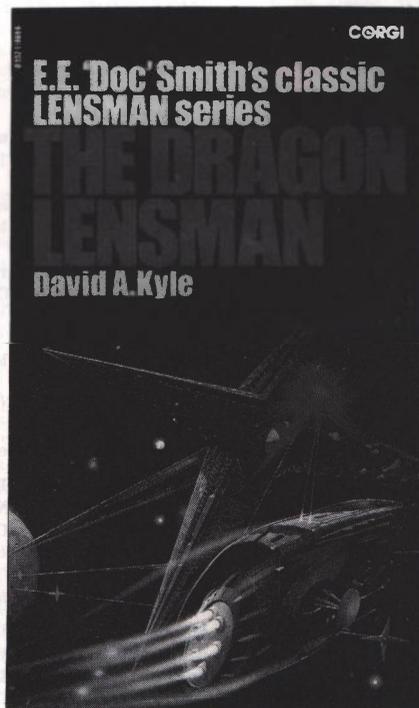
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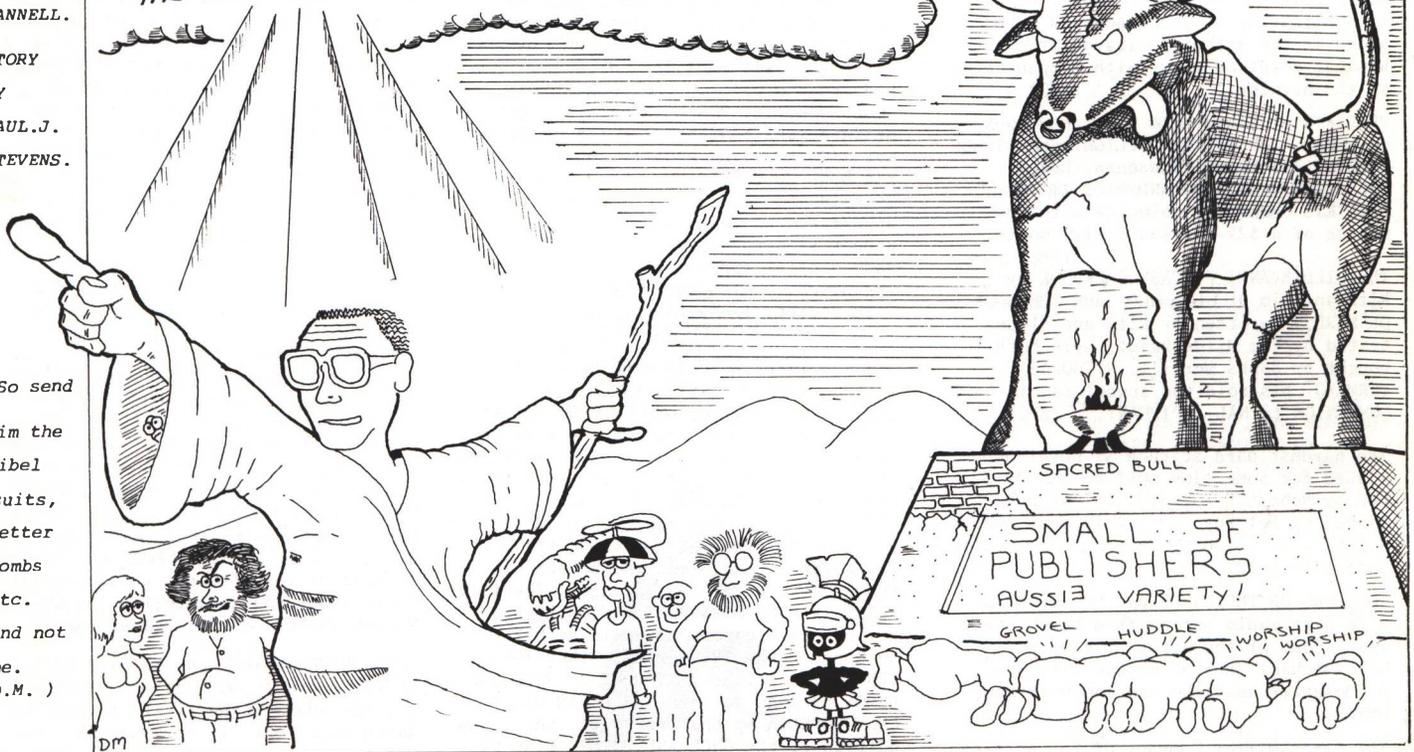
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(So send
him the
libel
suits,
letter
bombs
etc.
and not
me.
D.M.)



REGISTRATION



HAPPENINGS

On the off chance that you are reading this before August 22nd I will mention the two conventions being held that weekend. Before I do, I might add that I do not consider that either convention's attendance would be effected at all by the other one being held the same weekend. There have been a number of conventions and such this year and people cannot be expected to attend them all. The two conventions in question also will appeal to a different audience at any rate.

TOLKON will be held at the New Crest Hotel, Kings Cross, Sydney on August 22nd to 24th. It is this year's University convention and is fantasy orientated, and in the usual form of previous Tolkons that have been held by the University of Sydney Tolkien Society.

PHANTASTACON '81' is being held at the Melbourne Town House Hotel, 701 Swanston Street, Carlton August 21st to 23rd. It appears to have a little of everything but leaning towards games and comics. There will be a film programme, auction and masquerade. Enquiries telephone: 848 7623 or 874 7475

COMICON III, the 1981 Australian Comic convention will be held in Sydney at The New Crest Hotel, in Kings Cross October 3rd to 5th. Details from Comicon III, 7 Perry St., Leichardt, N.S.W 2040

CIRCULATION ONE will be held in Canberra 3rd to 4th October, at The Ainslie Hotel, Enquiries and bookings P.O.Box 544, Civic Square, ACT 2608. Publicity simply states "Fun, Frolics and Serious Discussion".

THE CONVENTION OF THE GREAT KLINGON EMPIRE is to be held in Adelaide on October 24th and 25th. For details contact SASTREK on (08) 2556569

DENVENTION The 1981 World SF Convention is being held in Denver Colorado, USA from September 3rd to 7th. Quite a few Australian fans will be attending, but although I planned to, it is most unlikely that I will be able to make it. The voting for the site for 1983 will be announced and if you have not voted for Australia in 1983 by the time you read this, you will be too late unless you are attending Denvention. The 1982 World Convention will be held in Chicago, and our own A. BERTRAM CHANDLER will be the Guest of Honour. More details later.

SWANCON 7 is the next convention to be held in Perth, Western Australia, on the Australia day weekend, January 27th to 30th. Details to be had from P.O.Box 318, Nedlands, 6009, W.A.

The **FANTASY FILM SOCIETY** will be holding a small **CINECON** in 1982, but the date has not been decided. Meanwhile screenings will be held this year. The only date confirmed is at the **STATE FILM CENTRE** on November 15th. More details later. A minicon to honour **RON COBB** was a disaster due to the fact that other functions were being held on that day, and only 19 people attended the gathering held at the Victoria Hotel

on Saturday August 8th. A little more co-operation between the Society and other associated interest groups in Melbourne would have helped.

TSCCHAICON is the 1982 Australasian National Convention. (Australasian because of the new affiliation with New Zealand Fandom.) It will be held in Melbourne at Easter, at the Melbourne Townhouse Hotel, 701 Swanston St., Carlton. Memberships up to Tolkien will be \$16.00. For further details contact Justin Ackroyd, P.O.Box 2708X, Melbourne 3001. **JACK VANCE** is G.O.H.

MEDTREK is a Star Trek Convention organised by **ASTREK** in NSW and being held at the Hydro Majestic Hotel Medlow Bath, in the Blue Mountains. The date is February 13th & 14th. Further details from 12/207 Birrell Street, Waverly, NSW 2024

WELLCON C is the name of the New Zealand Convention that will be bidding for the National Australasian Convention in 1983. I will be printing a letter from **GREG HILLS** stating the position of NZ fandom in relation to the national convention bid and more in the next issue.

OCTOCOON '82 is a New Zealand convention to be held in 1982. Details can be obtained we believe from **TOM CARDY**, 137 Richardson St., Dunedin, New Zealand.

STAR TREK Screenings in Melbourne

Dates for screenings at the National Mutual Theatre will be October 10th and December 5th.

People and Publishing

MARION ZIMMER BRADLEY has sold a giant new fantasy novel to Ballantines for paperback and Alfred Knopf for hard cover. Total price was \$60,000 for the novel called MISTRESS OF MAGIC. No date of publication is yet announced. The story is the Arthurian legend from the woman's point of view, with Morgan LeFay as the heroine. (SFC)

PHILIP K. DICK has sold two new books recently. THE OWL IN DAYLIGHT and BISHOP TIMOTHY ARTHUR to Timescape. Del Rey are re-releasing DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP, to coincide with the making of a \$25-million dollar movie. (SFC)

THE HILDEBRANDT FANTASY COOKBOOK by Rita and Tim Hildebrandt and THE BOOK OF MERLYN written by Rita and illustrated by Tim Hildebrandt, were both bought by Bobbs Merrill. NICHOLAS YERMAKOV has sold the sequel to his LAST COMMUNION to NAL, EPIPHANY. (SFC)

The hardest hard science sf novel published for some time must be DRAGON'S EGG by Robert L. Forward. It was published by Del Rey early this year and N.E.L. will be doing the British edition late this year.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS was broadcast as a 26 part radio series from March 8th last. Some of the actors taking part were Michael Horden as Gandalf, John Le Mesurier as Bilbo and Ian Holm as Frodo.

The Times-Mirror Company of Los Angeles has sold New English Library to the British publisher Hodder and Stoughton. It will be retained as a separate company. They have a very strong SF list in paperback with ROBERT HEINLEIN and the "Dune" series by FRANK HERBERT among others. NEL incidentally gained the paperback rights for GOD EMPEROR OF DUNE for 37,500 pounds at an auction held by Gollancz. (SFC)

Futura will publish JOE HALDEMAN's new novel WORLDS, which was also sold to a German publisher, Moewig. Futura will also publish BARRY LONGYEAR'S novels MANIFEST DESTINY and CITY OF BARABOO. A.E. VAN VOGT was awarded an Italian Hugo for the body of his work and FOREST J. ACKERMAN one for his career while they both were in Rome at the Fantascience Film Festival. (SFC)

Farmer's THE MAGIC LABRYNTH had 350,000 copies in print in paperback after a second printing before publication. As a matter of comparison Space Age Books sold 250 copies of the Panther edition in a few weeks and the distributors, Gordon and Gotch, are out of stock. (See DAMIEN BRODERICK'S review this issue.)

L.SPRAGUE DE CAMP has completed his biography of ROBERT E. HOWARD, but as of July it had not been sold to a publisher. THE WINTER BEACH is a new novel by KATE WILHELM to be published by Houghton Mifflin in the USA. A sequel to IN THE OCEAN OF THE NIGHT by GREGORY BENFORD, which was originally sold to Dell, is now being considered by other publishers. JACK WILLIAMSON has written THE QUEEN OF THE LEGION for Timescape. EVANGELINE WALTON has also sold a novel to Timescape, THE SWORD IS FORGED. The SF Book club is to do a collection of art-

work it has featured on it's covers over the years, which will be published as a Nelson Doubleday book. L.SPRAGUE DE CAMP has sold a new 'Krishna' novel, THE PRISONER OF ZHANANOCK along with all the earlier titles in the series.

(SFC)

Ace Books have bought the rights to twenty four "Conan" titles. Including eighteen they already have published and six previously published by Bantam. However Bantam will do the book of the "Conan" movie. RON COBB, artist, set-designer and budding director of films, was in Australia recently publicising his book COLOURVISION, which is published by Wild and Woolley. He made numerous appearances on television and radio, did a book signing at Space Age Books and made a brief appearance at a convention organised in his honour by the Fantasy Film Society in Melbourne. (SFC +)

The new Berkley Trade Paperback line will be simply that, with no special imprint. They will do GOD EMPEROR OF DUNE first plus new editions of the earlier three "Dune" novels. They have cancelled their hard cover line (pity!), but a few still to be done are: THE UNREASONING MASK by Philip Jose Farmer, CRUISER DREAMS by Janet Morris, THE SARDONYX NET by Elizabeth A. Lynn, and the WOLVES OF MEMORY by George Alec Effinger. The title FREDERIK POHL'S FAVOURITE STORIES has definitely been cancelled in hc but will be done in the TPB series. Other future TPB titles include LYONNESSE by Jack Vance, DEMON by John Varley, THE DREAM MAKER'S ENCYCLOPEDIA by Charles Platt, and a new edition of the ONCE AND FUTURE KING by T.H. White. (Locus)

While Berkley/Putnam are cancelling their hard cover sf line, Pocket Books will not only continue with their Timescape series, but are launching a new line with a new editor, not DAVID HARTWELL who handles Timescape, but ANN PATTY. A dozen books will be published during a year and marketed as mainstream. FEVRE DREAM by George R.R. Martin is the first title announced.

(Locus)

CARL SAGAN'S as yet unfinished sf novel will have the title of CONTACT. A movie option has been taken on GEORGE R.R. MARTIN'S story "Nightflyers". IAN WATSON, recently stood for parliament and although he lost he captured a higher percentage of Labor voters than any other candidates in the surrounding district. His new novel DEATHUNTER will be published in October by Gollancz. (Locus)

FRED POHL has finished his novel SYZYRGY for Bantam and he is working on a novel of his short story "The Gold At Starbow's End". He has also sold a third "Gateway" novel to Ballantines.

(Locus)

FOREST J. ACKERMAN has completed a biography of Lon Chaney. CRYSTAL GRYPHON by Andre Norton will be published by Fawcett. DONALD KINGSBURY'S novel COURTSHIP RITE, which was originally bought by Dell, has been sold to Timescape. STEPHEN DONALDSON'S next title in the "Covenant" series, THE ONE TREE will be published by Del Rey in Spring '82. No date on the British edition. (Locus)

GEORGE TURNER'S new sf novel VANE GLORY is due to be published by Faber in the U.K. late this year. It will not be published in Australia, by the new representatives for Faber, Penguin Books until next year. This is going to make things awkward for getting VANEGLORY nominated for this year's Ditmar Awards. As it will be published this year it will be eligible to be nominated, but nobody here will be able to buy copies until early next year, perhaps only a few weeks before the National convention at Easter. To get over the problem we are endeavouring to obtain advance copies, which we will loan to people who are genuinely interested in nominating and voting in the Ditmar Awards. More details later.

TERRY CARR has obtained three titles for his new Ace Specials project; PALIMPSESTS by Carter Scholz and Glenn Harcourt, A WORLD OF SMALL COMPASS by Donnan Call Jeffries and THEM, BONES by Howard Waldrop. ORSON SCOTT CARD is doing a major rewrite of his "Worthing Chronicle" series for Ace. SINGLE COMBAT is a sequel to SYSTEMIC SHOCK by Dean Ing for TOR. HARRY HARRISON has completed THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT FOR PRESIDENT for Bantam. WALTER TEVIS has turned in his new novel BELSON REBORN to Doubleday. Because of insufficient advance orders Pocket Books have cancelled THE BEST OF WILSON TUCKER. Shame! Shame! Shame!

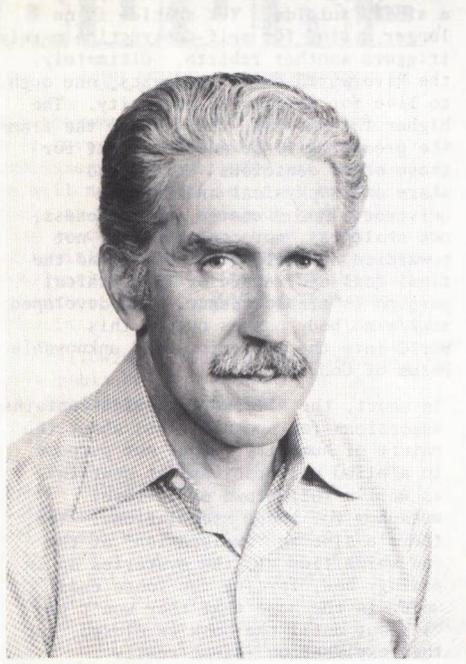
CHRISTOPHER PRIEST who married LISA TUTTLE recently, will be visiting Australia for the Adelaide Festival of Arts in March next year. It is hoped that he will also be visiting other capital cities, but we do not know if Lisa will be accompanying him.



MAGAZINE NEWS

The cover designs for the DAVIS publication's magazines ANALOG and ASIMOV'S SF MAGAZINE seem to be steadily deteriorating. The August issue of the former shows some slight improvement, with the dropping of the boxed in logo. The August and September issues of ASIMOV'S are the worst covers they have ever produced. They are simply too plain and unimpressive. As a matter of contrast, THE MAGAZINE OF F&SF covers recently have been particularly good. The new magazine from Davis publications will be called SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST, although for a while it was going to be SCIENCE FICTION/FACT DIGEST. The first issue will be published in September.

JACK WODHAMS: Australian SF Author Profile ★ ★ ★



INTRODUCTION

by Paul Collins

Considering Jack Wodhams' law regarding editors: 'One who regards his writers as the necessary manure he has to shovel if he wants grow the best roses', and his philosophy that he is 'willing to accept an editor as equal, but not as daddy', and preferring to be 'published complete as I have writ, warts and all', Wodhams does remarkably well. So much so he is undoubtedly Australia's top selling sf short story writer. His sales alone to *ANALOG* far outreach other local writers' selling capacity -- his recent sales confirm his popularity.

In just six months Wodhams has sold stories to *ANALOG*, *OMEGA*, *TWILIGHT ZONE*, the new prestigious *QUEST/STAR* (Horace Gold recently said of a Wodhams' story "it is superbly written... should be at least nominated for a Hugo"), Marty Greenberg's anthology *SEVEN CARDINAL VIRTUES OF SF*, my *DISTANT WORLDS* anthology, a new anthology yet to be published locally (untitled), *AMAZING*, plus stories currently being translated into Hungarian and German.

One remarkable feature of Wodhams' material is its originality. If ever a science fiction author could maintain a cult following, it would be Wodhams. It is safe to say in print that it will be Jack Wodhams who will, if anyone does locally, claim a Hugo for Australian fiction...

Paul Collins

ASFN INTERVIEW

Well as Jack himself puts it, "Publishers with vested interests should be forgiven their exaggerations", so we asked Jack for a few more details on himself to somewhat temper Paul's glowing contribution.

ASFN: How many stories have you had published Jack and where and when?

Wodhams: I am my own worst publicist. I don't care whether you believe it, but I am simply not interested in beating my own drums. Other bibliographers have written me requesting numbers, the what, when, and where of my stories, but my attitude is this:- if it is worth while compiling such a catalog, then someone else can do it; if it is not worth while compiling such a list, then I don't want to waste time doing it myself. Still My first stories sold were fairly close together, to *ANALOG*, and then to *NEW WRITINGS IN SF*. John W. Campbell was the most encouraging, possessed a most engaging absence of condescension, and distinctly must be regarded as the lifeline that hauled me up to obtain whatever footing I may have in the sf field today.

ASFN: What is your own favourite story?

Wodhams: The story of mine that I like best is always the one that I am writing at the moment. If a tale, it's prospects and possibilities, did not initially entertain me with some element of novelty, I would be too bored to make the paper dirty.

ASFN: Whom if any, other sf writers have influenced you in your own writing?

Wodhams: Other writers who have influenced (?) beguiled me into some attempt at emulation have been authors of humour, rather than sf. Among others, W.W.Jacobs, Evelyn Waugh, Damon Runyon, James Thurber, the outrageous Thorne Smith, and the incomparable Ernest Bramah. The writings of these fellows, though, oft do have wild, even sf, elements. And O.Henry, of course. John Wyndham might be the author I would honour most, in sf, closely followed by Ray Bradbury. Throw in Keith Laumer and Edgar Wallace. More recently I have been pleased to acknowledge the tales of James Tiptree, Junior, who is, so I have heard, really a girl. (I am sure she would love being called a girl at this stage of her existence. Ed.)

But there are so many, and I, as many another reader, may enjoy a story, yet fail to bother to turn back the pages to discover, and commit to memory , the name of its writer. Writers are 100% anonymous. There has to be an awful lot of focal vocal before a writer can believe that he has become recognised to exist.

ASFN: After a break you seem to be back on the writing trail again in earnest.

Wodhams: Yes, according to my agents, Rowena and Paul, (Cory & Collins) there should be more work of mine coming out here and there, from time to time. (See Paul Collins introduction, above. Also to be added to the list is "Big Time Operator" to be included in M.H. Greenberg's *INCREDIBLE LOCKED ROOM MYSTERIES*. ED.)

ASFN: What advice can you give to new writers?

Wodhams: If you need advice, then don't write. Way back near the beginning, at my first Melbourne con, I remember

inviting Old Pro George Turner for guidance, in a general way. He was, as memory serves, jolly decent, and delighted to oblige. I have no recollection at all what his advice was, it went in one ear and straight out the other. Truth is, no two writers speak the same language. Take any bunch of scribbles, and give them all the same spark to puff into flame, and they each will blow differently, to produce everything from glowing embers to fireworks. If two writers write the same, one is imitating.

The only advice I have ever taken has been in regard to the mechanics - - double spacing, one side of the page only, adequate margins, and, aw, maybe maybe the pained hint to suggest an improvement in my grammar.

ASFN: Well finally Jack, you have a number of short stories due to be published, can we expect another novel soon?

Wodhams: Presently I am engaged on the third novel I have started this year. Just now it is going reasonably well, and hopefully this is one that will keep my attention engaged until it is furthered to completion.

.....

My thanks to Jack Wodhams for the above "interview". I will be including more such Profile/Interviews with other Australian authors in future issues.

Merv Binns Ed.

THE ECONOMICS AND TRENDS OF CURRENT F&SF PUBLISHING

ANDREW PORTER reporting the Annual American Booksellers Association conference held in Atlanta recently, noticed a trend in that a wider range of publishers are publishing the odd sf or associated title. More publishers are apparently realising the potential in the f & sf field. There were not so many large format, gift type books, and the ones that were shown were those published with a sink-or-swim mentality that are so evident when editorial departments are at odds with sales departments. Another trend was the increase in prices, particularly hard covers. (I am glad you noticed that Andy. The trend is worse here. Books are getting that expensive that people are buying less and a recent report said that library business has gone up considerably recently, which is not surprising.MB) Andy said also said and I quote: " at what point do irresistibly rising prices meet immovable hands stuck in empty wallets?"

As a bookseller, that is a question I have been asking myself for some time.

Andy added that if the US economy improves we may at least see an end to the cutting back in sf publishing. The Australian economic situation is a mess, and it is obvious that our present government is leading the country to disaster.

(SFC +MB)



VALIS

by Philip K. Dick

Bantam; \$3.25; 213pp & appendix

Review by Damien Broderick

Everyone's yacking his head off about God these days. Let's take Philip Dick. Otherwise known, in his latest theological fiction, as Horselover Fat (a sort of Greek-German translation of his name). Old Horselover had a nasty shock some years back, when a vision of Absolute Evil was vouchsafed him. The Three Stigmata of the devil. Entropy rode the range, sucking everything down into gluey oblivion. Life wasn't easy for Horselover in those days. Happily, a good-guys revelation showed Mr Fat that he could be snatched out of the fire. There's actually a sort of.. spirit or... Force watching over us, imbuing us, hinting that after all, in the face of all that grim evidence, It's All Right. (Has anyone ever noticed how much Darth Vader resembles Palmer Eldritch, the demon-soaked pilgrim of Dick's hallucinatory novel?)

Horselover Fat meditates on the nature of the world, and human misery, and that stuff, for most of these 213 pages. In between the meagre narrative events, in which a species of Messiah or Anti-Christ or something is born to a pair of clean popstars, Horselover mulls over, bit by bit, the jottings he's made in his diary. They look like this:

Entry 30: The phenomenal world does not exist: it is a hypostasis of the information processed by the Mind. Now that might strike you as a fairly old fashioned idea, but how about this, from Entry 48:

The Godhead is impaired; some primordial crisis occurred in it which we do not understand.

By a stroke of luck, the twelve pages of this insight-packed revelation are not just left scattered incoherently through the rest of VALIS. They are neatly reprinted in an Appendix at the end, for easy reference and worship.

I might have given you the impression that I didn't enjoy VALIS. This is not quite correct. VALIS is a rotten novel, but it's fascinating as a casebook in the disintegration of a mystic science fiction writer. I keep wanting the mad author of *UBIK* and *DR BLOODMONEY* to come back home, but that's obviously impossible, and an unfair request. Dick has moved into stranger habitats since then. Treat VALIS as a by-product of the California Mindfuck Trip and you might enjoy it. As I did. Sort of.

THE MAGIC LABYRINTH

by Philip Jose Farmer

Panther; \$5.95 496pp

Reviewed by Damien Broderick

On the other hand there's bloody old Philip Jose Farmer's endless Women's Weekly cruise up and down the River of Cosmic Meaning. Endless? *THE MAGIC LABYRINTH* is advertised as the concluding volume of the Riverworld series proper, but bloody turgid old endless Philip Jose Farmer has publicly threatened us with more, little stories and snippets and doubtless mighty documented novellas and encyclopedias of addenda and marginalia, and apart from that there's the last three sentences of *LABYRINTH* which just beg... cry out... for a sequel.

What?? Do your ears deceive you?? Isn't it the case that *THE MAGIC LABYRINTH* is the hottest property on the sf shelves, the book above all books which brought constant inquiries from eager would-be purchasers? Oh please, Mr Bookseller, when oh when is the next Riverworld book due? Is it not true, as the blurb on the back page states, that it's "the most heralded science fiction event of recent times... the culminating achievement of the epoch-making Riverworld Series which has been pronounced the most daring, wide-ranging and speculative in the annals of science fiction"?

Yes. All these things are true, and have come to pass.

Something went badly wrong. After the first volume of the series (*TO YOUR SCATTERED BODIES GO*) appeared in book form, I read a close analysis of the improvements Farmer had wrought in language and character since its earlier magazine publication. The author of that careful and reasonably admiring scrutiny was none other than John Foyster, the killer critic. It is difficult to imagine John paying the same kind of attention (or any at all) to the last two volumes in the series. Farmer visibly thumps this stuff out like a cook in any army camp hurling bangers and mash onto tin plates as fast as he can, while the hungry troops march muddily past, endlessly. (I do not wish to imply that Farmer has abandoned his previous artistic standards for mercenary motives.)

Plainly, the flaws in writing and thinking which I'm complaining about will not disturb the great majority of Farmer's enthusiastic devotees. SF readers are generally word-blind. As evidence, recall Mervyn Binns' recent stomach-churning verdict, in these pages, on Joan Vinge's best-selling *Barbara-Cartland-in-space emetic THE SNOW QUEEN*: "If I had read it without knowing the author," confessed Mervyn, "I would have said it was by Ursula Le Guin." In any reasonable court, that assertion would be grounds for damages and horse-whipping. But sf readers generally can't tell the difference between Vinge and Le Guin, or between Farmer on those rare occasions when he gets it shockingly, brilliantly right, and Farmer most of the time when he flops down those unending piles of burnt sausages.

I mentioned God, though. What's the Riverworld series all about? It's about the meaning of life. Everyone gets resurrected on a world where the

basics of life are provided free. Sin enters at once. Greed, lust, aggression, anxiety (you didn't know anxiety was a sin?), suicide. Yet suicide is no longer a sin, for self-destruction merely triggers another rebirth. Ultimately, the Riverworld series suggests, one ought to live for passionate intensity. The higher the passion, the fiercer the flame, the greater will be one's respect for those other conscious beings who share one's physical and psychic universe. Ethics emerge from ripeness, not staleness, not constriction, not cowardice and self-restraint. And the final goal and reward of true ethical passion is transcendence. The developed soul/mind/body passes out of this world into the mysterious and unknowable Bosom of God.

In short, the Riverworld series contains assertions (or speculations) about the nature of humanity, about our purpose in a blind universe, and it contains as well a full-blown multi-level metaphor for those speculations. Yes, there's also an "explanation" at the end which ties all the mysteries up in a dingy bow, forcing the loose ends under in the hope that they won't pop back out until the book is closed, but that explanation is not really important. It too is a metaphor, and it's dragged in at the end with such speed that I think even Farmer considers it marginal. Basically, its meaning is this: the universe produces complexity of all kinds, but something extra-physical is needed to ignite reality into meaning. Farmer postulates a wathan, or soul; personally, I find this as unnecessary and distasteful as Von Daniken's argument that we need to invoke extraterrestrials to explain the great human deeds of the past. (For anyone who is interested in pursuing this question of the origins of consciousness in a world of matter, I'd recommend Douglas Hofstadter's book *GODEL, ESCHER, BACH*.)

The real problem, I suppose, is that the Riverworld books propose a literary project far beyond Farmer's powers. All his characters, despite some embarrassingly heavy-handed attempts to define them through speech, clump about the stage like zombies. The background data is ladled in with astounding clumsiness. (It's a pretty hard trick to pull off, admittedly, when your stage is so broad; even Tolstoy strikes the modern reader as ham-fisted in this regard.)

VALIS annoyed me, but stung my interest: I want to read the promised sequel, *THE DIVINE INVASION*. But *THE MAGIC LABYRINTH* bored, bored....

THE SCIENCE FICTION OF JAMES BLISH

V.O.R.	Arrow; \$3.20
GALACTIC CLUSTER	Panther; \$4.95
GET OUT OF MY SKY	Panther; \$3.50
MISSION TO THE HEART STARS	Panther; \$3.50

Reviewed by George Turner

When one considers the extraordinary range of themes treated by James Blish and the philosophic acuteness of much of his work, it comes as a surprise to

recall that from beginning to end he was a product of and practitioner of the Campbell/Analog school of sf. His first published story was also the first cyborg story in the modern sense and THE DAY AFTER JUDGEMENT, published towards the end of his life (1975), would have fitted, despite its immensely superior sophistication, into Campbell's pre-war magazine, UNKNOWN.

His stories belonged, generally, to the 'hard science' category, yet with the theoretical science so clearly presented and so neatly fitted into the text that one absorbed it not only without difficulty but also without noticing. Most of his stories, even the juveniles, also featured 'hard philosophy; always in the background hovered such problems as predestination, the nature of time, entropic history, moral responsibility, cultural symbology and the ambiguities of religious belief. Always his ideas were grounded in solid understanding of modern philosophic thought and always they were presented with a neatly fitted dramatic background which both framed and explained them.

He took the Campbell formula, shook the more offensive nonsense out of it and adapted it to some of the widest ranging science fiction of our day. A number of his volumes are now being republished.

The earliest of these, V.O.R., is probably the least of his published works but still not uninteresting. It is the story of a supremely dangerous robot visitor to the solar system and its defeat by brains when brawn becomes useless. A weakness here is an uneasy handling of the human interest area of the tale. According to Peter Nicholls (ENCYC. OF SF), Damon Knight had some hand in the novelisation from an original novella; the result will be more important to the Blish completist than to the reader seeking excitement; still, it has that, too.

By the time of publication of GALACTIC CLUSTER, only one year later (1959), Blish had accumulated a train of novellas and short stories second to none in that day and second to few in 1981. This collection, published today, would make any sf writer's name overnight. It contains such gems as 'Common Time', 'A Work of Art', 'Beep' and 'This Earth Of Hours', and makes a complete answer to those critics who have suggested that his handling of human beings was cold blooded and unsympathetic. Cool it certainly was, and unsentimental, but never unsympathetic; he was one of sf's few creators of people.

MISSION TO THE HEART STARS was written as a juvenile, but the description infers only some youthful characters and some very minor simplification of style. Its scientific and philosophic content are as carefully wrought as in such major works as A CASE OF CONSCIENCE and SEEDLING STARS, and the book is as adultly readable as either. It concerns a journey to the galactic centre and the nature of the culture discovered there.

The fourth volume, GET OUT OF MY SKY, is I think that story's first

appearance since its publication in ASTOUNDING in 1957. It is a 30,000 word novella dealing with stand-off politics (similar to the US-Russia situation) and the possibility of a new mode of communication to nullify propaganda and mass hysteria, and is definitely worth the rescue from forgetfulness. Included in the book is another Blish rarity, the quasi-sf werewolf novella, 'There Shall Be No Darkness', which dramatises the possibilities with more perception than most horror specialists have brought to the theme.

All these books are worth having, though I must recommend the collection, GALACTIC CLUSTER, as far superior to the other three. Meanwhile, CITIES IN FLIGHT (the full 250,000 word volume) is promised for republication in the near future. This group of four novels, though uneven, contains some of the most considerable ingenuities in all science fiction, from the marvellously conceived bridge on Jupiter to the final spectacular death of the universe as another one is born. I hope to write at greater length of this when it appears. Until then, anyone can do worse than read any Blish he comes across. He rarely gave less than a lesson in how to do it properly.

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TOO LONG A SACRIFICE

by Mildred Downey Broxon
Dell, \$2.50 Reviewed by Rowena Cory

At first this seems to be another traditional barbarian story set in 4th century Ireland. Maire is a healer, and her husband Tadhg is a bard. Life is good for them, until Tadhg hears the music of the Sidhe. He can't rest until he sleeps on the Faerie mound, and the Sidhe return a changeling in his place. Maire refuses to give up hope, and consults the great Trout who lives in the magical pool.

But when he leads her to the land of Sidhe, at the bottom of the lake, she discovers that Tadhg is the Queen's lover, and has forgotten her. Before long, lost as she is in despair, the lure of the Sidhe reaches her, and she becomes the King's lover. Many years pass, thus breaking the usual plot line until the 'sky' over the lake darkens, and all the Sidhe are terrified.

Their time is passing, a great evil prowls the land. And all the folk of Faerie are fading away. Maire pleads for she and Tadhg to be released. The Queen grants this, and gifts them with the power of invisibility, fey sight, and the ability to understand strange speech.

Here events are hastened. As they surface in the lake to the accompanying sound of gunfire in the near town, they are separated; the rest of the novel deals with Maire's attempts to find Tadhg.

This is complicated by the fact that being touched by magic they are susceptible to possession. Gradually

Tadhg forgets his beliefs as a creator of music, and lover of beauty, as the Hunter's hold on him grows. He leads the men of Ireland in battle. Death and destruction please the hunter, who was in Tadhg's time the one who battled the Goddess at the end of summer for the right to bring six months oppression to the land. Only now there is a dark beast that has aligned itself with the Hunter, and feeds off destruction.

Maire is sent to the insane ward at the local hospital -- the problems which beset both of them as they adjust are quite logically and entertainingly developed -- the goddess takes possession of her, helping her to escape.

When Maire and Tadhg are finally reunited, it is in the guise of the Hunter and Goddess, in a confrontation between good and evil. The latter half of the novel is worth reading. The author shows a keen understanding of the psychology of a divided country.

THE HANDS OF ORLAC by Maurice Renard
Translated from the French by Iain White
301 pgs, Souvenir Press \$19.50

Reviewed by John Alderson

Originally published in 1920, this book concerns the worries and some horrors of a favourite pianist whose hands having been destroyed in a railway accident has grafted in their place, the hands of a supposed murderer guillotined the next day. He is unable to play the piano and becomes obsessed with the idea that the hands wish to murder, and when murders do occur is uncertain that he may well have been the murderer. Spliced to this is the story of a blackmailer who claims to be the guillotined murderer whose head was sewn back on and who now wants a payment of one million francs for his hands.

I thoroughly recommend this book. It is an unusual and gripping story, told much differently from the Sf we are used to, with interesting and appealing characters.

WILD SEED by Octavia E. Butler
248 pgs, Sidgwick & Jackson \$19.50

Reviewed by John Alderson

A highly implausible and chauvinistic view of a 3,700 year old male who breeds telepaths etc (for no real explained reason), and his meeting with a 350 year old female who is all goodness and light and whose descendants would make a nation. If you like stories where the man is made to grovel and weep before the woman and is accepted when he reforms his ways, then this is the book for you. The author could be a good writer.

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More reviews will be found on page 19 following Paul J. Steven's column.

The Local Releases list is not in this issue, but will be included in the next issue and will include titles up to September.



A JAUNTY VIEW
...of recent Fantasy + SF
By PAUL J. STEVENS

THE SHROUDED PLANET by Robert Randall
Starblaze PB \$4.95us

Out of print for far too long, this series first saw publication in the pages of Astounding during the 1950s and was an immediate hit with the readers. It has been published in the USA in book form in limited edition and was also seen in British Mayflower paperbacks. The team of Bob Silverberg and Randall Garrett make up the persona of Robert Randall and in this series of two novels (THE DAWNING LIGHT is to follow) they produce a classic science fiction work that should be on every school library shelf and in every collection.

The basic plot of the series is a backward planet called Nidor where the sky is always covered by cloud and where ignorance and superstition reign. Into this peaceful and stagnant society come the god-like Earthmen who set up a school to teach and who in doing so destroy the old order to enable a new and questioning one to take its place and so join the Earthmen as equals.

SAVAGE EMPIRE by Jean Lorrach
Playboy Press PB \$2.25us

Yet another sword and sorcery series with a good, wise and beautiful sorceress saving her people from destruction whilst the dumb and stupid hero tries to figure out if his years of teaching are true or false whilst his wounds heal. When the last page of the story arrives the reader is left with a sinking feeling of yet another one of those damned series novels has been foisted onto him/her. I had a feeling someone has done this all before, a number of times.

NINE PRINCES IN AMBER by Roger Zelazny
Sphere PB \$4.50

At long last it looks like Sphere have bought up the Amber series and we will see them all in paperback in British editions without having had to chase after the Avon editions. As there are five books in the series let us hope they publish them all within a few months and not take several years as is the norm with the Brits. I don't have to sing the praises of the Amber series but only have to say it comes highly recommended and by one of the best sf and fantasy writers in the world.

THE HUNTING OF SALYUT SEVEN by Guy Alimo Corghi PB \$4.95

A good, taut thriller of the space race and political terrorism and hatred. A US space shuttle has to stop a hate-filled Arab astronaut turning loose a particle beam weapon on Israel and starting World War 3. Would make a good movie.

STAR RIGGERS WAY by Jeffrey A Carver
Arrow PB \$4.50

An interesting way of travelling to the stars has been figured out by Mr Carver, but his hero grates on the nerves and made me wish he would get killed off in the first ten pages. He moans, whines and generally feels so sorry for himself the entire book that when I got to the last page I threw the book onto the floor and jumped up and down on it a few times. Frustrating reading.

STORMQUEEN by Marion Zimmer Bradley
Arrow PB \$5.50

Yet another in the early history of Darkover and the uses and abuses of the matrix power in bloody feuding and civil war. In this story Dorilyns, daughter of Lord Aldaran has a power to call down lightning on those she fears, but with this power comes madness, a growing insanity that must be conquered or all of Darkover could be destroyed. How this problem is finally resolved makes for 364 pages of exciting reading. Once again Marion Z. Bradley proves that she is a good storyteller and Darkover one of the most fascinating planets in science fiction today.

SOVEREIGN by R. M. Meluch
Arrow PB \$4.75

I must admit to some disquiet when reading this novel, as if something was missing from the narrative, some vital spark that could give it life but by the time I finished its 264 pages, I had decided that this book was a waste of time and the author a failure. A boring bunch of manure.

DEATH'S ANGEL by Kathleen Sky
Bantam PB \$2.25us

When I panned the previous Star Trek book I was being unfair, as this story is one of the worst pieces of crap I have read in a long time. The author panders to a sick preoccupation with Kirk's sex life on the part of some frustrated Trekkies and then attempts a weak murder mystery that fizzles out and telegraphs itself long before the final denouement. The introduction

of a female security agent to liven up the plot and get Kirk's gonads working overtime shows the paucity of ideas that the Star Trek genre has come to. Even hardened Trekkies should pass this one up. Perhaps the new series of Star Trek novels coming from Pocket Books will give new life to the desiccated corpse.

SKYROCKET STEELE by Ron Goulart
Pocket Books \$2.25us

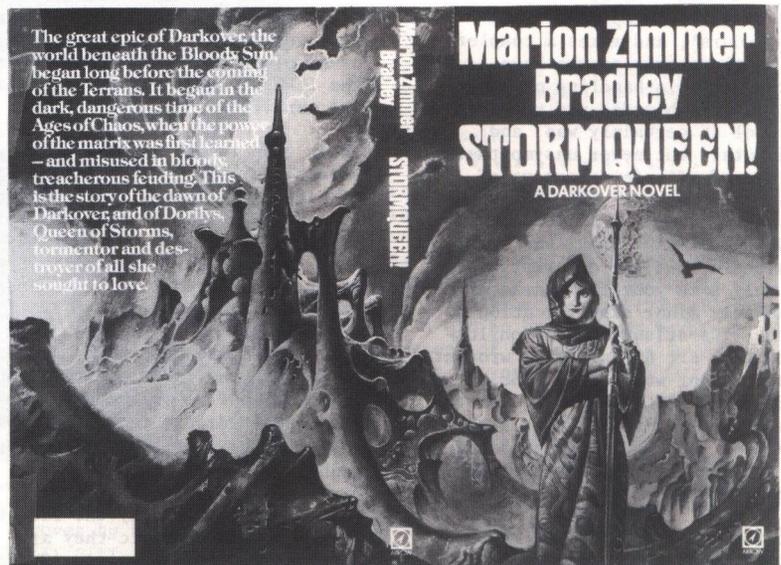
The author obviously intended to have a lot of fun with this book but somehow the promised fun does not eventuate and the thin plot peters out into a bit of a bore. Ron Goulart can do far better than this. The cover by Carl Lundgren is the best thing about the book.

THE MAN IN THE DARKSUIT by Dennis R. Caro
Pocket Books \$1.95us

Here is a definite candidate for the Pat Terry Award for humourous science fiction. It has a private eye hero, ladies in distress and a villain in a Darksuit who is slowly going mad from its effects. I won't tell you any more about this except to say that it is worth reading and it is a good giggle. Recommended.

THE RESTAURANT AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE
by Douglas Adams
Pan PB \$3.50

If you have never heard of Arthur Dent, Ford Prefect, Zaphod Beeblebrox or Marvin the paranoid android then you had better get a copy of HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY and read that before opening this book. If however you have read the aforementioned publication, or heard the radio play, or listened to the three record set then you can take up your towel and once again embark on the improbable adventures of our heroes as they face the menace of the Frog Star, are thrust into the Total perspective vortex, or go to the end of the universe whilst looking for a good lunch. After this I need a drink ... how do you mix a Pangalactic Gargleblaster?



A VOYAGE TO ARCTURIUS by David Lindsay
287 pgs, Sphere, \$5.50
Reviewed by John J. Alderson

From this book a series of vivid images remain, nothing of the characters. For truth to tell they are not characters at all, but names upon which to pin a discourse. Consider the book then as one of those dialogues from older times, when such abstractions as Pride, Truth, Virtue were given parts to speak and actions to perform. As a novel this book falls badly. No characters ever spoke like these characters, or for that matter, acted like these characters.

What then is this book?

It is an examination of the problem of pain. But it is a non-christian view of the problem of pain in a non-christian universe. Consequently it lacks the fundamentals of the Christian philosophy. Trifling matters like hope, faith, and ethics, are absent, for these three things are the essentials of the Christian ethic, in particular the existence of faith and hope. One may search all other religions, but to find these missing. In the Christian philosophy God/good are finally all powerful, and evil a negative thing. In this book evil is not just a negative thing nor is it limited in power, nor is good triumphant...nor can it be.

A VOYAGE TO ARCTURUS is a product of the Great War and its shattering of faith and much of hope.

How does this metaphysical book appear to be part of science fiction. They reach Arcturus in a spaceship! That occupies several sentences!

It is however a thought provoking book. An illustration of what happens when one swallows plausible if false arguments.

PERILOUS PLANETS Ed. by Brian Aldiss Futura 367pgs; \$4.95
ENEMIES OF THE SYSTEM by Brian Aldiss Granada 124 pgs; \$3.50
Reviewed by George Turner.

Aldiss's series of anthologies, drawn inexhaustibly from the pulp magazines of sf's adolescence, are for me an unflinching delight. He has the magic finger which falls unerringly on the right tale to illuminate an era or flesh out a theme. Or is it just that his taste in antiquities coincides with mine?

What we get are stories, so much more solid than the literary exercises pretending to be fiction which infested the 70s and are only now dying out. They are not wildly important to the genre but they do record the development of one area of sf; many of them might have been written in 1980 as easily as 1950.

The Aldiss anthologies - 'Space Odysseys' 'Evil Earths', 'Galactic Empires' (2 vols.) and this one - form a show-case of the booming magazine era.

I wish I could write as appreciatively of 'Enemies Of The System'. It is, unforgivably for such talent as Aldiss's, a clumsy story. He has chosen to satirise systems of thought, choosing communism as his specific target, in a deadpan comedy which never manages to amuse. The opening chapters - in which two exemplars of 'the system' carefully explain to each other in endless dialogue what both have known from birth and which the reader also knows if he hasn't just arrived from the Capellan boondocks are unbearable.

There are some interesting switches on evolutionary theory later on but little of interest in the plot and even less in the flat narration. It all reads uncomfortably like a first draft.

BOOKS CONTINUED

A LIST OF TITLES PUBLISHED UP TO AUGUST.
Cumming's INTO THE FOURTH DIMENSION.

WYNDHAM/STAR Books titles from May on include: FIGHTING SLAVE OF GOR by John Norman, SHATTER, a horror novel by John Farris, HISS by Andrew Laurence in the same category, THE TOLKIEN QUIZ BOOK by Nigel Robinson and Linda Wilson, A STEP FURTHER OUT by Jerry Pournelle, Part one and part two, SATAN WHISPERS another hn by Clarrisa Ross along with Frank Coffey's SHAMAN, and only two DR WHO titles, both reprints, DR WHO AND THE CYBERMAN and THE TOMB OF THE CYBERMEN.

OF THINGS FANISH . . .

Perhaps it is because people in some quarters regard me as a "dirty pro" or they see ASFN as more a professional news magazine rather than fanzine, but I am getting very little information about fan activities. However THYME is a newszine edited by ANDREW BROWN and IRWIN HIRSCH (See Daryl Mannell's Fanzine column for details), which is covering the local fan field. They have a few details on THE FAN FUNDS which we will pass on, in that JOHN BANGSUND is not standing for DUFF. We can add that GREG HILLS will probably not be standing either, but DARYL MANNELL most likely will be. I have not heard of even any other possible nominations, and they close for 1982 by Denvention (September 3rd to 7th.) JAN FINDER and BILL BOWERS are considering standing for 1982, and the nominations close by September 3rd (The date of the Denvention World Con.) JAN HOWARD FINDER and BILL BOWERS are considering standing for the trip to Australia in 1983. We will report on the TAFF and GUFF funds when more definite details are known. The deadline for nominations for GUFF we believe is September 12th. Candidates require nominations from three Australian fans and two British. Agent, is JOHN FOYSTER, 21 Shakespeare Grove, StKilda 3182, Victoria, Australia.

NOVA MOB. Dates and topics for discussion at the meetings in the near future are: September 2: The recent works of Brian W.Aldiss (FRANKENSTEIN UNBOUND and after).

October 7: Each person attending will be asked to talk about a science fiction short story for 5 minutes.

November 4: European SF, starting with the brothers Strugatsky and moving on to French, German, Italian etc., SF.

December 2: The Nova Mob Christmas Breakup. The meetings all start at the Danube Restaurant, Acland Street StKilda, before moving to the Foyster residence at 21 Shakespeare Grove, just around the corner.

.....

THE ROBERT E. HOWARD UNITED PRESS

ASSOCIATION is looking for more members. They would be pleased to hear from any Australian fans.

You can write to Graham Flanagan, P.O.Box 1029, Canberra City, ACT 2601 or direct to Brian Earl Brown, 16711 Burt Road, no.207, Detroit, Michigan 48219 USA. Members include Glenn Lord, L.Sprague De Camp, and Karl Edward Wagner. Graham is also looking for contributions for his own fanzine.

THE AUSTRALIAN DR WHO NEWSLETTER is available from Dallas Jones, c/o Box 191, Gordon, NSW 2072. Subscription is \$2.00

SPACE AGE BOOKS celebrated ten years in business in July. A small gathering was held in the shop to mark the occasion.

MICHAEL HAILSTONE editor of CRUX has changed his address. It is now P.O.Box 193, Woden, ACT 2606. Michael reports that he badly needs more subscribers. A subscription costs \$6.00 Cash is needed to get both issue number 4 paid for and get number 5 started. As one of the very few places that Australian sf is being published, CRUX does merit your support.

NEW ADDITIONS TO FAN FAMILIES that have arrived or are due include: KAREN ELIZABETH ANGOVE to Neville and Peta Angove at 5.15 on August 2nd. David and Sue Grigg are expecting their first child in December. Mark and Jenny Lawrence are expecting their second child.

POLISH SF FANDOM would like to hear from Australia. I hope I have this address right, but it is rather hard to read. ROMNALD P.SZOKA, w LIEBKNECHTA 5 m 6, 91 - 819 LUDZ, POLAND. Romnald is very keen on exchanging fanzines and would like any interested Australian fans to write to him. The sf club he belongs to publishes fanzines and belongs to a group of about a dozen clubs in Poland.

We did not receive any reports on the New Zealand SF convention this year, NORCON '81, at which A.BERTRAM CHANDLER was GOH, but we hear it went quite well.

THE BRITISH SF ASSOCIATION AWARDS

The Annual BRITISH SF ASSOCIATION AWARDS for work published or distributed in the UK in 1980 were voted on by members attending the 1981 British National SF Convention. The winners were .Novel: TIMESCAPE by Gregory Benford. Short Fiction: "The Brave Little Toaster: A Bed Time Story for Small Appliances" by Thomas M.Disch. Media: "The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy" second series. Artist: PETER JONES.

(Joseph Nicholas SFC)



A QUICK LOOK AT FANZINES BY TINY DARYL MANNELL.

Merv has been receiving quite a few fanzines of late, so naturally the idea of a fanzine review column, (similar to the one Leigh Edmonds once did for the news) became a viable proposition. These days I spend a lot of time at Space Age books working on the Fantasy Film Society, the Foundation etc. so being in the wrong place at the wrong time I find myself as the News newly appointed fanzine editor. Will I ever learn! Because the reviews have to be brief, I have decided to " Borrow " a point system similar to what Marc Ortlieb's set up in THE WEST OF MINSTERS LIBRARY. The set up is as follows.

OVERALL QUALITY.

- A. Excellent.
- B. Very Good.
- C. Good.
- D. Poor.
- E. Forget it!

REPRODUCTION.

- 1. Excellent.
- 2. Very Good.
- 3. Good.
- 4. Poor.
- 5. Impossible to read.

Additional information .

- Name & address of editor.
- Type of reproduction.
- Number of pages. Type of zine.
- Method of availability.

So with the guidelines laid down, let's get underway.

AUSTRALIA IN 83 BULLETIN. April 1981. Editor, Shayne McCormack. P.O. Box A491, Sydney South, 2000. Australia. Update bulletin on A in 83 worldcon bid. Mimeo reproduction. 8 pages. Rating C,3. Available for subscription at \$3.00 for 4 issues.

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF DIVERSE WORLDS. Editor, Debra Milson. 554 Cross Rd. South Plympton. South., Aust. 5038. Clubzine. Photo-copy reproduction. 19 pages. Rating C,2. No obvious information re availability. More fantasy orientated than SF or fannish.

BULLETIN DU SFFAN. No. 35. Dec '80. Editor, Jean Milbergue. 17 sq des Carrieres, La Clairiere, 78120 Rambouillet. CPPAP 59538. Clubzine of the SFFAN. Photocopy reproduction. 28 pages. Rating 4. Written entirely in French. Can not comment on stories. as I can not read French. Available to members of the SFFAN.

BULLETIN DU SFFAN No. 35. Dec. '80. (Special critiques.) See previous comments.

BULLETIN No. 35 INFOS - Dec. '80. Special Cine. Again, see previous comments. 12 pages.

BULLETIN FROM THE BRIDGE. Stardate 8104.12. Editor, Jill Curtin. 32 Jetty St. Grange. South Aust. 5022. Clubzine of SASTREK. Photo-copied cover, remainder mimeo. 10 pages. Rating C,3. No info on availability.

BUNYIPS IN THE MULGA. No. 3. Editor, Graeme Flanagan. P.O. Box 1029 Canberra City. Aust. 2601. APA-zine. Photo-copied. 36 pages. Rating B,3. Possibly available for the usual, but not too sure.

THE CAPTAINS LOG. 46. Editors Andrew Bauld/Tracy Adamczyk. C/- AUSTREK, 5206aa Melb. 3001. Clubzine for AUSTREK. Mimeo, 10 pages. Rating C,4. Again possibly available for the usual, but not too sure.

THE CAPTAINS LOG. 47. See above. 13 pages. Rating B,4. Spoilt by bad reproduction.

CRABAPPLE 18. Editor, Ken Ozanne. 42 Meek's Crescent Faulconbridge N.S.W. Aust. 2776. Fanzine. Mimeo. 26 pages. Rating B,2. Avail. for the usual.

THE CYGNUS CHRONICLER. March 1981. Editor, Neville J. ANGOVE. C/- THE EPEREX PRESS, P.O. Box 770, Canberra City. Aust. 2601. Semi-prozine. Off-set and type-set. 24 pages. Rating A,1. Beautifully presented with some excellent contributions. Available for \$A5.00 for four issues or \$A1.50 per issue. Highly recommended!

DATA. No. 38. Editors, Ron & Sue Clarke. 6 Bellevue Rd. Faulconbridge. N.S.W. Aust/ 2776. Clubzine for ASTREX. Mimeo. 11 pages. rating B,3. Possibly available for the usual as well as ASTREX members.

DATA No 41. As above. 16 pages. Rating B,4. Reproduction has fallen down at bit.

De Profundis. 125. Editor, David K.M." Starchaser" Klaus. C/i LASFS, 11513 Burbank Boulevard, North Hollywood, California. U.S.A. 91601. Mimeo. 10 pages. Clubzine of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Soc. Rating B,3. Good guide to happenings with U.S. West coast fandom. Available for the usual, members of LASFS or \$US5.00 for 12 issues.

FANTIPODEAN No. 3. Editor, Graeme Flanagan. P.O. Box 1029 Canberra City, Aust. 2601. APA-zine. 12 pages. Rating B,4. Mimeo and photocopy. Mimeo reproduction poor in places. Possibly available for the usual, but not sure.

FANZINE DIRECTORY 3. Editor, Allan Beatty, P.O. Box 1906, Ames, IA. 50010. U.S.A. Directory of fanzines published in 1977. 13 pages. Off-set. Rating A,1. A must for fanzine fans. Gives very comprehensive

listings. Available \$US1.00, \$A1.00 as well as trade.

GEGENSCHWEIN 41. May 1981. Editor, Eric B. Lindsay. C/- 6 Hillcrest Ave. Faulconbridge. N.S.W. Aust. 2776. Personalzine. 17 pages. Mimeo. Rating B,2. Often very interesting. May be limited in scope for some. Available for the usual.

FORERUNNER. Vol 3, No.8. Jan.'81. Editor, Jack R, Herman, 1/67 Fletcher St. Bondi. N.S.W. Aust. 2026. Clubzine of the Sydney SF Foundation. 18 pages. mimeo. Rating C,3. Available for the usual or \$A3.00 for 12 issues.

FORERUNNER. Vol 3, No.12. May '81. As above. 12 pages. Rating C,3+. Reproduction has improved.

FORERUNNER. Vol 4, No.1. June '81. As above. 10 pages.

THE MENTOR 31. June 1981. Editor, Ron L. Clarke, 6 Bellevue Rd., Faulconbridge, NSW Aust. 2776. Fanzine. 26 pages. Mimeo. Rating B3. Interesting article from John Alderson and Bertram Chandler on Gor books. Available for \$1.00 per copy or the usual.

THE MENTOR 32. August 1981. Same details as above. Rating B3.

MUNICH ROUND UP. No. 151. Dec. 1980. The satirical fanzine of the Munich SF group. Unfortunately I can't read German, so I can't comment on the fanzine's quality. There is a brief English summary, but still limited to Aryan friends. Possibly off-set or Photocopy repo. US agent is Andrew Porter, P.O. Box 4175, New York. 10017.

NOUMENON. No. 41. Editor, Brian Thurogood. 40 Korora Rd. Oneroa, Waiheke Island, Hauraki Gulf, New Zealand. Australian agent is Cary Handfield, P.O. Box 91 Carlton, Vic., Aust. 3053. Fanzine. Off-set and type-set. Outstanding quality. Rating A,1. Available for \$NZ 5.75 for 10 issues. \$AUS 7.00/10 issues (seamail). Recommended!

Q 36F. Editor, Marc Ortlieb. 70 Hamblynn Rd. Elizabeth Downs, S.A. Aust. 5068. Humorous fanzine. Mimeo. 44 pages. Rating A,3. Harry Andruschak's puns are delightful agony! Available for the usual. Also includes The West of Minster's Library (fanzine review section). Highly recommended.

SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES. No. 77. Editors, Marty Cantor and Mike Glycer. Clubzine of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Soc. 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601 USA. Mimeo. 22 pages. Rating B,3(-). Reproduction poor in places but the contents are very good. A good guide to US West coast fandom happenings. Available for \$US1.00 per copy or the usual. Also known as SHAGGY.

TWLL-DDU. No. 19. Editor, Dave Langford, 32 Northumberland Ave., Reading, Berkshire. RG2 7PW. United Kingdom. Fanzine. 20 pages. Mimeo with it seems an off-set cover. Rating B,3. Some interesting letters

as well as fan happenings in good old England. Available for 50p or the usual.

TAU CETI. 2/81.

Editor, Jill Curtain. 32 Jetty St. Grange. S.A. 5022. Aust. Clubzine for SASTREK. Photocopy cover, rest is Mimeo. 15 pages. Rating C,3. Will interest Stra Trek fans. No info on availability.

WEBER WOMAN'S WREVENGE. Vol 1, No.,1. Editor, Jean Weber. 13 Myall St., O'Connor, ACT 2601. Aust. Fanzine with social overtones. Mimeo. 18 pages. Rating B,3. Interesting US trip report. Jean, why was Merv and the ASFN omitted from your list of Aust. faneds?

WEBER WOMAN'S WREVENGE. Vol 1, No.,2
As above but with added contents.
30 pages. Available for the usual.

AERIAL. No.3.

Editor, Graham Ferners. 2/16 Hollyhock Pl., Browns Bay, Auckland 10. New Zealand. Fanzine. Mimeo. Rating B,3(-). Repo poor in places. 16 pages. Reviews, letters & news. Nice little touches now and then. Good zine for NZ fan news. Available for the usual.

THE CAPTAINS LOG. 48.

Editors, Andrew Bauld & Tracy Adamczyk. P.O. BOX 5206AA Melbourne, Vic. 3001. Aust. Mimeo. 14 pages. Rating C,4. Clubzine of Austrek. Interesting to Star Trek fans. Possibly available for the usual but not too sure on that.

THE CYGNUS CHRONICLER. June 1981.

Editor, Neville J. Angove. C/- The Eperex Press. P.O. Box 770 Canberra City, ACT 2601. Aust. Semi-prozine. Off-set and type-set. 24 pages. Rating A,1. Beautifully produced with some excellent reading in it. Available for \$A5.00 for 4 issues or \$A1.50 per issue. Highly recommended!

DATA. No. 42.

Editors, Ron & Sue Clarke. 6 Bellvue Rd. Faulconbridge, NSW. 2776. Aust. Clubzine for Astrex. Mimeo. 26 pages. Rating B,3. One of the better Star Trek zines in that it isn't entirely devoted to Star Trek. Available to Astrex members and possibly the usual.

GEGENSCHWEIN 41. August 1981.

Editor, Eric B. Lindsay. C/- 6 Hillcrest Ave., Faulconbridge, NSW 2776. Aust. Personal/fanzine. 17 pages. Mimeo with off-set cover. Rating B,2. Many personal mumbings that appeal to me. Available for the usual.

TAU CETI. 3/81.

Editor, Jill Curtain. 32 Jetty St. Grange, S.A. 5022. Aust. Clubzine for SASTREK. Photocopy cover, rest is Mimeo. 10 pages. Rating C,3. No availability info but possibly for the usual.

THYME ONE.

Editors, Irwin Hirsh & Andrew Brown. 279 Domain Rd, South Yarra, Vic. 3141. and 5 York St., Prahran, Vic. 3181. (respectively) Newszine. 4 pages. Mimeo. Reports on the local news/gossip/scandals etc. Ideal for non-

Australian fans to get the latest update. Available for the usual or 3 issues for \$A1.00 (Overseas) 3 issues for \$A2.00 (Airmail)

Well kiddies, that just about wraps up my reviewing for the day. Remember, if you produce a fan/club/personal zine and you want it reviewed, (as in free publicity) then send it to Tiny Daryl Mannell, ASFN, C/- 305-307 Swanston St. Melbourne. Vic. 3000. Aust. Bribes for better reviews gratefully accepted. (I've got a bank manager to support!)

Daryl Mannell



KIM HUETT,
8 Central George Ave.,
Cündletown, NSW 2430

24/5/81

Dear Mervyn,

Please forgive me for being so late in commenting on the Jan/Feb ish of ASFN. As you know I have moved down to Sydney and getting used to working for the first time as well as living alone for the first time has not left me with much spare time to spend writing. However this does not excuse you for being so late with this latest issue. When you start a project like this the people who subscribe expect to get the zine at regular intervals. You have an obligation to these people and it should be fulfilled.

The quality of this issue however did make up for the lateness of it. In the last few issues I see that you have been able to organize the layout for greater readability. This certainly makes a lot of difference in the amount needed to find anything. The only real problem area is the "PEOPLE AND PUBLISHING" section. This section would read a lot better if there was less overlap with the publisher's announcements and the rest of the material more carefully edited so that all information about a certain book or author is all together and you would not keep repeating yourself, eg. you mentioned that Homeworld by Harry Harrison was reprinted before release twice. You cannot expect to reprint sections from other zines and not get foul up like that. Edit them and acknowledge all your sources at the end of the section.

I know it is asking a lot but how about some information on small press zines and anthologies like the ones who seem to get all the awards in the various fantasy awards. If you or someone could come up with a few addresses, prices, likeliness of availability, it would be greatly appreciated.

Now on to the letter column which deserves quite a bit of comment.

Firstly ignore Jeffrey Buchanan as his complaints are based on nothing valid and consist only of cheap insults. Does Mr Buchanan really expect a newszine to ignore the activities of some of our authors because he has a personal dislike of them (at least I think this is why he didn't want them mentioned as he forgot or didn't bother to mention what he has against them). That would make as much sense as a national newspaper not mentioning the Labour Party because the editor-in-chief voted liberal.

I am afraid that I don't agree with George in all he says about the local SF magazines. It is true that their quality is not as good as the American zines but then they can afford to pay enough to attract stories by top authors even though they make most of their living from novels. Now these local zines would be a lot more to George's taste I suspect if there was more fiction by the pros like Wodhams etc. However the editors just cannot afford to buy material from them eg: I know that Michael Hailstone was offered some Wodhams stories but didn't have the sort of money a pro would expect to get so he was forced to pass up the offer.

Now nobody can blame the pros for wanting a good price for their fiction. After all this is their livelihood and they have to pay the bills. Still would it be so difficult to let our editors have one story a year at whatever price they could afford? I include you in this George because the only way to improve things is to pitch in and help, not winge and do nothing.

This lack of pro support is one of the major stumbling blocks for editors like Michael Hailstone because they then have to rely on new writers who do not rely on writing for survival. I'm sure that the editors try to help the writers improve their material but remember like Mervyn these men have taken subscriptions and it is just not possible to spend the length of time needed to bring the stories up to the level George wants. They have an obligation to publish, and publish they must if they do not want to disappoint their readers.

To make things worse, not enough people are willing to support these zines with advertising or subscriptions which means they are not given any chance to raise themselves above the level they have already reached.

Really George if you want to do something productive why don't you spend your time writing a short story for one of these zines instead of criticising them for things they cannot help?

Now George what do you mean by not mentioning The Cygnus Chronicler in your letter or did you cover it in your comment about understanding that there was a couple of other local papers printing in the same style of "fan" stuff. If so it was a low blow not worthy of someone of your talent. If not how can you judge the field when you don't even know all of it. The Cygnus Chronicler has published quite a lot

of good stuff by name authors as well as newcomers and should not be left out of any review of the field. Unfortunately leaving it out even if it was accidental did make your letter sound as though you were only picking those things to mention which supported your argument. Of course this is purely a subjective impression, but still.

Mervyn what ever possessed you to write those comments on George's letter. The second paragraph was alright as it is true about our local zines, they do need to improve but we must remain conscious of the whole situation or our criticisms have no relevance. As I realise that in part the lateness of the Jan/Feb issue was not all your fault.

What I object to is that first paragraph which is just a collection of insupportable statements of the type you dislike in Mr Buchanan's letter. Who passed a law saying that it's impossible to argue with George because this letter is proof that it is possible? To make matters worse you claim that George was in full appraisal of the situation when he seems unaware of one of our main fiction magazines. You demean yourself by printing inane statements like that and what is worse the zine loses some of its professional touch due to them. Like you said we need intelligent criticism let us hope that we see some on this subject soon in ASFN.

What I meant in my last letter to ASFN is could you please publish at least once a year a list of all novels and stories by local authors published in foreign markets so those who want to see what our authors are getting published will have something to work from.

How about lighting a fire under Chris's Thesis and Paul as the A in 83 cartoon is far too short for my taste. Also could you tighten up the "Fanzines Received" column. The reviews do not mention whether these zines are available for trade, loc, sub, or a buck in the letter which tends to place a stumbling block in front of very neo-neo-fen.

This is enough feedback for anyone so I am going to end here. Please do not take anything I have said too personally as I want ASFN perfect and as you said improvement can only come through criticism. So good luck on ish 23.

Yours

Kim.

Dear Kim,

As always I am in a rush to get this issue finished, so I cannot answer your letter in any great detail. Let me just say that your points are well taken, but I stand by what I said in my follow up to George Turner's letter in issue # 22. I do mention the sales of stories by Australian authors when the authors or their agents advise me, but obviously I do not know about them all, so I will endeavour to chase them all up in future.

Merv B.

George Turner
3/123 Westbury St
Balaclava 3183

July '91

Dear Mervyn,

Three quarters of the way down the second column of his letter (ASFN 24) Neville Angove writes: 'Certainly what he (Turner) has said about the magazines - I mean the quality of the fiction and the quality of the editing - is true ...' What, then, is the rest of the ill-informed frothing at the mouth about? Best to ignore it; plainly he has his troubles and why should I add to them?

Of more interest is the hurt but restrained letter from Michael Hailstone, which deserves an answer.

Getting established through the overseas magazines, he says, is hopeless. So? How about Wynne Whiteford, Lee Harding, John Baxter, David Grigg, Jack Wodhams, Cherry Wilder and, more recently, Leanne Frahm and 'Pip' Maddern? Nor is it true that we can't develop an Australian brand of sf without a regular local outlet, though we would certainly do better with one. An Australian brand of sf is not something for the local tribe, concerned with Bondi Beach and kangaroos, local habits, regional slang and Australian rules football; it is simply a distinct habit of prose as readily distinguishable from the work of English and American writers as theirs is from each other's.

It is a matter of not imitating, not borrowing, not following the conventions of imported sf; a matter of sitting down to write with no model in mind save your own personal mode of expression, of rejecting the 'accepted conventions' (mostly inane) which have become part of sf through the years, of taking each idea, however simple, and thinking it through to your conclusion instead of accepting the mixture-as-before principle to produce merely a copy of the story being written by 50 other writers at the same time. Thinking it through to a logical conclusion is what picks up a tired old plot and demonstrates something new in it. It may even result in a story that will catch the reader's interest in spite of poor writing. Writing is bloody hard work, not just dashing off something with a space ship or a telepath in it.

'...until I get more support,' Michael writes, 'I can ill afford to be hard on contributors, for fear of losing potential subscribers.'

The answer to that is brutal: Until you print better stories how can you hope to obtain more subscribers? Catch 22. Better to publish half as often and give the writers hell until they stir themselves to try to do better. At present they see their work printed and often praised (by readers whose standards must have frozen at primary school level) and are encouraged to think that what they are doing is good enough, when what they need is an editor who will say bluntly that it isn't good enough

and go on to point out why. (You don't tell a writer what changes to make - what and how are his business - but where changes are necessary, where the thing falls down.)

As for losing writers, the ones who can't take a request for rewriting are the ones you and sf can do without; your magazine can only suffer from their presence. The real writer is a tough bird who will, as I have written elsewhere, waste ten minutes hating your editorial guts, then set out to prove you wrong about his talent.

If I sent you a story which didn't satisfy you, would you publish it rather than try to tell a professional his business? Well, you would be wrong and I wouldn't thank you for letting bad work pass. Lee Harding sent back 'In A Petri Dish Upstairs' because he didn't like the ending and thereby got himself a much better story; if I had objected - which I didn't, because I saw at once that he was right - he would have told me to take my story and shove it. Which would have been exactly the correct attitude.

I have credited the small-magazine editors with courage, but they need more courage yet - the courage to miss an occasional issue because the material isn't good enough, the courage to risk losing an author (who probably wouldn't be much loss if he resented criticism), the courage to tell a writer just where and how he falls short and ask him to rehandle. If there's anything in him at all, he'll do it; if he won't, forget him.

Now, as to the 'competent writers' Michael never hears from: Has he, perhaps, tried asking them for material? Does he expect to be sought out by people who perhaps don't know his magazine exists? Has he, for instance, looked down the 'Contents' lists of 'The Altered I', 'The View From The Edge' and 'Transmutations' and wondered where some of those writers are, those writers who may not know that he represents an outlet? Has he heard of Tony Peacey in Perth and Tony Huntingdon in Townsville, crying out for somebody to write for?

Writers, these, who 'wouldn't deign to contribute to such a humble low-paying struggling publication like CRUX'? Maybe, maybe - but I have seen a Bert Chandler story in a fanzine, contributed free. Editors have to go after their writers.

The other thing editors have to do is to learn the ungentle art of literary criticism. So do writers, if they want to understand why their stories fail. Criticism is, in fact, what we teach in writer's workshops, disguised as creative writing; it might be an idea to run one for editors - if they could be persuaded down from their high horses to attend. Most of us learn, not by 'doing' as Angove seems to think, but by studying what others have done and adapting the gained knowledge to our needs; it's a long process and all a workshop does is hurry it up by raising the scores of points an indiv-

idual may take years to see for himself.

An editor is very much in the position of a workshop leader; his business is to chivvy writers into making if not silk purses at least presentable bags out of their sow's ears. To do this he must either educate himself or call in somebody with greater experience.

If anyone should think that is an open invitation to submit their next issue for vetting, it isn't. I have already waded through enough typescripts this year, good and bad and passable, and written enough 3000-word letters of advice and criticism, to breathe white fire at the next person who thinks he has a divine right to claim a writer's time, patience and experience - usually without a word of thanks afterwards.

Still, if there should be a struggling editor who genuinely wants to learn how to go about it...

Yours sincerely
George Turner.

Dear George,

I appreciate your time and effort in helping me with ASFN and your letters in particular. At least we are getting a reaction and I hope in the long run that it is to the betterment of sf in Australia.

Merv B.

Lee Smoire,
2329 N. Calvert St.,
Baltimore, MY 21218 USA

Dear Friends,

This is a short note of appreciation, which will be followed by a longer letter sent to people in the fan centres. I would like to report that the HAPSTAFF Fund (Help A Poor Starving Foreign Fan) was a success, raising between \$70 - \$80. This amount not only saw me through Adventon, but helped me make it through the last week I was here, as my temporary job unexpectedly ran out a week early.

I had expected to have a small balance left which I was to donate to DUFF; instead I have purchased a bottle of Jim Beam at the Duty Free Shop and will have it auctioned at other Midwestcon or Westercon and will donate the proceeds of that. Additionally, when I get my financial situation straightened out at home, I will make a personal donation.

I want to thank everyone for the

1. generosity
2. kindness
3. cooperation shown me during my trip. I had a marvellous time, and, if I can't wholeheartedly support Australia in '83, I can say with no reservations and full passions, Australia in '85! (Or whenever you next choose!)

Thanks again,
Love Lee Smoire.

LEE HARDING
PO BOX 25
BALACLAVA
VIC 3183

1/7/81

Dear Mervyn,

I read Neville Angove's extraordinarily long-winded letter in ASFN 24 with growing disbelief. But my eyeballs careered to a stop when I reached the following paragraph: "...it is only when the story has actually been published that both the author and I can really see if it has worked..."

I'll go along with the writer's response - but surely if Angove can't tell if a story is worth buying and publishing, by reading the ms., then what the damn hell is he doing in the business? No professional editor/publisher can afford that kind of gamble. If he can't perform this rudimentary function, then surely he must seriously question what he's publishing for. In making this statement he has unwittingly singled out the main problem with semi-professional and outright amateur publications: the people in charge seem to have no idea of what constitutes literary quality. I'm astonished that you could devote almost a whole page to such a blindingly silly letter. My own experience as an editor/publisher of fan fiction (surprise, surprise) has convinced me that this is an activity done for self aggrandisement, no matter how much we convince ourselves of our altruistic motives. Perhaps professional magazines follow a similar pattern. If so, then they certainly pay more for the privilege.

Regards
Lee.

Dear Lee,

I am just as bad an editor as the rest of the 'amateur' magazine producers. No doubt I should edit the reviews and the letters, but this takes time and I am already putting more time into the News than I can afford. If I could get a bit more help

Merv B.

RICK KENNETT
46 SOUDAN ST
COBURG 3058

12/7/81

Dear Mr Binns,

Mr G. Holttmans's remarks in the letter column of the May/June ASFN have prompted me to pick up my crayon to respond.

I was amazed at the certainty of his statements, saying that we will always be here on Earth and that there will never be construction crews (Australian or otherwise) building airports on distant stars. "Always" and "never" are very long periods of time. Barring accidents and sheer stupidity, the human race will be around for quite a while. A hell of a lot may be accomplished in that time. The thinking

behind Mr Holttmans's remarks seems to be the same which lurked behind "The world is definitely flat", "Man will never fly" and "The bustle is here to stay". In a word --- shortsighted. For a species that has only recently come down out of the trees, it's a bit early to be all-knowable about what we will ever and never do. In all our 20th century wisdom we really don't grasp a tenth of all there is to know yet.

Also, in his letter, George Turner remarked that some of the writers and editors were inexperienced, and criticized some individual stories such as Patterson's; but nowhere did he make such a sweeping statement as (or even imply that) "Banjo Patterson and the other writers being crap".

Yours Sincerely
Rick Kennett

Dear Rick,

Thank you for your comments. I am providing a forum for people to say what they want to say, but perhaps in my own comments I could make some more constructive criticism. Meanwhile I will most certainly publish any and all the letters I have the room for, that are either replying to previous letters or breaking new ground.

Merv B.

FURTHER LETTERS: I received a letter from Lee Harding stating that Paul Collins did not give any credit to the Literature Board for their assistance in getting his books published. Paul also wrote to me and said that he has expressed his gratitude to them on numerous occasions and said he should not be expected to mention them every time he gets into print. Lee Harding was refering in particular to the article on CORY & COLLINS in issue # 22 of The NEWS. There is unfortunately a growing animosity between Paul Collins and his critics. Even I have been drawn into it. Legitimate criticism is the only way we can find out what we are doing wrong and correct and improve what we are producing, be it writing, editing or any sort of art. Some of the criticism has been very deep, simply because Paul's critics, including George Turner believe he is not doing justice to his writers and they want to see Australian sf grow and improve. It is not a personal thing against Paul himself, but he has chosen to take it that way. In some ways he has done a good job in getting Australian sf off the ground, but now only hard hitting strong advice and editing of author's writing can help them improve their craft.

Next issue I have letters from Christine and Derrick Ashby and Josephine Dorian. Sorry, but I cannot squeeze them in this issue.

Merv Binns Ed.

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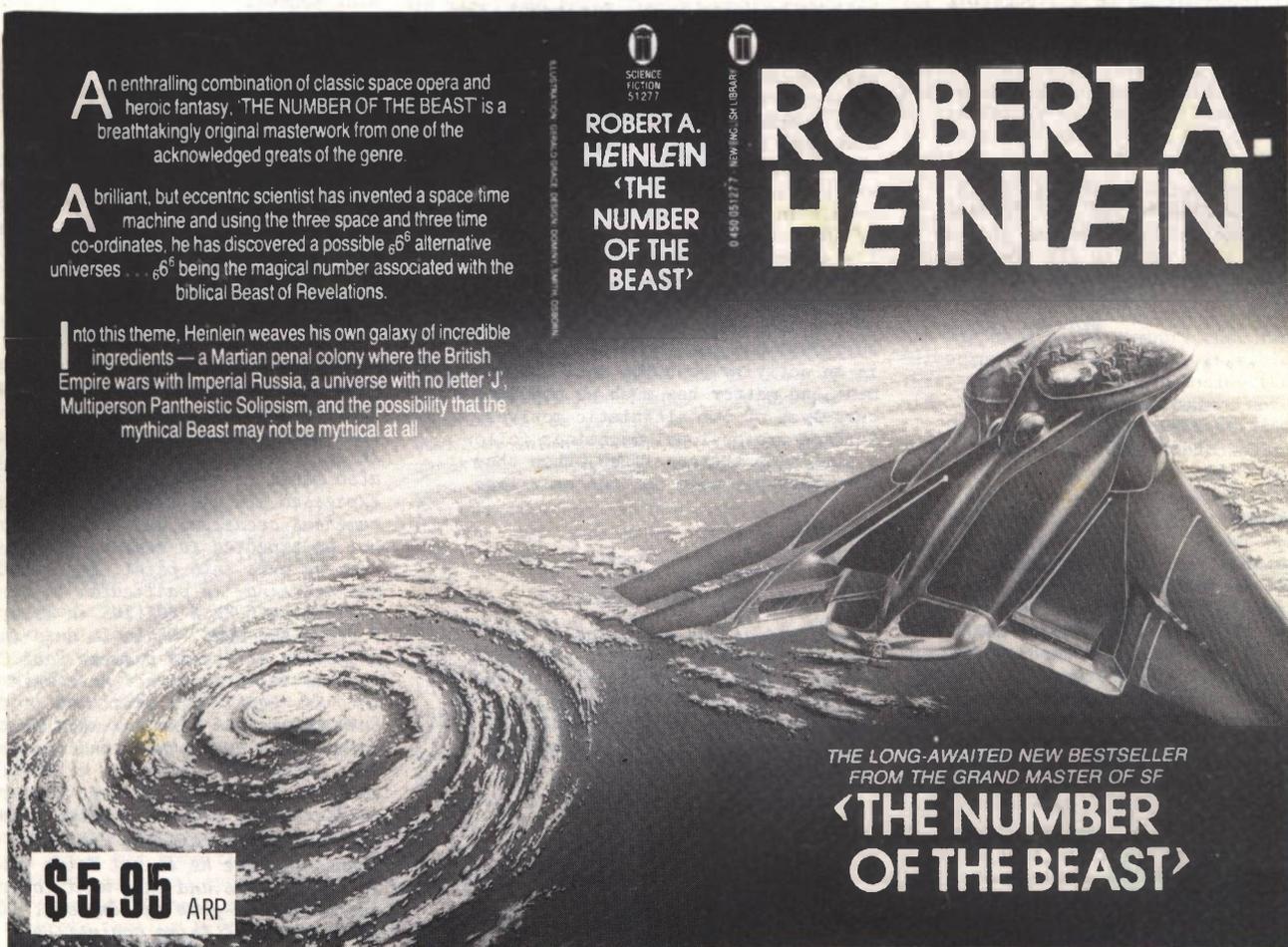
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