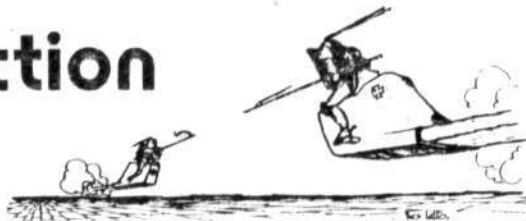


Birmingham Science Fiction Group

(Honorary Presidents: Brian W Aldiss and Harry Harrison)



NEWSLETTER 117

MAY 1981

The Birmingham Science Fiction Group has its formal meeting on the third Friday of each month in the upstairs room of THE IVY BUSH pub on the corner of Hagley Road and Monument Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham 16. There is also an informal meeting on the first Tuesday of each month at WILLIE'S WINE BAR, on the corner of Summer Row and Fleet Street, Birmingham 3. New members are always welcome. Our treasurer is Margaret Thorpe, 36 Twyford Road, Ward End, Birmingham 8. The 12 month subscription is £3.50 per person.

MAY MEETING - Friday 15th May 1981 at 7.45 pm

GARRY KILWORTH will be speaking "In Praise of Aliens" for the first part of the meeting. Then there will be a panel discussion involving four of Britain's younger SF authors - Garry Kilworth, Robert Holdstock, David Langford and Chris Morgan - who will answer questions on any aspect of writing SF. Garry Kilworth first came to public attention when he was a joint winner of the Gollancz/Sunday Times SF Competition and had his story "Let's Go to Golgotha" printed in the Sunday Times. Since then he's had 3 novels published (In Solitary, Night of Kadar, and Split Second), with a 4th Gemini God coming from Faber in June. The paperback of Split Second is due out from Penguin in July. The panel discussion which follows will give YOU a chance to ask some of Britain's up and coming SF authors for their views on the state of British SF, and for advice on writing. Have your questions ready.

APRIL MEETING

Thomas M. Disch read us some of his poetry and a new short story before answering questions (see page 4). Despite a big attendance the meeting made a loss of £12.70. Expenses were: Room Hire £15.00, Speaker's Expenses £41.40 and Raffle Prize £1.50 = £57.90 total. Income was: Entrance Money £35.00 and Raffle Ticket Sales £10.20 = £45.20 total.

FORTHCOMING

- *In June our speaker will be local author Hugh Walters.
- *On June 27th is the 10th Anniversary Party. If you haven't got your ticket yet- shame on you. More details inside, page 4.
- *In July, after the great success at the Leicester SF Group, we have a speaker from the Aetherius Society.
- *In August we hope to have Anne McCaffrey, who will be touring Britain to publicise the paperback publication of Dragondrums.
- *In the autumn we should have Bob Shaw, when his book collaboration with our own David Hardy, Thomas Cook's Galactic Tours, will be published.

BIRMINGHAM SCIENCE FICTION FILM SOCIETY's programme for Sunday 7th June will be Charly and Fantastic Planet (which weren't shown this month due to a mess-up by the film hire company). Arts Lab at 11.00am as usual.

Don't miss the informal meeting at Willie's Wine Bar on Tues 2nd June.

...NEWS... THE NEBULA AWARD WINNERS were announced about two weeks ago in the USA. But news is travelling a little slowly this time; all I know at present is that the award for Best Novel went to Timescape by Gregory Benford, which isn't even on the final nomination list for the Hugo awards... And speaking of the Hugo nominations...

HUGO NOMINATIONS have been announced. These are for things first published in 1980, and the awards will be presented at the Worldcon in Denver this August. Here are the nominated novels, together with their British publishers, so that you can all rush out and buy copies: Beyond the Blue Event Horizon - Frederik Pohl (Gollancz), Lord Valentine's Castle - Robert Silverberg (Gollancz), The Ringworld Engineers - Larry Niven (Gollancz and Futura), The Snow Queen - Joan D.Vinge (Sidgwick & Jackson and Futura), and Wizard - John Varley (Futura). Harlan Ellison, Thomas M.Disch, Gordon R.Dickson, and George R.R.Martin, singly and with Lisa Tuttle, all have nominations in the Best Novella category. The only British nominees are Keith Roberts (for Best Nov-elette), Charles Platt (for Best Non-Fiction Book) and Dave Langford (for Best Fan-Writer).

CHRISTOPHER PRIEST & LISA TUTTLE were married in London on 25th April. A congratulatory telegram was sent on behalf of the Brum Group.

PAUL OLDROYD (chairman of Novacon 11) has announced his engagement to Chris Donaldson. They hope to marry later this year. Congratulations.

DAVID C.HOLMES, the Brum Group member with the confusing name, has announced his engagement to Helen Hartley (of Birmingham Science Fiction Film Society committee fame). Congratulations.

STAR WARS ON RADIO: For those who missed the daily episodes for a couple of weeks from Easter, you'll be able to do the same again each Saturday from July 4th, when the serial is being repeated on Radio 1, this time in stereo.

BRIAN ALDISS has been invited to be one of the judges for this year's Booker Prize, one of the most prestigious of literary awards.

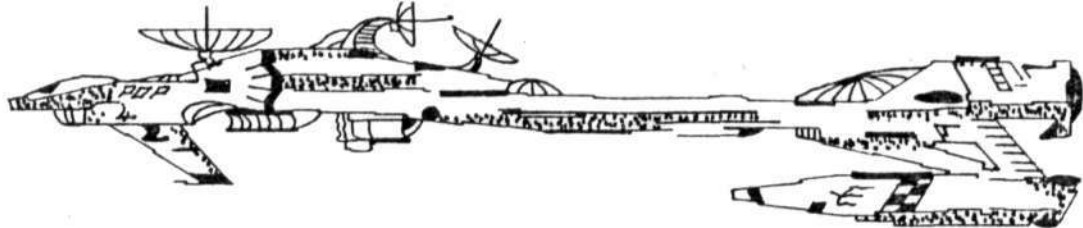
ANDROMEDA BOOKSHOP's top ten best selling paperbacks for April were: 1.The Number of the Beast - Robert A.Heinlein, 2.The Master of the Five Magics - Lyndon Hardy, 3.War in 2080 - David Langford, 4.Dr Who and the Enemy of the World - Ian Marter, 5.Wizard - John Varley, 6.The Prisoner: A Day in the Life - Hank Stine, 7.Somewhere in Time - Richard Matheson, 8.Black Easter / The Day After Judgement - James Blish, 9.Songs of Stars and Shadows - George R.R.Martin, 10.Wheelworld - Harry Harrison.

SOLIHULL SF GROUP has an informal get-together on the second Friday of each month at the Mason's Arms pub in High Street, Solihull. And, what is more...

STEVE GREEN, who organises the Solihull SF Group, has just been appointed as information co-ordinator for all local SF groups, by the British Science Fiction Association. So if you help to run a group make sure Steve has details of your meetings and other activities. His address is 11 Fox Green Crescent, Acocks Green, Birmingham B27 7SD.

MISS PETA LEDWITCH, who has just moved back to Birmingham after several years in Italy, wants to talk to people about science fiction, and she invites any BSFG members to call on her, any Saturday evening. Her address is The Laurels, Druids Lane, Birmingham B14 5SU, tel 430-6084. Write, phone or just drop in.

BABELCON, a Hitch Hiker's Guide convention, is being held at Birmingham's Grand Hotel on 7th-9th August. G-o-o-h Douglas Adams. Attending membership £6.00. Contact: Babelcon, 11 Rutland St, Hanley, Stoke on Trent, Staffs.



YORCON 2

a convention report by Chris Morgan

The major British SF convention each year is at Easter. Like Easter, it is a moveable feast; this year it moved back to Leeds. It also has a tendency to grow in membership, so that the Dragonara (or, as one Progress Report put it, Draganora) Hotel was bursting at the seams with about 700 people. Time was when Easter conventions had a guest-of-honour; now they have a whole gaggle of them. This time there was a British Professional g-o-h, Ian Watson, an American Professional g-o-h, Thomas M. Disch, and a Fan g-o-h, Dave Langford, all of whom were very funny (even when they didn't mean to be).

Ian Watson used political references to counterpoint his speech (thus ensuring that all attendees were made aware that he is standing as a prospective Labour councillor for the obscure rural corner of Northants in which he lives). Tom Disch made belief systems the main subject of his speech, saying things like "Blessed are the readers of science fiction, for they shall inherit the future" (for which he, unsurprisingly, received a tremendous ovation). Dave Langford, being just a fan, was not asked to address the assembled multitudes in the main convention hall, but was forced to deliver his delicate pearls of wit and wisdom in the overcrowded squallor of the fan room. He had the last laugh through the fact that War in 2080 was just about the best selling new book in the convention book rooms.

I didn't attend many programme items (come to think of it, there weren't many programme items) but I do remember yet another ludicrously funny Bob Shaw talk and a better-than-expected "Just a Minute" panel game (won by the ever-popular Joseph Nicholas). The fancy dress parade on the Saturday evening was most enjoyable, with a number of partially clad females (which I'm sure you don't want me to tell you about) and a Brum Group entry, specifically designed to tell the world about the 10th Anniversary Party. Later there was some frenzied leaping, mainly out of time to a disco and a live group.

During Sunday the shortage of space in the hotel was further exacerbated by the formidable presence of Michael Moorcock. I would have approached him for a chat, but I couldn't think of anything to say. Sunday evening's banquet was surprisingly edible; overpriced, of course, but better than I can remember from any previous con banquet. In the awards ceremony which followed, BSFA awards went to Gregory Benford's Timescape (novel), Tom Disch's "The Brave Little Toaster" (short fiction), Hitch Hiker's Guide 2nd series (media) and Peter Jones (artist). The Doc Weir award went to John Brunner for contributions to fandom, and the Ken McIntyre award to Pete Lyon for fan art.

A notable contribution was provided by the lifts, which were obviously controlled by some devious alien mind. One of them had a penchant for stopping between floors and rhythmically clapping its doors, while the other played cat-and-mouse with its occupants, going down when they wanted to go up and vice versa. But when they really got going, oh boy! ---they developed about 3g in acceleration, forcing passengers to the floor on the way up and allowing them to float about on the way down. Astronaut training certificates were awarded at reception to those checking out.

Next year, at Easter, it's all going to happen at Brighton's Metro-pole Hotel.

Arrangements are progressing steadily for this great event. We've recently discovered that a previous incarnation of the Brum Group was founded 20 years ago this summer. Some present Brum Group members belonged to that group, too. We won't say who, because our chairman may not want you all to know his real age! We've collected quite a lot of material for the souvenir booklet, but more illustrations, photographs and information relating to the Brum Group and its various activities over the years will be welcome.

For those who haven't yet joined, remember it only costs you £2.00 to attend---which includes a copy of the souvenir booklet and a piece of birthday cake, plus a lot of entertainments of various kinds. Please make cheques payable to the Birmingham Science Fiction Group and send them to Pauline Morgan, 39 Hollybrow, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 4LX.

Thomas M Disch

an article by Pauline E.Morgan

Not from Yorcon II and his success in winning the BSFA short fiction award for "The Brave Little Toaster", Tom Disch came prepared to do battle with non-believers like Roger Peyton, who consider poetry a waste of time. To this end Tom began his talk to the Group by reading extracts from his poetry collection "ABCDEFGH IJKLMNOPQRST UVWXYZ", copies of which he had for sale. It contains such amusing offerings as "How to Behave When Dead" and "On the Disposal of My Body" which ends

....Burn it, or feed it

To lions at the zoo.

Or give it to some needy

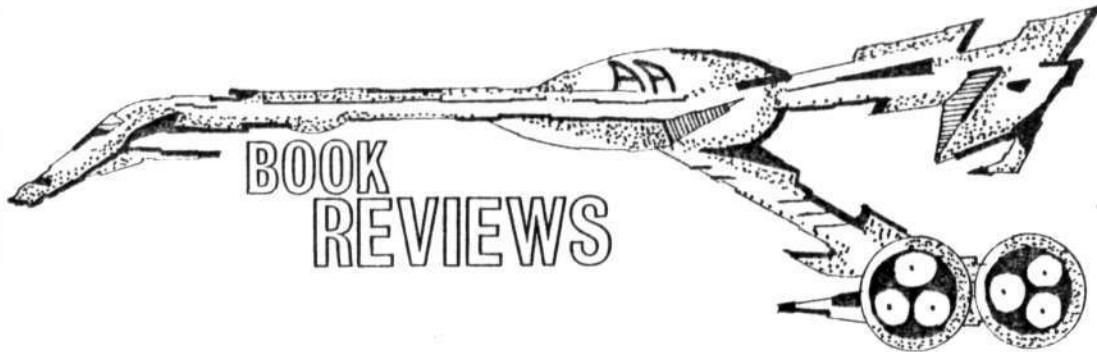
Necrophile: he'll know what to do.

Later he read to us a new (and highly amusing) short story.

Tom started his professional writing career in the early 1960's on the day he decided that he would do nothing else (like going to work) until he had written a publishable story. He did. It was not published immediately but he had faith in it. "The Double-Timer" appeared in 1962. Later, when he felt ready, he gave up gainful employment and took himself off to Mexico to write The Genocides (1965). He is not afraid to experiment, and his latest novel to be published in Britain, On Wings Of Song (paperback due out on May 14th from Magnum), was nominated for both the Hugo and Nebula awards and won the 1980 John W. Campbell Memorial Award.

His interests are many and varied. He has written the words for Act 2 of an opera, Frankenstein, and is at present wrestling with a love aria for Act 1. Tom was delighted to find an exhibition of William Morris designs at Birmingham's Art Gallery, as he has spent four years researching for a book on the set to which Morris belonged. He has been a judge for an American literary award - he wanted an excuse not to write for a few months. Also he has a strange attraction for furniture. This latter fact was discovered on Saturday night at Yorcon II during the hours after the fancy dress parade. All the chairs, tables and settees from outside the lifts on the lower seven floors found their way up to the eighth (accompanied by strains of "Lloyd George Knew My Father") to where Tom Disch lurked, leering satanically at those who wished to get out of the lift.

In the words of John Clute in The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction Tom Disch is "... perhaps the most respected, least trusted, most envied and least read of all modern sf writers of the first rank." If he continues to produce novels of the calibre of On Wings Of Song the numbers of people who read and enjoy his work will surely increase.



BOOK REVIEWS

MALAFRENA by Ursula K. LeGuin, Granada £1.50, 380 pages

Reviewed by Pauline E. Morgan.

The setting of Malafrena is Orsinia, the same imaginary Balkan State which featured in Orsinian Tales; the time is the 1820's, a period of political unrest in Europe. Orsinia lies under the yoke of Austria. Young Itale Sorde has ambitions to free it at the expense of his father's hopes for him. This is a beautifully written historical novel chronicling Sorde's gradual realisation, through editorship of his journal, imprisonment and revolution, of what freedom means for him, and that for each person it may be different. Malafrena grows on you the deeper into it you get, although right to the end I felt myself apart from the characters and their world, much in the same way an idealist, like Itale Sorde is aloof from the real problems and needs of the people his revolution is intended to free.

THE RINGWORLD ENGINEERS by Larry Niven, Futura/Orbit £1.50, 354 pages

Reviewed by Vernon Brown.

The long-awaited sequel to Ringworld, The Ringworld Engineers relates how Louis Wu, now a wirehead, and Speaker-to-animals, now true-named Chmee, are kidnapped by the deposed puppeteer leader Hindmost and taken back to the Ringworld to aid him in salvaging artifacts that will enable him to recover his position. On arrival they find the Ringworld has become unstable and will shortly fall into its sun; the rest of the novel is devoted to their attempts to save it. Well written and researched, the book however smacks to me of an updated Barsroom novel, as Louis and Chmee encounter humanoids of all sorts and cities of all descriptions in their travels, as well as escaping from a variety of peculiar situations. Still a must, though, for all Niven fans and everyone interested in non-terran technological constructs.

THE WIZARD OF OZ, 219 pages; THE LAND OF OZ, 265 pages; OZMA OF OZ, 246 pages, all by L. Frank Baum, Ballantine (distributed by Futura), 85 pence each

Reviewed by Vernon Brown.

Christmas television viewers will already be familiar with the story of The Wizard of Oz, as will Eastercon attendees, for a fannish version was enacted some years ago with Jim Blish in the title role. For the benefit of others, the novel relates how Dorothy, with her dog Toto, are whisked by a cyclone to the land of Oz, where she undergoes many adventures with her companions the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman and the Cowardly Lion before finding her way home. An entertaining and light-hearted tale for children of all ages, with illustrations to match. However, numbers 2 and 3 (and presumably the other dozen odd of the series) are obvious afterthoughts, grafted on to The Wizard of Oz in response to public demand. Clumsy in construction and illustration, to me they are not a patch on the first, although to be fair, this may be a matter of unfamiliarity breeding contempt.

THE PRIESTS OF PSI by Frank Herbert, Futura £1.35, 204 pages; THE JESUS INCIDENT by Frank Herbert & Bill Ransom, Futura £1.60, 405 pages
Reviewed by Pauline E. Morgan.

The Priests of Psi, in paperback here for the first time, is a collection of five of Herbert's earlier stories, none written later than 1970 but all standing up well to the test of time. All are subtle and thought-provoking with a great deal of implied complexity, just as one would expect from Herbert. In general there is a theme of achieving or keeping peace, with "Mindfield" and the title story both considering the problems of an enforced peace, though "The Priests of Psi" is perhaps spoilt by too much philosophising and not enough action---a fault in some of Herbert's earlier work. "Old Rambling House" is the odd story out and the weakest, being a little too brief and contrived for its intergalactic twist to succeed. On the whole a good collection.

The Jesus Incident is a reissue. In Destination: Void the cloned crew had the option of producing an artificial consciousness or perishing. The book ends with this new consciousness informing them "decide how you will worship Me". The Jesus Incident involves this consciousness, many generations later. The Shipmen have still not found the correct way to worship, many regarding Ship as God. They also have to contend with an extremely hostile planet which they have been brought to colonise. Destination: Void was very technical and philosophical; The Jesus Incident is easier to read. The philosophy is still present, but disguised in the twisting and turning of the plot it is not thrust down the reader's throat. The ecology of the planet Pandora compares well to that in Dune, and the book deserves the same kind of consideration. If anything the scope of The Jesus Incident is greater than in any of Herbert's previous work. Could this be Bill Ransom's influence?

THE SNOW QUEEN by Joan D. Vinge, Futura £1.95, 536 pages

Reviewed by Chris Morgan.

This is definitely the most hyped-up novel of 1980, and it may well win a Hugo. It includes much that is good and enjoyable, though a very close analysis reveals cracks and discrepancies. It's a space opera in the swords 'n sorcery mould, based loosely on the fairy tale of the same title. All except the most critical of readers will probably find themselves liking it; certainly it's not a difficult read despite its length. It contains some fine creations (aliens, societies and gadgets), and some of its secondary characters are excellent. I reviewed the hardcover in last September's newsletter. Recommended.

STELLAR 6 edited by Judy-Lynn Del Rey, Ballantine distributed by Futura £1.25, 182 pages

Reviewed by Margaret Thorpe.

There's a wide variation of quality in this anthology of eight stories and a poem. As expected, Anne McCaffrey's contribution is well told: its title, "Cinderella Switch", fits in neatly with the story of an interplanetary gatecrasher. One of the best stories is "The Cerebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras III" by Martha Dodson & Robert Forward, which has accurate biochemistry data as a background to an awful denouement. Also worthy of note is "A Gift of Space" by Margaret Hewitt, which examines the morality of one's career being decided on the basis of a computer health analysis. The remaining stories are either mediocre, as Simak's "Byte Your Tongue", or rambling, as in "The Slow Death Corridor" by Mark McGarry. On the whole a well balanced set of SF ideas; it's a pity the standard of writing isn't uniformly good.

INSEMINOID by Larry Miller, H.E.L. £1.25, 158 pages

Reviewed by Margaret Thorpe.

This must rate as one of the worst books of all time. The storyline is a close copy of Alien but lacks the suspense and horror of the original in favour of sensationalism and plain bad taste. The author's ignorance of basic biology would make even an 'A' level student cringe. Give it a miss.



A selection of
amazed reactions
to War in 2080
from passers-by
in Birmingham
this week.

WAR IN 2080 by David Langford, Sphere £1.50, 242 pages

Reviewed by Chris Morgan.

This is no boring text-book but a dazzling guided tour of increasingly more scientific ways of killing ever more people with less effort, written by one of SF's most amusing fan-writers. Killing people... amusing? Well, no, it must be admitted that the subject is not inherently funny, especially when the symptoms of acute radiation poisoning are described in ghastly detail (as on page 43), but if it were not for its leavening of wit and humorous asides this would be a most depressing book to read. Nor is David Langford just a fan-writer; he actually knows about nuclear weapons, planet-busting missiles and a variety of death-rays (and he has the scars to prove it). The book is complemented by illustrations, diagrams, SF cartoons and (to demonstrate its academic panderings) an index. Every home should have one. Buy it, buy it!

TALES OF KNOWN SPACE by Larry Niven, Futura £1.35, 238 pages

Reviewed by Chris Morgan.

May is a special SF month at Futura, with three good-looking titles appearing in UK paperback for the first time by Niven, Herbert and Vinge (all reviewed in this issue), plus several reissues, including a couple of Niven collections. Tales of Known Space is the better of those two, including some extremely good hard-science stories, such as "The Borderland of Sol". Even Niven's very first published story, "The Coldest Place", is worth reading. And there's a useful bibliography at the back. Recommended.

RETURN TO EARTH by H.M.Hoover, Methuen Children's Books £4.95, 160 pages

Reviewed by Margaret Thorpe.

Characterisation is the most striking aspect of this children's novel. Samara is the heroine struggling to come to terms with her role as International Director of a corporation after the assassination of her mother. Galen is a retiring planetary governor who helps her to an understanding of adult responsibilities. The young protagonist is clearly portrayed, but the older adult, so often a token figure in children's books, is also powerfully drawn, complementing and contrasting with Samara's youth. Recommended.

THE KEEPER OF THE ISIS LIGHT by Monica Hughes, Magnet 95 pence, 136pp;
THE GUARDIAN OF ISIS by Monica Hughes, Hamish Hamilton £5.95, 140 pages

Reviewed by Margaret Thorpe.

The Keeper of the Isis Light is a juvenile novel, beautifully written, with a clever final twist that is worthy of a wider readership. Olwen and her robot guardian are alone on Isis until a shipful of colonists arrives, and Olwen's peace and serenity are shattered by the intolerance of these newcomers. The author's handling of a sensitive issue makes it a memorable book. The high quality is sustained in the sequel, where the colonists have degenerated in a few years into a primitive, superstitious society because of one man's guilt and shame over his treatment of Olwen. Both are sensitively written, and their message of tolerance is cleverly handled.

BLACK EASTER / THE DAY AFTER JUDGEMENT by James Blish, Arrow £1.50, 209 pages

Reviewed by Chris Murphy.

Try some SF with a difference---the "science" is theology, and basic premise is that the ancient war between Good and Evil has reached an unexpected conclusion. Black Easter describes how a corrupt millionaire hires a magician to release forty-eight demons from Hell. The novel seems to end with no possibility of a sequel, but is followed by The Day After Judgement. This coldly playful satire deals with the end of the world and its perplexing consequences. Unlike many black magic stories, these minor classics (first published in 1968 and 1972, and now together in one volume for the first time) are aimed at the head rather than the stomach.

TRANSIT by Edmund Cooper, Coronet £1.10, 220 pages

Reviewed by Dave Packwood.

This is one of Cooper's less memorable novels. The idea is sound, if not wholly original. Four humans are abducted and made the subject of a Pavlovian experiment seventy light years from Earth. However, there is a rationale for everything that happens. The presentation is at fault here. The characters are too stereotyped and the novel is simplistic in style and very formulaic. Recommended only for devotees of Cooper.

A HOLE IN SPACE by Larry Niven, Futura £1.25, 196 pages

Reviewed by Malcolm Thorpe.

This reprint collection by one of SF's foremost gadgeteer contains an article on manufactured worlds, "Bigger Than Worlds", and a curious non-SF story, "\$16,940.00". The remaining stories are a mixture of future gadgetry, crime and aliens. Several adjacent stories involve displacement booths as part of the plot, with a full explanation being given each time. The best stories are an up-market version of Asimov's "The Billiard Ball" ("The Hole Man", which won a Hugo), and a story about a race of nomadic aliens who would send our sun nova unless a launching laser is constructed ("The Fourth Profession"). Though the stories are generally quite readable, more care should have been taken over their selection and arrangement.

DOWN TO A SUNLESS SEA by David Graham, Pan £1.50, 317 pages

Reviewed by Steve Green.

Armageddon novels are becoming uncomfortably close for comfort these days, and this airborne On the Beach is no exception. Author Graham has put his obvious background research to good use, and only the strained religious finale---a curious plot twist indeed for a self-styled atheist---seems out of tune with the novel's downbeat atmosphere. The world ends not with a bang but with a Shaggy God Story; yawn.

EDITORIAL NOTES

This issue has been slightly more rushed than normal because I've got a lot of work on at the moment. In fact, Pauline has done some of the typing for me. I'd like to thank Locus and Ansible for some of the news items. Also, thanks to all reviewers and artists. Artists this issue are: Ivor Latto (p.1), Phill Probert (pp.3 & 5) and Euan Smith (p.7). As I've got a few spare lines here I'll tell you about Cyrucon. It's a Welsh SF and fantasy convention being held at the Central Hotel, Cardiff on 14-15th November. Guest speakers are Ian Watson, Brian Stableford, Lionel Fanthorpe, Mike Ashley, and me. (They had to have me; none of the others have got names that sound Welsh enough.) Attending membership is £5. Cheques to Cyrucon 1981, 129 City Road, Cardiff CF2 3BP. This May 1981 issue has been produced by Chris (and Pauline) Morgan, 39 Hollybrow, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 4LX. Tel: (021) 476-0458.

ARENA SCIENCE FICTION



ARENA SF 7.

IAN WATSON. The Crudities of SF.

MARK ADLARD: Interviewed.

ANDY DARLINGTON. A review of the Interface trilogy by Adlard.



ARENA SCIENCE FICTION 8.

KURT VONNEGUT: Interviewed.

BRIAN STABLEFORD. Locked in the Slaughterhouse. An over-view on the work of Kurt Vonnegut.

RICHARD LUPOFF. A tour of the solar-system via SF.

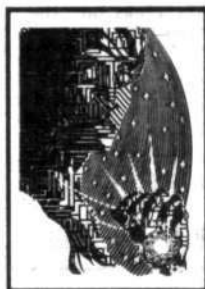
BACK ISSUES

ARENA SCIENCE FICTION 9.

GEORGE TURNER. Author of Beloved Son takes an extensive look at the Australian SF scene.

ROBERT HOLDSTOCK: Interview.

PAUL KINCAID. A critical review of Robert Holdstock's published SF novels.



ARENA SF 10.

BARRINGTON BAYLEY: Interviewed.

ANDY DARLINGTON. An extensive look at the work of Barry Bayley.

DAVID WINGROVE. A review of some of the recently published American SF.



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ARENA SCIENCE FICTION

Wilhelm In Boston

Brunner In Krakow

Watson In UFO'S!

ARENA SCIENCE FICTION 11

KATE WILHELM

is one of the most respected writers of the science fiction genre. At the 1980 World SF Convention, she was 'Joint Guest of Honour' with her husband, Damon Knight. Her major speech, The Uncertain Edge Of Reality, is published this issue.

JOHN BRUNNER

is, without doubt, still one of the most controversial figures of the British science fiction community. His novel, 'Stand on Zanzibar', is a landmark of sf. This issue we have an interview with the man himself, and publish his speech, The Conjugation of the Verb Tomorrow, given at Krakow.

IAN WATSON'S

recent novel, 'The Gardens of Delight', is reviewed by BRIAN STABLEFORD. Ian Watson's views are always dynamic if not esoteric! Ian's article, UFO's, Science and the Inexplicable, opens the door slightly to his soul and explains his views on the current scientific thinking concerning UFO's.

REVIEWS

BRIAN STABLEFORD, BARRINGTON J. BAYLEY, DAVID REDD, DAVE LANGFORD, AND GEOFF RIPPINGTON review some of the recently published science fiction.

ARTWORK

by ALAN HUNTER, RENZO SCIUTTO, TAIS TENG, PETE LYON.

ARENA SCIENCE FICTION IS EDITED AND PRODUCED BY GEOFF RIPPINGTON.

ARENA SF would like to acknowledge the support given by The South East Arts Association.

ARENA SCIENCE FICTION is an occasional journal (published three times a year) of opinion, information, and criticism of the science fiction field. Previous issues have featured articles and letters by George Hay, Robert Sheckley, David Wingrove, Andrew Stephenson, Peter Nicholls, Ian Watson, Mark Adlard, Mike Ashley, Mike Moorcock, Brian Stableford, Angus Taylor, Richard Lupoff, Arthur C. Clarke, Michael Bishop, Robert Silverberg, Fred Pohl, Chris Priest, Thomas M. Disch, Brian Aldiss and Elizabeth Lynn. A magazine not to be missed.

NORMAN SPINRAD. "The level of criticism in Arena SF and other British publications of the like are light-years beyond the stuff one sees in most American fanzines, including the 'academic fanzines.' "

GREGORY BENFORD. "Arena SF lives up to the grand tradition of intelligent U.K. science fiction criticism."