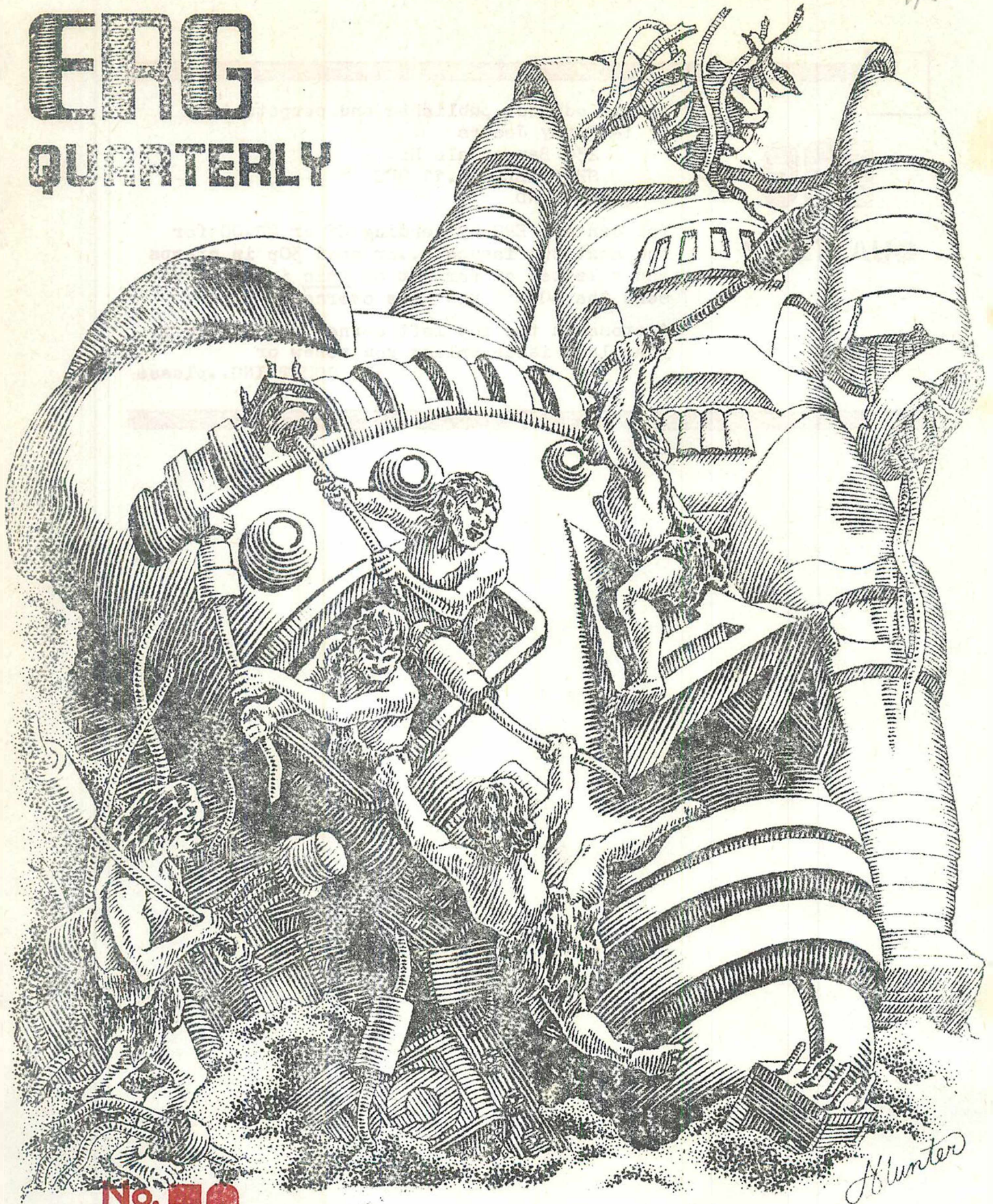


# ERG

## QUARTERLY

4/82



No. **78** APRIL 1982 23<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary Issue





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**ERG**

**QUARTERLY**

ERG is edited, published and perpetrated  
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SHEFFIELD S.11 9FE  
ENGLAND

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Greetings Ergbods,

3

Amazing how the years roll by. I slipped up in the last issue by saying this was ERG's 24th anniversary...since No.1 first appeared in April 1959, that makes this the 23rd ANNIVERSARY ISSUE. A rather long time even if the Book of Guinness has no section for such a record. Only two more years to the quarter century.

Just in case you hadn't noticed..postage has increased considerably since that first issue, with the latest rip-off coming in last February...so... Sorry chums, but if you don't subscribe or take action on this issue, I can't afford

to send you the next..so if a cross or query heads the inside front cover it means you tremble on the brink. Which brings up another point..where all you good kind people reading this can do me (and ERG) a favour. Unless you save your copies, when you have finished with each issue, would you pass it along to a friend (enemy if that's how you feel) and thus help to spread the news that ERG exists..Joe Nicholas did two recent comments on British fanzines in a Stateside zine..and never mentioned ERG. Like it or not, but ERG is surely part of the British fanpubbing scene. ERGo..let's make sure it doesn't get overlooked any more by passing along this issue after you read it..and if the one who gets it, again passes it along..and again..and again, well maybe we'll get heard of in that big fan Award cabin in the sky.

Scattered throughout this issue are some gentle hints that ERGTAPE 2 is now available (with 3 in preparation) A collection of bits and pieces from back issues of ERG and other sources..readings, music and strange noises. Send £2 for your C60 cassette and support ERG's cottage industry. ERGtape No.1 is also still available at the same price. Order now.

In previous issues I have waxed lyrical over my ZX81 microcomputer and the love affair still flourishes..with the latest program being in the sledgehammer to crack a nut variety. At Scrabble, I always get the scoring job..so I ran up a program to put the players names up on the TV and display the scores as we go along. Lazy crow, that's me. However..things change and my ambition knoweth no bounds, so I now have a BBC, Acorn 'Proton' Model 'B' on order..with 32K RAM, eight modes, umpteén colours and VERY high resolution graphics. Once I can afford a printer (probably for the ZX81) I'll hope to run off ERG's mailing list at the press of LPRINT RUN or whatever. I also have a little project under way to use the various displays for titling sequences in my animated films. Hoo boy!

TRADING ..I still want to lay my hands on pre-1935 issues of ASF and assorted US pulps (sf, air, pop. science etc) of the pre 1940 era. Can't offer cash..but CAN offer slightly superlative trade-in values for mint hardcovers and paperbacks...viz:- If you price your ASF at £4...I'll give you material from my list of greater value than £4. Drop me a line.

I'm thinking of re-running my series (from Lynn Hickman's 'Pulp Era' and ERG) titled 'DOWN MEMORY BANK LANE'..musings on my fannish memories. Any comments on that thought..pro or con? ????



CALLING ALL CALIFORNIANS..and those living nearby. Any chance of meeting you all this summer? Val and I will be in the Los Angeles area for nearly three weeks during August. Current itinerary is as follows..but by all means, drop us a line if you think we might meet up.

COSMOS TOUR August 1982 via Greyhound Coach  
 Aug.3 Dep. U.K. arr, Los Angeles. Night of Aug.3 Tuesday.  
 Aug.4 Wed. Tour inc., Hollywood stay night in Los Angeles  
 Aug.5 Thur Disneyland stay night in Palm Springs  
 Aug.6 Fri Colorado Valley to night stay in Phoenix  
 Aug.7 Sat Sedona, Oak Creek Canyon, Flagstaff, Grand Canyon  
 Aug.8 Sun Grand Canyon, Hoover Dam, Las Vegas Night in Las Vegas  
 Aug.8 Mon Day in Las Vegas  
 Aug.10 Tue. Sierra Mountains, Yosemite Nat. Park stay night here  
 Aug.11 Wed Day in Yosemite and night  
 Aug.12 Thur Lake Tahoe, Reno night in Reno  
 Aug.13 Fri Sacramento, San Francisco night in San Francisco  
 Aug.14 Sat San Francisco  
 Aug.15 Sun San Francisco  
 Aug.16 Mon. San Luis Obispo  
 Aug.17 Tue Santa Barbara to Los Angeles.  
 Aug.18 Wed Los Angeles  
 Aug.19 Thur Los Angeles  
 Aug.20 Fri Dep Los Angeles ..fly to Manchester.

XXXXXXXXXXXXX

Best nights for meeting people will be Los Angeles on the nights of Aug. 4th, and 17th 18th & 19th and Las Vegas, Aug. 8th & 9th. San Francisco on Aug. 13, 14 & 15. One catch is I don't know the hotel names...maybe the Cosmos rep in L.A. might be a help on this ??? Meanwhile, I'm hoping to catch up with all those people I had hoped to see in either 1979 or '78 and had to miss out on..Bruce Pelz, Torry Ackerman (whom I did meet in Boston) and a load of other nice folks in the L.A. area (Bob Bloch, do you read me?).

The CROSSWORD Puzzle in ERG.77 drew a complete zero in responses, so the prize of CIRQUE by Terry Carr remains unclaimed. Heck, and I had made that one much easier to give people a chance.

*Latest addition to the press room of the crumbling leaves mansion, is this new golf-ball typer...a Japanese 'Brother' plus 3 assorted type faces...Pica, Quadra and this Script Ball. It also boasts such refinements as automatic carriage return..which means I have to make sure I don't leave a cup of coffee standing within the danger area. I hope to use it more for other work, rather than for ERG, but it will no doubt be seen to creep in here and there for special purposes.*

A quick 'up to the light' check indicates that the stencil cutting isn't so hot...anyone who has experience on stencil-cutting with golf ball machines might care to advise ??? I used a plastic underlay and a reversed carbon...maybe if I just used nothing beneath it might do better.

Which is all for now...see some of you in L.A. in August, I hope.

Best, Terry





# UPON REFLECTION

by  
TERRY JEEVES

Domby Grork dodged the falling sword, scrabbled a handful of dirt from the dusty ground and heaved it full into the face of his unknown attacker. Momentarily blinded, the ambusher clawed at his eyes for a single, unguarded moment. That was all Grork needed. His own blade slid from its scabbard, flickered briefly and the assailant's sword twisted from its owner's grasp to go clattering away down the gloomy alley from which the attack had come.



Spluttering and rubbing at smarting eyes, the would-be killer suddenly became aware of Grork's sword point hovering at his throat. Its gentle, yet insistent urging backed him against the slime covered wall of the alley. Grork gave the man time to feel the first faint stirrings of hope before speaking.

"Now my friend, perhaps you may care to say why you offer me such an inhospitable welcome to your village?" The sword tip emphasised his words.

The villain's dirt-smearred face glistened in the flickering light from a nearby oil-wood torch spluttering in its wall-sconce. By the cut of the fellow's hair and clothing, Grork recognised him as a Krasnan; a breed noted for avarice and villainy. Runnels of sweat streaked their way through the grimy visage. Taking a deep, shuddering breath, the man gasped out,

"I planned to win the lost treasure of the hill. To get it, I must first satisfy the legend. When I heard your steps, it seemed Our Lady Krell came to my aid, but I was too hasty..." He broke off in terror as Domby Grork's blade pricked more urgently at his throat. "Sa7 more!" hissed Domby. "What is this treasure and a legend which demands my life?" The Krasnan's eyes roved wildly in search of aid. They found none among the flickering shadows and weird, moving mis-shapes of the night. His terrified gaze returned to Grork. "If I tell you, then will you set me free?" Domby Grork gave a cold smile. "Ay, that I will. Free as any man may hope to be. Come now, speak."

No longer trembling for his life, the Krasnan strove to ingratiate himself. "The treasure is said to lie somewhere on Castle Hill. In his lifetime, the mad Warlock, Nordred gained great wealth by means of his magic, his evil, and some do say, even in traffic with the Devil himself. He hid it well; when he died at the hands of outraged villagers, no trace of it was ever found." The man shuddered as the blade at his throat made itself known more intimately. A thin trickle of red inched its way down into the neck of his filthy garment.



"Come now, you joke with me," smiled Domby in a voice which held no trace of humour. "I saw that hill as I neared the village. It bears no castle!" "Not now," gasped his captive. "Mordred and his castle are long gone. The warlock dwelt in solitude for many centuries, using his black arts to live beyond the normal span of man. The villagers could see his castle on the hill and its reflection in the lake below. So long did both endure, that when Mordred's foul deeds finally drove the peasants to destroy both he and his castle, the image of its towers is said to remain hidden in the waters below. He who sees the vision of the castle must fear the vengeance of Mordred."

"A pretty tale", scoffed Grork, "but where does my death come into it?"

"Legend says that Mordred's riches may only be found by one who has slain another that very night," croaked the Krasnan. "I thought the tale but the muttering of old wives until after many nights searching about the hill, I did indeed discover a hidden chamber beneath the rubble. The place was empty, but I thought perhaps, if I fulfilled the legend...." His voice trailed away, but Grork knew that his own continued existence was due only to his having foiled the villain's ambush. A fraction slower and Domby Grork would have entered the long sleep, while his captive ran back to the hillside in search of riches. "This hidden chamber," he said. "How may one find it? Without that, how can one believe such a tale?" The Krasnan almost babbled in his haste to avoid the stinging blade. "Only one stone remains erect, beside it a flat rock. Push that aside and the entrance will be revealed. Now I have told you all, free me as was the promise."

"But certainly," chuckled Domby. "Free as any man may hope to be, that was my promise." He leaned upon his sword hilt, the blade pierced the Krasnan's throat. The man stiffened, blood spirted fiercely, then the body slumped to the ground.

"Free as all men who wish to shed life's cares and burdens," mused Domby. He stooped, wiped his blade on the man's cloak, then straightened. "Now, since I have fulfilled the condition of the legend, I may well find Mordred's hoard. Leaving the corpse where it had fallen, Grork plunged into the clinging doom which shrouded the alley.

The moon had risen by the time he reached the lakeside. By its pale light, Domby could see the ragged mound of stones upon the hill and their reflection in the black waters. Bending his steps to the rough path, Domby began to ascend.

The Krasnan had spoken true. Only one stone remained erect among the moss-coated rubble. Beside it rested a wide, flat slab of basalt. Throwing his weight upon it, Grork gave a mighty heave. Nothing happened. A second attempt met with no greater success. Cursing the dead man, he sank to the stone to rest. In the bright moonlight, a belt of crushed weeds was visible at his feet. Understanding dawned. Moving to the other side of the stone, Domby heaved in the opposite direction. He was rewarded by a movement of the slab. Slowly it swung aside to reveal a dark cavern below. Thin tendrils of mist curled up from the opening bringing a dank, decaying smell to Domby's nostrils.

Pulling up a handful of dry weeds, the adventurer struck steel to flint. By the light of the improvised torch he peered into the hole. A flight of steps vanished into the darkness. Treading carefully down them, Domby came to a large dungeon-like chamber. On its floor lay a few scattered tools and





and a large lantern still bearing a stub of candle. Domby lit it from the stub of his makeshift torch. The uncertain gleam cast threatening shadows on the walls, alternately creeping up on him, then leaping away again as he swung the light. Setting down the lantern on a strangely carved stone, Domby picked up a hammer from the heap of tools and began tapping his way around the mauldering walls.

It was a slow job, but eventually, his efforts brought a hollower echo from one area of the wall. A few stronger blows caused a whole section of the rough plaster work to collapse. Enraged the hole, Domby picked up the lantern and stepped over the rubble into another, smaller chamber. Before him stood a cobweb shrouded chest. Draped across it, a skeleton. Dust swirled around Domby as he stepped forward and kicked aside the bones. The smell of decay seemed even more oppressive. He swung the hammer, once, twice, and yet a third time. At the final blow, the shattered lock fell from the chest. A strange eerie squeal came from the rusted hinges as Domby heaved up the lid. From within, a foul stench swirled into the chamber. The lantern sputtered violently and went out..... but not before Domby had seen something scabrous and unthinkable stirring and swelling in the chest...

Grork gave one scream, turned, and half fell, half scrambled across the shattered masonry and up the steps into the moonlight. Before he could heave back the covering slab, a hideous something chittered on the stairway. That was enough! Leaving the opening gaping wide, Grork fled across the tumbled stones. Heedless of slashing brambles and bruising falls, he leaped and fought his way like a mad thing across ruts and boulders. Behind him followed a strange leathery flapping sound accompanied by the inhuman, high-pitched chittering screech he had heard on the stair.

Lungs bursting, Domby skirted the lake. Tripping over a hidden rock, he crashed to the ground. Scrambling to his feet again, he cast a quick glance behind. The hill top loomed high in the moon's weak rays.. and there, reflected in the waters of the lake, Domby caught a brief glimpse of a lofty castle. Tall and evil it loomed, towers, turrets, battlements of darkest ebony. Then the shimmering image shattered into a thousand sparkling fragments as something hideous crawled and flapped in the water.

Something black, noisome and not born of this world, rose whimpering from the pool. Ichor-dripping tentacles reached out and enfolded Domby...

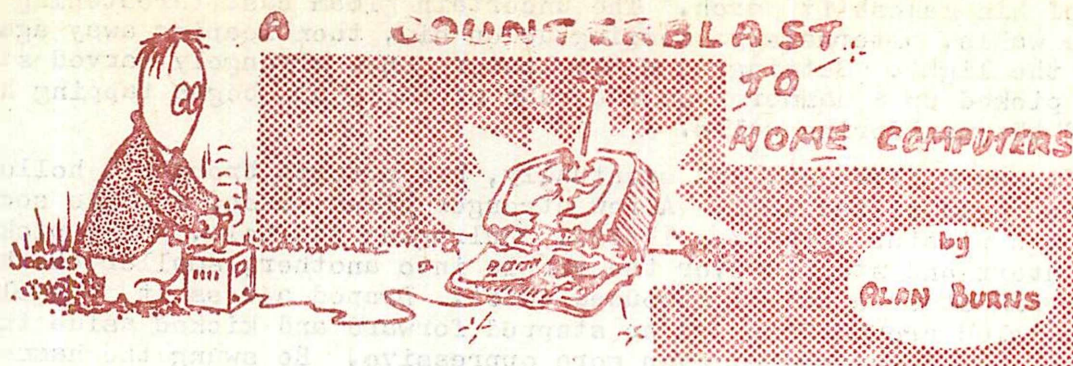
That was the last thing Domby Grork was to see. But, as the thing possessed him, his tortured body continued to scream its messages of agony along every disintegrating nerve.

The silent screaming continued for a long, long time.....

#### THE END

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The above short story was entered in the recent National Fantasy Fan Federation's annual short story contest. Sadly, although the judge did say some kind things about it, the yarn was unplaced. Never one to waste what may be of interest (or otherwise) to others, I include it here. Comments would be appreciated. Incidentally, many moons ago, I entered the NFF's very first contest with 'Mightier Than The Sword'..and had the pleasure of scooping the first prize. Then and now the comment was.."with effort should soon be selling professionally" Trouble is, I devote my efforts to so many other things...ERG among them. You pays your money..... T.J.





Let me begin by saying that I have no special thing against industrial computers. After all they keep postmen gainfully employed carrying the irate letters from customers who have been dealt with savagely by computers, or rather by the incompetent weirdos that go by the name of computer programmers. No, my thing is against home computers.

Now the object of a computer, its strength and weakness is that by its use a system can be established. I have yet to find a home wherein a system can be established with any reasonable chance of being kept to. If you just want a computer to play games on, such as guessing three random numbers, or locating the rooms that have bugs (yeuk) in them, then this can be done with a few bits of card that can be marked appropriately. When I was a child I had a game called bagatelle, which cost about 7/6d (36.6p precurring) It gave hours of innocent amusement, and the rattle of the balls was a much more pleasant sound than the bangs, whines and hisses from the space war machines, the purpose of which, I am certain, is merely to generate a most undesirable xenophobia, and if, when the aliens do land, space war games will be responsible for us getting Klaatu and his robot sidekick all up tight.

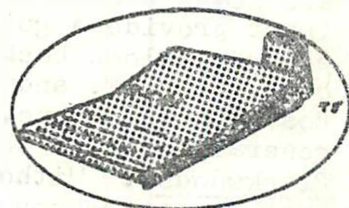
The other month I asked Terry what he was doing on his home computer. He said he was working out a programme to generate logs to the base ten, and then logs to the base e. Now I went and looked at my pocket calculator, ran round the room five times, consulted a venerable table of logs from my schooldays and finally decided that Jeeves was either out of his tiny mind or hadn't enough to do. I mean if you want a log you press two keys on my calculator and there you have it, without any involved routines, subroutines or goto.

Now another use suggested by those who sell home computers is that you can set up household accounts, and if you are a faned you can store lists of names and addresses. Now I can claim an expert knowledge of household accounts, having property that I let, and having to make returns thereon to the leeches of the Inland Revenue. I have a book, down one side I list rents collected and dates, down the other side I list outgoings with dates. When the form comes I do a rapid total, and to the outgoings I add profit by difference and copy the lot out in duplicate and send it off to the Income tax.



A home computer would be no better, in fact nothing like as quick. Then lists of addresses, I have an address book, with sections of pages listed A to Z. I can have the address I want by the time that you've gone and got the computer, asked the distaff side of the family if she minds missing Crossroads while you plug it in and get the address. That is unless you are filthy rich and have a desk to spare for a computer with its own screen, printer, floppy disc assembly and the rest. Here courtesy of Michael Banks I do have a faint praise for a home computer. If you are an author you can type over a whole page on a computer, check it for errors and then key in print to your 'smart' typer and get a nicely finished page all ready to bind up, ready for the next rejection slip to your collection.

This leads me on to the next complaint about home computers. If you are thinking small then the Sinclair is designed to monopolise the TV screen while you use it. The bigger ones occupy room. Though Sharp have brought out a hand-held instrument with printer and so forth that looks pretty nifty and can quite nicely be produced with a flourish from you executive brief-case.



I could delve into a pile of things that a home computer is supposed to do but isn't good at. Filing recipes. I can just imagine the distaff side of the family coupling up the machine, or sitting down at it with floury hands and looking up to see if its four grammes or four kilograpmmes of margarine. I have several cookery books in my collection with wipeable layflat backs, you open them up, put them down and work away. Further home computers can be difficult on their off days. I believe Terry has had trouble with a special programme for doing bank accounts presumably written by someone who counts on his fingers and still ends the year with a fat balance and a healthy interest.

So in general to sum up. If you are going in for a home computer sit down first with a piece of paper. On one side write down all the things you have to do now that you feel a home computer would make easier. Then go to your bookshop and invest a small sum in a book of instructions in the computer language your home computer that you have in mind uses. Read it carefully. Then out your hand on your heart and swear you understand what it's all about (LIAR!) Then talk it over with your spouse or girl-friend. Women are remarkably candid about the need to have a new piece of furniture or an engagement ring in preference to a lump of ugly hardware that does nothing but make a nuisance of itself round the house. Then when you've got all your tasks and opinions on one page then start listing on the other side whether or not the home computer can do them. Having dinner ready for you, not really. An affectionate cuddle, depends if the computers been running long enough to get warmed up. A computer is a bit lumpy in bed. A bank account? Get married and you won't have that to bother about for long. Household bills, the money a home computer will cost would pay a good part of the rates if you don't have a socialist council. So to round off I say simply this. It depends whether you like hardware in your home, or whether you like a happy wife or girl-friend, I'm doubtful if you can have both.



ERG 77 AND THE CASE OF  
THE DISAPPEARING S.F.

A Reply To Judith Buffery ..... by ....Robert Maxson

Judith Buffery points out that Astounding and the SF of H.G. Wells have never been granted 'Great' status, in terms of literary achievement. Surely she realises there is a reason for this? Granted the critics are never always correct in praising and damning any work of art, they at least provide a guideline (and now that a number of years have passed, it is easier to look back on these subjects). Astounding provided a much needed outlet for SF, and is generally conceded to be among the best of the pulps. Best, in this case, is not good enough (as they say). The truth is that the general level of the stories was not on a par with Dickens (or, probably, Blackwoods). Without Astounding we would not have the SF we do today, but that is not reason enough to raise it above the level it achieved. Similarly, H.G.Wells too often wallowed in didacticism (increasingly so in his later novels: Star Begotten, regardless of the blurb, has no interesting characters, has no action, and consists merely of discussions about the possibility of extraterrestrial life), ignoring the adventure of earlier, more successful novels, which still managed to convey a moral. H.G.Wells is another forerunner of today's SF, along with Verne, Shelley and, to a lesser extent, Poe, but his work never reached above the merely craftman-like. (Another qualifying statement must be inserted here: I enjoy all of Wells' work, from his early short stories - excellent examples of their genre - to later works such as the severely long and dense Shape Of Things To Come, which does not lessen my statements about his relative importance.)

If you want a book to sell, never label it as SF. Kurt Vonnegut has used this formula successfully, witness Slaughterhouse 5, which is, the author tells us, a non-SF work. The time travel and aliens are merely incidental. Obviously, there is a stigma attached to SF. Equally obviously, this derives from the days of pulp, when any SF was good enough to publish, and was aimed primarily at adolescent audiences. Compared to the worst of SF, Wells and Astounding are masterpieces. It is my experience that people do not want to read SF because they are not interested in the future, they are not interested in reading about spaceships and space-travel, (The Star Wars syndrome), they think it is weird.

Taken in turn, no matter how hard we try, the future is coming. At least SF attempts to define a workable system for surviving in it (equally, many other genres can do the same, by re-evaluating incidents such as history, personality interactions, etc, to define 'humanity'. This does not mean SF is any inferior, merely another aspect).

The Star Wars syndrome; this is the biggest stumbling-block, the fact that SF being produced today is of no better quality than the pulps. Of course, the special effects are excellent, but the story would not rate a mention in a N-dy book; and it is chiefly the film-makers who are to blame, where all the product is aimed at the lowest common denominator of mass appeal, but this still reflects on published SF. Also, unfortunately, some published SF is simply 'in it' for the money'.



SF is weird: very little can be done about this. People who think this should be left with their TV on, heavily sedated, and with no sudden noises. They will be perfectly happy about this.

As to cults, that is something else to be avoided. Star-Trek though Miss Buffery would have us believe otherwise, has indeed been commercialised! This explains the plethora of books/T-Shirts/movies, etc. (there would be little demand for a Star Trek Cookbook otherwise!) Again, this gives outsiders the impression that SF is for kiddies.

I must agree, however, that most of the important SF these days is published under the appellation, 'Children's'. Witness merely two authors: Alan Garner and Ursula Le Guin (in her Earthsea Trilogy) Notice that Ms. Le Guin has carefully avoided labelling Malafrena as a fantasy, and that it is a Romance? Compared with these works, adult SF has a hard time competing.

The solution to the problem lies in the fact that publishers ultimately, are 'in it for the money', also. They publish books that make money, (e.g. massive Heinlein books, Stephen Donaldson epics). SF fans should exact higher standards in their selection of reading and Award giving. This last is a major point: looking back at the Hugo and Nebula lists (sure fire selling points for novels) one sees much that is poor literature. The selection for the 1981 Hugoes was particularly poor.



Jeeves

Along with not only demanding higher standards, but practising them, I agree with Judith Buffery that we must 'come out' as it were. However, saying that SF is just as important as crime novels, and then displaying a Gor novel, is not going to do much good in the long run.

Thankfully, some evidence of higher standards is showing, with major journals and newspapers devoting a (small) part of their space to reviewing SF, and the increasing popularity of the genre. Lastly, one must always remember that for every Dickens/Aldiss, there are innumerable hack writers who will eventually be forgotten.

Robert Mapson, 40 Second Ave  
Kolmscott  
West Australia

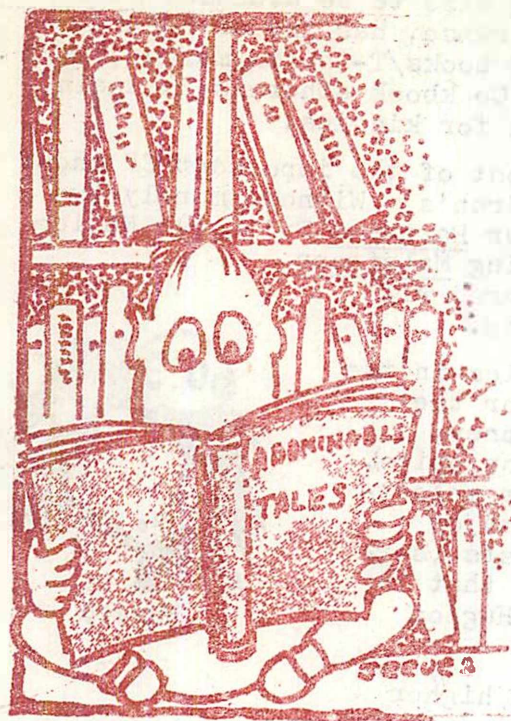
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Editor's addendum Roger raises some interesting points..but to me, there still remains the eternal question. By what standards do we assess whether or not a work of fiction..specifically, SF, is 'good'? Roger compares Dickens/Aldiss..yet much as I like Brian Aldiss the man..I do not place his stories on the same pedestal. There are two obvious methods of making an assessment....1. Critics ratings 2. Sales figures. Both are suspect as most of you would agree. One might cite Award polls..but not only has there been some suggestion of 'rigging' in this area..but in any case, for my own tastes, tales which win Awards seldom measure up to my own personal standards of good SF.

To my mind, there is only one method of selecting 'good' SF which has any chance of getting near the mark...the test of durability. Not infallible by a long chalk..but surely, any SF novel which keeps coming on the market twenty or thirty years after it was written, must have something going for it. Can anyone out there suggest a workable method of rating and selecting 'good' SF ????

Terry Jeeves

# THE F I C T I O N L I S T



Following the listing of my favourite books, quite a few people asked for a similar list of fiction. This proved a much tougher proposition, but eventually I was able to draw up a list of 12 books, and 12 shorter stories. No doubt as soon as I finish this typing, I shall remember stacks of yarns which I have missed out..Not to worry, this ought to be enough to give you an idea of the type of yarn I like..but remember, it is NOT a list of 'The Best Of SF', but a load of tales which have given me great pleasure over the years..and continue to do so.....

## THE BOOKS

UNDER PRESSURE..Frank Herbert, (also titled 'Dagon In The Sea' and '21st Century Sub' The submarine mission to steal oil from underwater fields.

THE LENSMAN SERIES..E.E.Smith..I'm cheating a bit on this one by grouping six titles into one...but despite modern softcore critics it is still an achievement and a great 'gosh wow' read.

SINISTER BARRIER.. E.F.Russell, the tale of the Vitons which preyed on humanity's suffering which appeared in the first issue of Unknown. COLOSSUS..D.F.Jones. The giant computer which assumes control of the Earth. There were two more stories in the series, but only this first one had the mark of greatness..and became a film. Next come two J.W.Campbell titles..THE MOON IS HELL, log of an ill-fated lunar expedition, and the fabulous WHO GOES THERE? tale of the alien found in the Antarctic and thawed out with frightening results. THE PUPPET MASTERS..by Robert A. Heinlein concerns the parasitic aliens who nearly take over Earth, and UNIVERSE by the same author which deals with mutation on a generation starship. The AGENT OF VEGA yarns of James H Schmitz on the Galactic super agent theme make up another favourite volume. Plenty of high-power Bondstuff of a far better calibre than the mediocre Retief. THE VOYAGE OF THE SPACE BEAGLE ..vanVogt is the collected and linked series of yarns from ASF, one of which..or maybe two (Discord in Scarlet and Black Destroyer) formed the basis for 'ALIEN'. Jack Williamson's yarn of robots killing by kindness,, WITH FOLDED HANDS comes next..I still enjoy their too literal interpretation of 'to guard and keep from harm'. To round off the list..Fred Brown's, THE MIND THING..the mind controlling alien making a bid for domination. That winds up the twelve 'one-story' books...I've deliberately omitted such goodies as THE ASTOUNDING and GALAXY anthologies and others...rating stories is hard enough..rating the pease pudding of anthologies, well nigh impossible. Just let's say that such volumes would most certainly be included in an ultimate, desert island package of 25 volumes.

So now for a dozen stories which were not long enough to make their own complete books...purists will notice that I don't include Asimov's celebrated 'Nightfall'. I rate this highly for first-reading impact, due



mainly to the impact of the final lines..but on re-reading, the characters and dialogue don't stand up that well. So herewith the yarns which still give me a kick when I re-read them. How many do you recall ?

HOBBYIST.. E.F.Russell. The space scout who finds a multi-species planet-wide museum..and its collector/creator. Also from Russell is the account of the battleship crew being whittled away by the MYOB/ob/FIW society which sprang from Gandhi's civil disobedience ideas..'..AND THEN THERE WERE NONE' Arthur C. Clarke is in my list with a couple of titles..THE NINE BILLION NAMES OF GOD, that incomparable yarn of the Tibetan monastery which hires a computer to list all the combinations..and thus end the world. RESCUE PARTY from ASF tells of the rescue crew arriving to evacuate Earth in advance of a Nova..and they find mankind has all ready set out to save himself. I still get a kick out of the discovery paragraph in that one. Damon Knight's neat twist in the tail, TO SERVE MAN account of the aliens who want to help us, and even have books on how 'To Serve Man'...but they are cookery books! Knight also supplies CABIN BOY..a comic/serious account of a not-quite space ship and its not quite normal crew when they meet..and nearly destroy a human spacecraft. Three from Theodore Sturgeon are, MICROCOSMIC GOD wherein an 'inventor' employs the microscopic Neoterics to build things for him by taking advantage of their accelerated time-scale. RULE OF THREE which sees three opposed humans united in one amorphous creature, and KILLDOZER where an alien force takes over the building gear of an airfield construction crew. Again, this finally made it to the big screen. CHILD'S PLAY by William Tenn concerns the midelivery, from the future, of a children's Bild-A-Man kit. The recipient experiments with unusual results. Going back into the mists of time, I'll include David H. Keller's horrific THE DOORBELL..wherein a now rich man avenges himself on those who 'did him wrong' by luring them to his home, then killing them by feeding them capsules containing metal fish hooks..and bedding them down in a room beneath a giant electromagnet wired to the bellpush. Finally, another HEINLEIN title..WALDO, the tale about the genius doomed to live weightless in a satellite environment because of a debilitating disease. Variouslly titled 'Genius In Orbit', this is where the atomic material handling devices got their name..via a superb ROGERS cover for a bed sheet sized Astounding.

There you have my current list..but of course, there are such yarns as Kornbluth's LITTLE BLACK BAG, Wells, THE STOLEN BODY; Budrys, Rogue Moon, and a host of others. Observant readers will no doubt notice that almost every yarn comes from the pre-1950 era. The answer is simple..they don't write stories like that any more. Somewhere along the way, editors and authors got kidded into ..sf must have a social message and get listed in the 'real literature' files. Maybe so..but for my money, I read the stuff for entertainment...and I find more of that by digging into the old files. When I pick up a tale which talks of 'salespersons' instead of salesmen or saleswomen, I know the author has something to say..which doesn't interest me at all. Look folks, when I want educating, I buy a text book..when I want entertainment I turn to science-FICTION. Since when did fiction have to reflect the real world except as a background to the antics of the characters? O.K., so that's an oversimplification..but you get the idea.

To generalise, much too much of modern SF is bland. No crises, no adventure or reader involvement. Instead, we get only part of a story, often posing an 'insoluble problem'..fading out without solving the thing. The cant is that this leaves the reader to use his imagination. Heck, that's what I pay my money for the writer to do for me. Otherwise one could have a hell of a time picking ideas out of words chosen from the dictionary.

Me, I like a real story.....which you'll find in the lists above.

All being well, the Shuttle is due to make its third flight into orbit in March 1982. Crew members will be Jack R. Lousma, Marine Corps colonel and veteran of Skylab 3; and Charles G. Fullerton, an Air Force colonel one of the test



fliers for the 1977 Approach and Landing Tests of the Enterprise. Backup crew will be, Thomas R. Mattingly and Henry W. Hartsfield Jr.

THE JAPANESE NEWSPAPER, 'Asahi Shimbun' has signed for a Shuttle, 'Get Away Special' for the purpose of conducting an experiment to make artificial snow crystals in weightlessness. The experiment was chosen from 17,000 reader's suggestions, and could have importance in crystallography and the growth of semiconductor crystals.

A NEW ENGINE CONCEPT being funded by NASA is investigating the possibility of designing an engine which drive a lifting rotor for take-off, then shift to a turbofan mode for flight at speeds not normally achieved by helicopters. Lift during horizontal flight will be achieved by locking the rotors and using them as a fixed wing..no word of how the aerofoil problem will be solved. The powerplant selected for experimental modification is the TF-34 turbofan from General Electric. Latest news is that the test machine not only achieved 346 mph (faster than the first Spitfires and Hurricanes) but flew twice as far as a standard helicopter on the same amount of fuel..how does that grab the NASA-knocking freaks ?

NASA's 23 year old history records only five 'perfect' launch years. 1981 was the newest..with two Shuttle launches and 11 satellite launches covering weather, comsats, and Sun-Earth energy studies.

SHUTTLE 2, despite its curtailed flight caused by a defective energy cell, still achieved some 90% of its mission objectives. The Remote Manipulator worked well, as did re-entry protection...and work has begun on a new solid rocket booster, the SRB-X capable of boosting a 65,000 lb payload into low orbit, or 12,000 lb into synchronous orbit. Those solar power stations may be on the way.

ENERGY FREAKS please note. The Energy Efficient Program demonstrated performance goals in various engine components, with the technology developed providing fuel savings in advanced turbine-driven fan engines of up to 20% over today's most efficient engines.

NASA'S QUIET, SHORT-HAUL Aircraft demonstrating advanced techniques aimed at solutions to airport congestion and noise problems completed a flight evaluation series in 1981. Engine exhaust is directed over the wings to increase lift, thus permitting quieter take-offs and landings from short runways of smaller, closer to city, airports.

TEST OF THE FIRST Stirling engine demonstrated efficiencies equal to auto diesel engines and with emissions less than research goals.

THE FIRST EXPERIMENTAL AC ELECTRIC VEHICLE propulsion system tests showed an overall efficiency of 82%, equalling dc systems and both systems hold promise for improved performance and lower initial cost of an electric car.

THE FIRST SPACELAN MISSION is currently scheduled for September 1983 and the SPACE TELESCOPE, a joint project with the European Space Agency is due to be launched on the Space Shuttle in 1985.



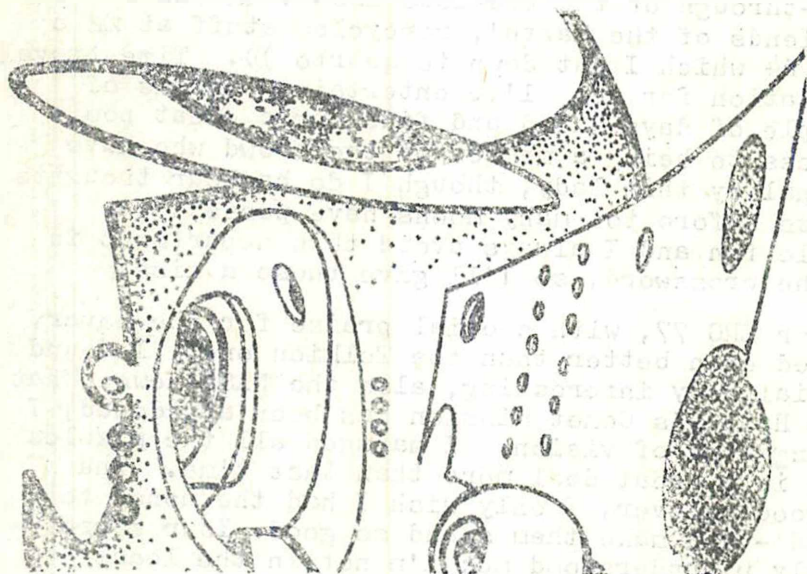
THE EXPLORATION OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM continued with the successful Saturn encounter by Voyager 2 in Aug. 1981. This provided information on the ring structure comparable in detail to a street map. The rings consist of at least three distinct bands with the various Saturn moons, debris and the mass of Saturn itself, probably imprinting a harmonic wave-like feature representing gravitational influences among the various bodies. Ring thickness is considerably less than that of a football field. Voyager 2 is now going on to pass Uranus in Jan. 1986.

PIONEER 6, 15 years after its launch, continues to return interplanetary and solar science information. This is the longest interplanetary mission achieved....Pioneers 6 through 11 continue to function well. Pioneer 10 is now 25,000,000,000 miles from the Sun and the Pioneer Venus mission continues to produce scientific results showing that the planet has two alternate cloud states which change over a period of years from a jet-stream pattern to a cloud and wind pattern which acts like a single air mass body.

THE HIGH ENERGY OBSERVATORY PROGRAM ended in 1981 when the two satellites (HEA-2 and HEA-3) both exhausted their control gas. Between them, they had amassed an enormous amount of X-ray astronomical data..including the possibility of a black hole at the x-ray source Cygnus X-1

AN IMAGE PROCESSOR for robotic vision was demonstrated at JPL. It can visually track objects at a 15 video frames/sec rate and is a step towards control oriented computer vision system development for space robotics.

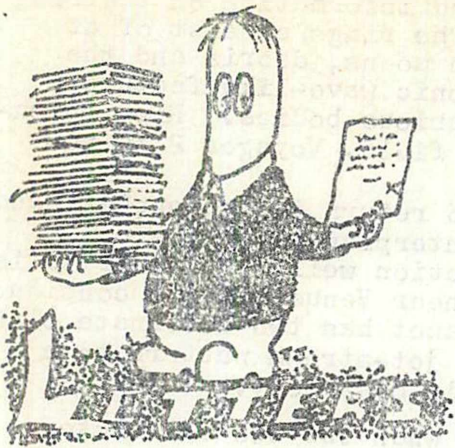
A MOBILE WORK STATION concept from which space-suited astronauts could assemble large space structures was developed and tested under simulated space conditions. It is designed for operations attached to the Space Shuttle, or as a free flyer. Astronauts would be attached to the station by foot restraints, thus freeing their hands for assembly tasks.



CONCEPTS FOR SPACE ASSEMBLY without tools using light weight composite columns and specialised joints were developed. Assembly of a 30 element structure in both a 1g lab environment and a neutral buoyancy tank has shown the concepts to be practical.

A COMPUTER PROGRAM for automatically scheduling spacecraft action sequences was developed at JPL. It combines artificial intelligence technology with other techniques. It was recently demonstrated on a Voyager type simulation spanning a six hour period involving spacecraft actions and events. (((Getting near, "He dialled a Venus course into the computer and pressed the button....." )))

All information extracted from NASA News.



We open the batting this time with a letter from:-

JOHN D. OWEN 4 Highfield Close  
Newport Pagnell  
Bucks

That lady Judith Buffery steals the show again with an interesting piece of speculation that chills me to the bone - blockbusters may have their place, but I'm sure it's not in SF. Fantasy yes, as Stephen Donaldson showed - but all the 'blockbuster' novels I can think of in SF, the later Heinleins for example, have been pretty dire. The essence of writing SF is finding the precise length at which a particular idea works. Too many authors stretch a flimsy story over three volumes, or cram a

complex piece of plotting into a novella. The best books are those that find the right balance between length and plot that satisfies the reader. It is possible to come up with books (and series of Books) that have a wide appeal - you can probably count both Zimmer Bradley and McCaffrey as authors who have successfully produced widely acceptable works & without resorting to dastardly formulas for success that assure a writer the work will end up in a remainder bin after six months. (((Does 'widely acceptable' equate with good? Personally, I find Zimmer Bradley unreadable..and surely the McCaffrey Dragondross is heavily 'formula'???)))

PETER SINGLETON  
Ruskin Ward

Park Lane Special Hosp.  
Maghull  
Liverpool L31 1 HW

I'm glad you managed to find a new and opaque cover stock in sharp contrast to the annoying see-through of the previous issue. ((( 'Twas from 'Friends of the Earth', repcycled stuff at £2 a lb. A4 which I cut down to quarto )))

Time travel has always held a great fascination for me. I've entertained dreams of ripping into the future a couple of days ahead and fiddling a great pools win! Judith Buffery: I confess to being a member of the crowd who have never read anything professional by this lady, though I do harbour thoughts of correcting my singular lapse before too many moons have passed. Unfortunately, I'm not a puzzle fan and I always avoid this department in Omni, and the same goes for the crossword, so I'll give those a miss.

JUDITH BUFFERY  
16 Southam Rd.,  
Hall Green  
Birmingham

Thank you for ERG 77, with special praise for the cover, which I liked even better than the Tolkien one. I found the Ergitorial very interesting, also the NASA News. What a shame the Halley's Comet mission has been abandoned, I can't understand such appalling lack of vision. I managed all the puzzles and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the crossword, which is a great deal more than last time. The letters and reviews were as good as ever, I only wish I had the money to buy those books I haven't read - you make them sound so good. Your correspondent, Richard Allen obviously misunderstood me: I'm not in the least ashamed of writing, it's just that in my heart I hanker after the ancient Oral tradition of story telling. This is probably because I like the sound of my own voice, or it could be the result of a grounding in English Literature and Anglo-Saxon poetry.

ERG TAPE No.2 is now ready (and ERG TAPE No.1 is still available) both cost £2.00 or \$4.00 and are packed with a variety of readings, plays etc, from various sources including ERG.1 Orders to the ERGitorial address. Cash with order, please. Meanwhile, ERGtape 3 is in preparation.



JEAN WEBER

13 Mtall St., Thanks for sending ERG 75 & 76. I did enjoy the 'Afterthoughts'  
O'Connor on your U.S. trip. Turning to the computer articles, I found  
ACT 2601 them more comprehensible than some I've read in fmz. As the  
AUSTRALIA editor of a computer magazine myself, I know how difficult it  
can be to trace the line between boring those who already know what  
you're talking about, and confusing those who don't. Sorry, I don't do  
crossword puzzles. Your reading tastes differ from mine; I prefer the  
'sociological relationships' (spftcore) SF. Glad to see someone else who  
didn't like 'On Wings Of Song', though. I'm enjoying reading the few British  
zines coming in now, yours included, though the personal bits lose me complet-  
ely as I recognise none of the names. No wonder neos feel left out. Nothing  
one can do about it of course. Eventually it all starts to make some sort of  
pattern. ((( True, we all start out as neos..and it is a hard row to hoe. I  
have occasionally suggested a 'buddy' system at cons to help out this way...  
but I now find that nowadays, when I get to a con, 99.9% of the faces are  
new to me, and I feel like a neo all over again. Sad isn't it?)))

Richard J. Faulder

C/o Yanco Agric. Research Stn.  
Yanco

NSW 2703 AUSTRALIA

Perhaps I shouldn't say this,  
but I skipped your article on the  
ZX81. Something as limited as the ZX81 is not really  
suitable for me. It could probably do the number  
crunching I require, but a calculator could do the  
job just as well..it couldn't do a word processor  
imitation (((Actually, extended memory and programs  
are on offer to allow just that..plus proper  
keyboards..but I've ordered the new 32K Proton)))  
Did you have the last page of 'Stupidman' in mind when  
you started the strip..I found it rather a comedown  
after the whimsy of the first 3 pages. ((( Right mate..  
I couldn't think of another ending to fit into 4 pages)))  
One can't name the same predictions for the microchip Era  
as for the Industrial Revolution..the latter was creating  
a new range of products, was still fairly labour intensive  
and soaked up large numbers of the populao. With robots building  
robots, the only jobs are for people who design robots. ((( Yes..but jobs are  
not a necessity. The key is energy..if we can harness fusion or solar power,  
most people could have a token 'two hour a week' 'job' if leisure and other  
activities were arranged properly...and the more robots, the more robot  
repairmen will be needed..for many a long year, yet)))

ERIC MAYER

4771 Ridge Rd. E.

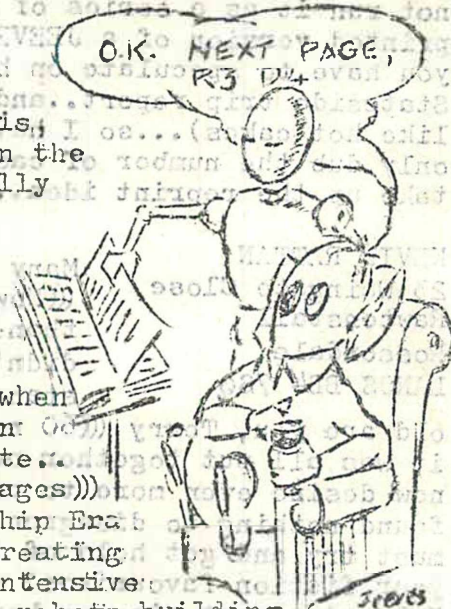
Rochester

N.Y. 14622

I very much liked your cover this time. What I especially  
liked was the underground, yet still outer-space-like  
setting. The magical lights which resembled stars of clusters.  
I seem stuck in the rut of always sticking a moon or something  
round in my covers for compositional purposes but I never thought of doing it  
in this more orogonal manner. (I've noticed some people, like yourself, don't  
seem specially obsessed with moons in their drawings. I wonder, if I put  
enough into GROGKY covers can I convert it from a cliché to a trademark.?)  
(((Only if you get the official ERGonic conversion kit..price 2½p)))

ERGTAPE 2

Yet another advert informing you of this melange of readings, and  
other strange esoterica..such as ~~James~~ Jeeves Comes Home is now available  
on cassette for £2 (ERGTAPE 1 also still available at £2.00..order now)





IAN GOFFIN

19 EDGEHILL Cresc  
FOXHILL  
SHEFFIELD S6 1FG

NASA News. I'd like to shove this down my friend's & families' throat. Always whining about how much the space programmes are costing when there's so much strife around us. They can only see one side of the argument, not realising how many people have benefitted from space technology, how many lives have been saved and made more bearable..not to mention the fact that the transistors swigning from their wrists have sprung from the very thing they are complaining about. (((Which is why I try to select as many down-to-Earth NASA research items as possible))) Basic Reading was a good idea, when I buy a science book, it is usually on a hit or miss basis. With my luck, I usually buy something thirty years out of date, written by a schizophrenic. I don't suppose you are planning an article of the same kind, but with fiction books in mind?? ((( Surprise, surprise...see 'THE FICTION LIST' elsewhere in this issue.))) Just remembered, what happened to the fannish omnibus? I was looking forward to it. If you have dropped the idea, why not run it as a series of articles in ERG. (((Good idea..I keep shelving the printed version of a JEEVES OMNIBUS..as so few people buy such things, and you have to speculate on how many to run...I still have unsold copies of my Stateside trip report..and of Checklist to Astounding, Part.3 (1 and 2 went like hot cakes)...so I have been making the ERGTAPES instead..that way, I only dub the number of cassettes required as orders come in. However..I'll take up the reprint idea..as and when space permits)))

KEVIN RATTAN

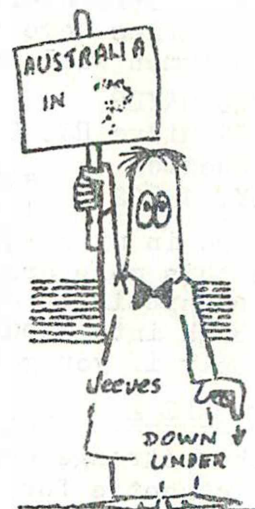
23 Waingate Close  
Rawtenstall  
Rossendale  
LANCS BB4 7SQ

Many thanks for the latest ERG and my FIRST PRINTED LOC. (((Now you've got another))) I found the issue better than the previous ones, there were no articles which didn't interest me...Production was up to the usual standard, but then you've had a lot of practice. How old are you, Terry (((60 next October))) Ergitorial, well worth the reading, it was all put together neatly and informatively. 'Where Is SF Going?' I now desire even more to read something of hers. I really enjoyed this and found nothing to disagree with..also liked the cartoon. 'Basic Reading' I must try and get hold of the 'Collapsing Universe'. Can we look forward to your fiction favourites? ((( See this issue))) NASA NEWS, sad to hear of the Halley's comet mission being axed. There are some European missions being planned aren't there. (((Spacelab in conjunction with NASA for one..as for others, pity, but unlike NASA, they don't send me full details of what's going on.)))

WILLIAM BAINS

182 Sedgemoor Rd  
Coventry CV3 4DZ

Your editorial on time was entertaining. Time travel in SF is usually introduced so casually that it just gets up my nose. Over every time travel looms the Grandfather paradox, and unless you invent an infinite number of parallel universes, the problems with causality mess up the whole thing. The sophistication you speak of in 'Time Warps' or 'gates' is purely linguistic. Any t.t. story that does not offer an answer to the Grandfather paradox is either a piece of light fantasy, or is rubbish. Answers do exist. The primary one is the abandonment of the Graeco-Roman tradition of causality. Unfortunately, this theory is so central to all our science and philosophy that any writer throwing out causality is writing in another language. ((( H'm yes..I think. How about G-anda killing being merely like erasure of one letter or word from a printed page...the rest stays as it was?)))





PONG 25(1st annish !!) 34pp Qto, mimeo from Ted White, 1014 N. Tuckahoe St., Falls Church VA 22046, USA LOCs, Trade, money. Boasts a Photocover, articles (Steffan on art, White on fanzine presentation, etc etc) loads of letters. Once again, old curse-everything writes on Britzines and omits (again) ERG which like it or not..has been a regular Britzine for 23 YEARS. Pong is profusely and excellently illoed, and apart from thingy, it comes over as a friendly zine.

THIS HOUSE 12. 30pp 1/4to. John A. Purcell, 3381 Summit Ave. So. St.Louis Park. MN 55426 Very cleanly produced and payed out affset, with plenty of excellent illos. Editor on being a sunflower seed addict, plus a cross-country trip, Midwestcon report, Fmz notes, letters and some good film and book reviews..

though one of the latter on Dorsai had some fascinating spelling errors. Available for \$ or the usual..or in UK, from Al Fitzpatrick, 38 Northfield, Barlby Selby, North Yorkshire, YO8 7JS Nice, neat and unpretentious.

NEW CANADIAN FANDOM 30 very neatly duped and well illoed pages. 5 issues for \$4.00 USA or Canadian, from Box 4655, P.S.S.E, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6E 5G5. Contains news, con reps, fan history, reviews, letters etc. plus an informative piece on SF/Canadian libraries and preservation of fanzines. One sample copy free on request..so how can you lose?

GROGGY TALES 14. 20pp from Eric Y Kathy Mayer, 1771 Ridge Rd.East. Rochester, N.Y.14622..and I won't tell you exactly how to get it as you wouldn't believe me. Dittoed..which means rather faint to read..but what Eric does with his cover and coloured illos has to be seen to be believed. A friendly perzine with a Dave Rowe wedding report, lovely lettercol and entertaining anecdotes on the Italian neighbour. This one has no pretensions to be Analog in a disguise, but just sets to be pleasant..and manages it very well.

oooooooooooo

LETTERS

Contd.

oooooooooooo

I just couldn't resist squeezing in this late arrival from ROBERT BLOCH ...because I hope I can meet up with you Los Angeles next August. California

"What a pleasure to receive ERG 72 ((flattery yet!))) ..and not the least of my enjoyment is derived from the knowledge that you've managed almost a quarter of a century of exceptional output. As I mentioned the other day, the senescence of British fandom is a gratifying phenomenon: within the past month, I've heard from Chuck Harris and John Berry, and even though Scottishe is no more, I suspect (and hope) that we've not heard the last from that little sex object, Ethel Lindsay, bless her. (((t'ain't all..Eric Bentcliffe is working on a grand old-timers reunion issue fanzine..with Ving Clarke, Harry Turner etc))). Do English fans really look the way they're pictured in your artwork? ((Absolutely))) I note Judith Buffery's remarks about fans at conventions who are described by the media as 'Computer programmers who get together every year, with false points on their ears'. This may be true in England, but over here, most of the programmers I've seen actually do have pointed ears...and heads. ((Well, I suppose it would be pointless if they didn't...ouch))) Hopefully, you'll have a chance to find this out for yourself, (((Yep, in August))) As for me, I'm limiting myself to three conventions a year in order to devote most of my time and effort to a rather lengthy book. (( And that is very good news)))

END..Letters.







Messrs. SIDGWICK & JACKSON open the batting with four more, 500+ page block-busting SF SPECIALS priced at £8.95 each. For newcomers, these are mammoth volumes holding two or three larger volumes within one cover.

S.F.SPECIAL 40 Three Chelsea Quinn Yarbro titles:- FALSE DAWN wherein Thea and Evan Montague set out to cross an America devastated and radiation-ridden by atomic war. They encounter villainy, rape, sadism and all the usual troubles of this genre. TIME OF THE FOURTH HORSEMAN has Dr. Ledbrau sacked when she uncovers an official plan to use controlled epidemics to reduce overpopulation. Setting up her own hospital, she encounters mob-rule, and more rape and villainy. CAUTIONARY TALES contains 13 yarns of speculative fiction...a sadistic alien, a writing machine, a teenybopper ghoul, mutants, demons, monsters etc., No hardcore, but an entertaining mixture..and not only well-written but far less of the 'downbeat' than the other two parts of the volume. Of course, if you like that theme..this is terrific stuff.

S.F.SPECIAL 41 Two titles by Charles Sheffield. SIGHT OF PROTEUS sees 22nd. Century Earth overpopulated and undernourished. Against this background we follow a trail of illegal experiments in 'shape changing' to a denouement far outstripping the original 'crime'. Excellent hardcore. WEB BETWEEN THE WORLDS has engineer Merlin building a 'bridge' up to synchronous orbit plus several well-integrated side issue - an intelligent squid, Sycorax a giant computer and others. A basic idea similar to Clarke's 'Fountains Of Paradise' but with more sustained interest, suspense and a neat 'sting' in the tail. Both are gripping, not-to-be-put-dpwn tales making a highly recommended book.

S.F.SPECIAL 42 TITAN (John Varley) This ex-Analog serial tells of Cirocco Jones and her crew as they investigate a giant alien satellite orbiting Saturn. They endure a hazardous trek across its surface before a final confrontation with a 'God'. Full of twists and cliff-hanging, plus the original Freff artwork. TIN WOODMAN (Dennis R.Bailey & David F.Bischoff), also involves investigating an alien artifact.. a spacecraft. Div Harthor, a telepath makes the contact, but his mission commander develops a paranoiac hatred for telepaths..and the alien craft. A compulsive read as it follows the emotions and actions of its characters. A very 'gud-uh'..If you like hardcore and can only afford one of these volumes, then I'd suggest that you latch on to this one instead of wasting it on a month's supply of newspapers.



S.F.SPECIAL 43

PEBBLE IN THE SKY (Isaac Asimov) was written in 1950. It opens with a Van Vogtian intricacy as it unfolds the tale of a 20th. Cent. man cast into the far future of 'Foundation'. He is immediately enmeshed in a revolt by Earth against the Empire, plus acquiring mental enhancement by use of a 'Synapsifier'. Asimov was still having character trouble with this one (his two main protagonists are ringers for other characters of his) but otherwise it is a richly involved tale of Galactic intrigue. THE SCIENCE FICTION SOLAR SYSTEM (Asimov, Greenberg and Waugh) holds 12 tales each linked with a planet, Sun, asteroid or comet. A scintillating collection boasting such names as Anderson, Asimov, Blish, Clarke, Sheckley etc. I'd rate the whole volume as a very close second to No.42. with No.41 right on their tails. No.40 trails the field..for me..because I just don't like post-A-war, misery laced with sex and sadism. Otherwise, at the price, these SPECIALS represent very good value indeed..and they look good on the bookshelves!

Beginner's Guide To ELECTRONICS

Owen Bishop £3.60 my teeth on the Admiralty Handbook of Wireless  
Newnes Technical Books Telegraphy and humped VT-31s around Bombay transmitting station. This books sets out to explain that progress to layman or student..and succeeds admirably. Opening with basic electricity, AC/DC and standard components, the layman's-language text flows smoothly through solid state devices, integrated circuits, logic arrays and computers. There are chapters on TV, recording, medical and industrial uses all in a virtually non-mathematical format well clarified by a profusion of diagrams and sketches. I was amazed at the scope and depth of the coverage which gave me an excellent refresher course. Ideal for authors wanting enough electronics background for integration into their stories, the book is well-indexed, a mine of information, and one of the best books I have ever come across. What Asimov does for science, Owen has done for electronics!

THE UNBORN

Dr. Bryson's sleep research is moving smoothly until the newly-pregnant Samantha joins his program and her body responses are Pan £1.50 fed to the giant computer, MEDIC. Operating on a free-association program, the computer detects and establishes communication with the girl's fetus. The unborn child acquires knowledge, then control as events move to a frightening crescendo. Highly believable characters, good dialogue and convincing situations (with plenty of explicit sex) make this one of the most gripping human/computer interaction yarns since Colossus. It is simply crying out, (a) to become a film..or/and (b) for a sequel. I hope we get both.

THE MANY COLOURED LAND

A small group of 22nd Cent. misfits take the one-way Julian May trip to the Pliocene Age where each member hopes to carve out a new life. Instead, they find themselves slave/servants and brood mares for the alien Tanu who are opposed by their alter-species, the illusion-making Firulag. Title and cover painting put me off this as being another 'cave-man epic'...tain't so. Instead, I found myself drawn into an enthralling, multi-level yarn with a superb and dextrously handled bunch of characters, all neatly juggled to keep the well-seasoned pot boiling with interest. A great, even epic yarn. My only complaint being that I shall have a long wait for successive parts of the trilogy.

The jacket says..'will eventually rival 'Lord Of The Rings' or 'Foundation' trilogys....I reckon for once a jacket blurb has got it right.

WANTED IN TRADE...pre-1935 ASF, or any magazine of SF, Aviation, Popular Mechanics etc., of that period. Set your own price and drop a line to the editorial address. B.T.J

THE LAST CONTINENT

The 22nd. Century, 'Black Uprising' devastates Earth, Edmund Cooper destroys the Moon and leaves the last blacks as struggling  
Coronet £1.25 Martian colonists. 2,000 years later, they return to an Earth ravaged by cosmic radiation. The politically-ridden blacks encounter the surviving white savages in the now tropical Antarctica...and the political faction pushes for genocide. The stereotyped characters of noble savage, political commissar and understanding woman scientist make this a pleasant but rather run-of-the-mill story.

THE UNCERTAIN MIDNIGHT

Trapped in a deep-freeze vault during a nuclear Edmund Cooper attack, John Markham is resurrected 146 years later into  
Coronet £1.25 a London (world?) where androids do all the work and humans live a life of leisure. Markham becomes a focus for a revolt against the androids who are gradually brain-washing and pacifying humanity. A black and white treatment of an improbable situation...and making no mention of how widespread the android rule has become. Of the characters, only Markham rises above the cardboard level. OK for an escapist/action read.

THE BOOK OF FACTS Vol.2

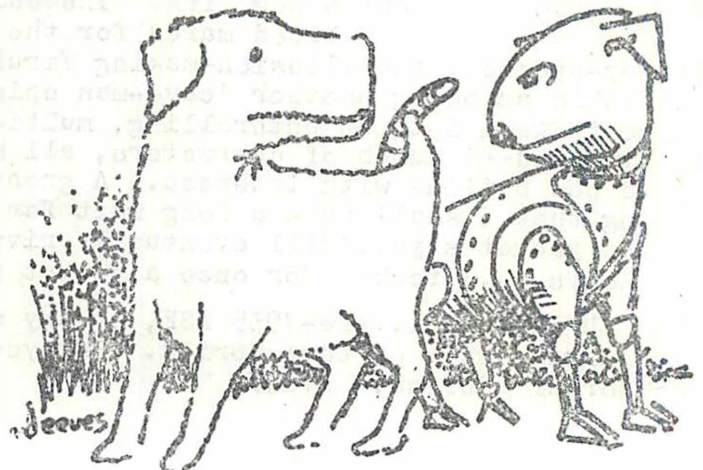
Did you know that 'Black Holes' were postulated 200 Isaac Asimov years ago? That the most common cause of death among  
Coronet £1.75 cowboys was by getting their heels caught in the stirrups? Literacy in Iceland is 100%? Mount Everest has grown 12" in the last 100 years? That all these and over a thousand other unlikely facts are to be found in one volume? Grouped into 35 headings for easy reference, they must form the largest collection of unusual trivia outside the British Museum. Ideal for making up your own Ripley strip or using by writers as an ideas 'grab-bag'. Once you start, you'll not be able to put it down.

GOD'S WORLD

1977 sees a series of religious apparitions summoning the Ian Watson faithful of all creeds, to send representatives to a planet  
Panther £1.50 of 82 Eridani by using a psychic space drive. The trip involves the crew in a murder and an attack by spider-like aliens before it gets to destination. Characters have less life than the words describing them. Plot structure is infolded so considerable mental agility is required to keep tabs of where you are and what is happening. Watson-lovers will drool over it and push for Hugo Awards...as will all Spec-F devotees.

THE ROSWELL INCIDENT

This type of book sets my blood boiling. Jammed with Charles Berlitz and the usual half-truths, innuendoes and hear-say, it  
William Moore purports to establish the truth behind a suppressed  
Granada £1.25 report of a 1947 UFO crash in New Mexico and the subsequent take over of ship and crew by the Air Force. Accompanied by a stack of photos of the 'This is the type of territory' or 'Mr. Jones before the event' the whole thing is merely a band-wagon in the 'UFOs are Real' fleet. If that is what you want...then you'll really go for these 'reveals'. Also listed are numerous 'sightings' by astronauts...none of which appear in the few flight transcripts I have in my collection. You pays your money and you takes your choice!





SMILE ON THE VOID

Stuart Gordon  
Arrow £1.75

Ralph M'Botu Kitaj is a sort of polymath of super-heroes and villains who acquired strange powers at the age of ten when visited by an 'angel'. Seeking Tarzan in Africa, he is raised by Mau Mau savages, followed by further initiation rites from a with-woman as he works to his destiny. Written in semi-biographical style which negates character empathy, I found this a totally different novel from the colourfully descriptive 'Eyes Trilogy'. I'm not quite sure what the author had in mind when he wrote this, but for me, it failed to come off. You may find differently and if so, this could well give you a boost.

THE PIG PLANTAGENET

Allen Andrews  
Arrow £1.50

Set in medieval France, depredations by various animals has stirred the local Lords to retaliate with a war of extermination. The Pig Plantagenet hears of the plot and is duped into warning the forest creatures and becoming their chieftain and leader out of danger. A touch of satire, a pinch of wit, plenty of wonder all bind to make this pure romantic fantasy fit to rank alongside 'Animal Farm', 'Watership Down' and other classic 'animal hero' tales..and I loved the bit where the young wolves keep sampling Plantagenet's tail.

PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

Ed. Ian Watson  
Greystoke Mobray £1.25

Watson has conceived the idea of a central character undergoing a series of mental experiences via an induction helmet. He supplies the between-story links which transform the individual stories making up the 8-yarn anthology, into a related series of yarns..each based on a work of art. My favourite bits were the 'second Creation' and the 'resuscitated barbarian'. For the rest... a psychedelic bag of 'speculative fiction' to gladden the enthusiast and enrage the hard-core addict. There are some excellent illos and a nice cover by Pete Lyon, but the typeface was not to my liking. Nice mixture.

THE TOUCH

Owen Brooks  
Futura £1.50

This block-buster of horror opens with a mischief-seeking trio of youngsters who vandalise a grave thus releasing the Satanic Dee, creature of shadow and power. Dee's touch leaves a trail of violence, rape and sadism as he gathers adolescents to his army. The zombie-like group tightens its grip on the small town of Somerville raiding police armouries and army camps for their weapons in preparation for the final onslaught. A book with a chilling new concept of evil, compulsive reading cum future film material. Its only weakness is the surplus of characters which tends to diffuse the focus of interest. Terrific stuff if you go for this genre.

MIDNIGHT AT THE WELL OF SOULS

Jack L. Chalker

Penguin £1.75

The desolate planet Dalgonia is one mighty computer left by a departed race. It holds a portal to the Hex worlds and a key to total power. Skander murders for the secret but is followed through the gateway by spacepilot Brazil, courier Vardia, and dope peddler Hain with his 'slave'. Winding up in different Hex worlds in totally altered shapes they follow twining paths to a final confrontation at the Well of Souls.

Wide-ranging, yet with excellent and neatly juggled characters, pace and interest are never allowed to flag. The jacket calls this a mega-read...and it certainly is. Maybe not 'classic or highbrow', but a damned good yarn.

"But you told  
me to go out  
and get  
a scoop"



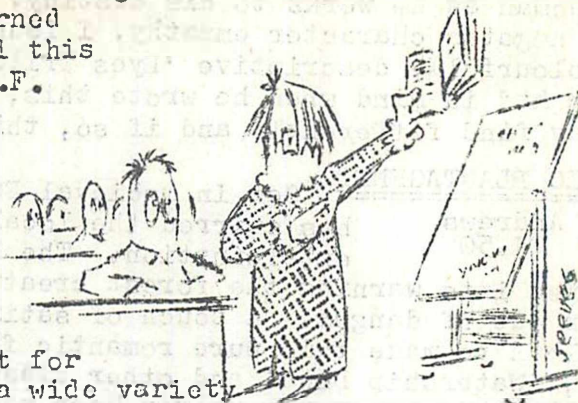


ONE HUNDRED MILES ABOVE EARTH

Raymond J. Ross Hale \$6.25

The title describes the location of an 'invisible' UFO the occupants of which are rather obscure though I gather they are descendants of two long-lost, warring Earth races. The 'pure' ones have returned (from where ?) to take over Earth. All this is revealed when the members of an R.A.F. Regiment squad on a survival exercise are spirited away and four of them set a test/ordeal, the motives for which also rather obscure. However the actions of the four central characters are well portrayed in their fight against all the alien (?) in charge can throw at them so that peripheral reasons and background take a back seat for a fast-paced action adventure against a wide variety of dangers. Entertaining escapist fiction which might have become an 'epic' had the invaders background motives received a more fully developed treatment. A striking jacket by Helen Hale completes the package.

"We may have a permissive society, Jones Minor, but that does not allow you to 'rape a parcel.'"

VOYAGERS

Ben Bova

Methuen Magnum

\$1.75

Stoner, ex astronaut and karate black belt locates signals and a spacecraft circling Jupiter, the news of which causes consternation in the U.S.A., the Kremlin, and the Vatican. Then the craft leaves Jupiter heading for a near-Earth pass.

Stoner and a Russian astronaut are detailed to lift out of Tyuratam on an intercept mission..but one faction in the Kremlin has other plans.

A taut, first encounter, hardcore yarn of the top quality we have come to associate with Bova. Plenty of sub-plots and credible characters. If this doesn't scoop an Award or two, I'll be very surprised.

CITY

Clifford D Simak

Methuen Magnum

\$1.50

Eight tales from in and around Astounding/Analog's 'Golden Age', linked by the common thread of the Webster family, Jenkins, the faithful robot retainer, and the intelligent dogs. The title yarn sees mankind leaving the cities and succeeding tales, they head for the planets and we have a search for a new philosophy, a Jovian paradise, an amoral superman who gives the ants a step to evolution leading to a final threat. All in Simak's pastoral, folksy style, studied with Biblical names and as smooth as buttermilk. Not quite epic SF, but still steady, pleasant and cerebral reading. I wonder how many of today's SF will stand reprinting after 30 years or so? ...this does.

ELECTRONICS: Questions & Answers

Ian Hickman

Newnes Technical Press \$1.96

A drawback of the standard electronic text book, is that each chapter presupposes a full grasp of everything which has preceded it. This may suit the student proceeding steadily through a course, but is hard lines for the inquisitive layman seeking particular information. This volume gets around the problem by posing a series of comprehensive questions then answering them in a comprehensive manner, largely avoiding formulae and involved circuitry all with a minimum of jargon. For convenience, material is divided into sections:- waveforms, components, digital signals, music, Radio, TV etc. The result is that if as a technical 'neo' you seek specific information on a point of interest, you can find it here without hacking your way through all the usual extraneous mathematical jungle. If you want to know what an i.c. is, or plot a bit of electronics into your next novel, then this book should be on your bookshelf.



BLACK HOLES

Jerry Pournelle  
Orbit £1.75

A re-issue of this collection of two poems, four articles and no less than 13 stories..all linked by the common theme of 'Black Holes'. As one might expect from writer/scientist, Pournelle, this is an excellent piece of work. The stories even include a 'Papa Schimmelhorn' and the articles are solid, layman's language and workmanlike. If you missed this little goody the first time round, then for goodness sake, grab it now.

FUTURE HISTORY

Jerry Pournelle  
Orbit £1.95

Earth is in its usual, near-disaster state through international bickering. Power politics demands the cashiering of Colonel Falkenberg of the C-Dominion (USA/USSR) forces which keep peace among colony worlds. He becomes a mercenary working under cover for his old Admiral and applies ruthless tactics to preserve civilisation. Falkenberg is not too well characterised, battles tend to run together and the yarn is reminiscent of 'Dorsai' material. Background coverage is rather wordy..possibly due to extra material added when linking the original separate stories into one novel. Otherwise, well up to Pournelle's usual standard.

KING DAVID'S SPACESHIP

Jerry Pournelle  
Orbit £1.95

Prince Samuel's World has been rediscovered by the Second Empire which means near serfdom for its peoples unless they can qualify for higher status by producing a spaceship of their own. Mercenary McKinnic, disguised as a trader is sent on a mission to bring back the necessary technical details from a library world. The craft is built..and uses a highly unusual method for propulsion ..it may sound feasible, but I'm sure the mass ratios would be against it. Nevertheless, a highly entertaining yarn

CAPELLA'S GOLDEN EYES

Christopher Evans  
Panther £1.50

The colonists on Gaia have received regular aid from the enigmatic alien M'Threnni, then David White finds their altruism is not unalloyed. His investigations cause trouble with the Government causing him to flee into hiding. Up to this point, the yarn grates and holds you, but then the pace slackens, the promised M'Threnni horror proves a damp squib and a totally unexpected starship from Earth takes its place as a menace. In case this was part of a trilogy, I scanned the credits carefyllu..but apparently this is a 'one off'..which makes the direction changing ending even stranger

THE ESSENTIAL T.C.LETHBRIDGE

Tom Grave & Janet Hault  
Panther £1.95

If, like me, you never heard of the man, a foreword gives a neat precis. Lethbridge was an archaeologist who became interested in parapsychology. This is a series of accounts from his books researching into dowsing, psychometry, pendulum divination both qualitative and quantitative etc. We hear of ghost sightings, the Biblical 'Elisha' story of a visitation, the ancient Gods, Dryads and precognition. As with all such works, their real worth depends greatly on the reader's attitude and 'will-to-believe'. If you are interested in this field, then this book is a down-to-Earth assembly of material unlike the 'pie-in-the-sky' style of von Daniken and his ilk





THE WINTER PLAIN

Jo Bannister      A strange, post-plague Earth of ice-deserts and city states  
Hale £6.25      which use atomic power plants serviced by itinerant engineers. One such, is the enigmatic Paul, and ex-telepath who seeks to rescue the young Prince Edmund from Jess the Barbarian. Accompanied by a telepathic concubine, a warrior and a eunuch, the path leads through sundry adventures and situations in excellent style. Despite a basic lack of credibility in the background premise, the central characters and actions are well blended into a highly readable novel where only the ending proves a bit of a 'let-down'. Otherwise, this is a case of once started, and you'll not want to stop. Another good 'un.

NIGHT OF LIGHT

Philip Jose Farmer      The religion of Yess is sweeping the planets causing two  
Penguin £1.25      priests to come to 'Dante's Joy' for the Night Of Light when they hope to tackle Yess himself. Accompanying them is the psychopathic murderer Carmody who plans to destroy the God. Complicating things are the strange changes in the sun which bring manifestations and changes to all those who stay awake during 'The Night'. This will grab you from line one, and hold you throughout Part.1 The Second Part, grabs you equally firmly as the background and performers are very deftly handled..but as so often, the ending leaves you rather up in the air. If you don't mind that, then you'll go for this.

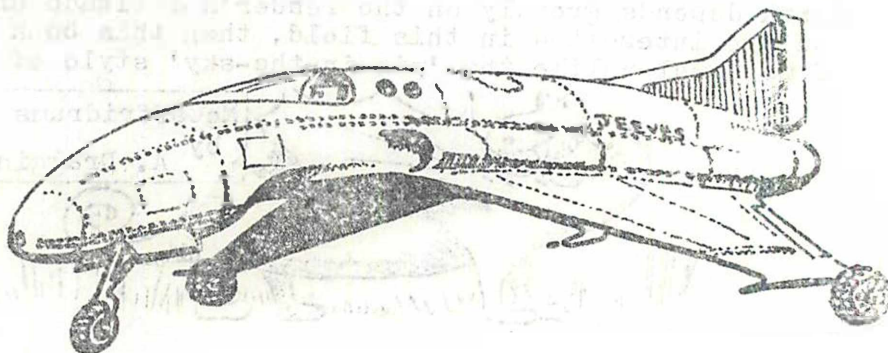
MAKE ROOM! MAKE ROOM!

Harry Harrison      First appearing in 1966, and regularly reprinted  
Penguin £1.50      since then (and with excellent reason), this is the world of 1999, overpopulated, undernourished and with total anarchy but a step away. In the city of New York, detective Andrew Rusch ekes out an existence along with everyone else, queueing for water, scrabbling for crumbs and striving to maintain order. One of the food staples is a synthetic, 'soylent'... Harrison paints a grim picture of a city (and a world) bursting at the seams. It isn't a 'pretty' novel, but by gum, it's compelling, so if you haven't read it before then put it on your shopping list right away. It was made into a film, 'Soylent Green' in 1973...and is a powerful argument for conservation, birth control and a closer look at life in general.

THE DIVINE INVASION

P.K.Dick      Corgi £1.50      After the Crucifixion, Gold fled the Earth leaving it to Belial. Now he is returning to battle for the very existence of the Universe. Dome dweller, Rybys Rommey is made pregnant by immaculate conception so that along with her 'husband' Herb Asher, she can carry God's second son to Earth in her womb. Dick is normally too incoherent for my tastes, but here, he holds to his epic theme with depth and humour as events climax to the final good/evil confrontation.

I'd rate it one of Dick's best so far. If he's on your list of favourites, don't miss this one.





DRAGONQUEST

I could never understand why, if 'Threads' are so fast multiplying, once into soil, that they hadn't over-run Anne McCaffrey Corgi £1.75 Pern prior to the arrival of the colonists. Be that as it may, here we are, some years after Threadfall and memories have dimmed. Friction arises between traditional Dragonriders and the newer breed. F'lar seeing the danger, seeks a better defence against the Thread than by dragon-burning. All the old familiars are here..Robinton the Harper, dragons, impressions etc, plus trouble from dragon lizards. What more do you need to know..the dragons fly again, and it's a fest for dragonreaders.

SPACE OPERA

Roger Wool's aunt Isabel seeks to take culture to the stars in the shape of a large opera company, and is aided by Jack Vance opportunist Bickel, and Captain Gondal. Roger smuggles his Coronet £1.25 new girl-friend aboard the junket and off they go to meet a 'Space Beagle' like variety of planets and races..with misunderstanding and chaos greeting their efforts. A wodehouse-lime farce with Roger cast as Bertie Wooster and Vance's usual excellent aliens just avoiding any real villainy or sadism.

SLAVES OF THE KLAU

When the alien Klau drag Earthman Barch and the lovely Jack Vance Lelianr to one of their slave planets, they bite off more than they can chew as Barch flees into the jungle Coronet £1.10 and organises guerrilla raids until a full escape is possible. Vance can really capture an alien viewpoint and here he does a much better than average job of the old theme wheein the 'barbaric' human shows 'advanced alien' a thing or two. Plenty of action/adventure, but with most of the nastiness kept neatly off stage. An enjoyable bit of leisure reading of the lightweight variety

...and TWO, Large Sized titles from Starblaze priced at \$4.95 each..

THE NEW ADVENTURES OF FRANKENSTEIN. 1. 'Frankenstein Lives Again' by Donald F Glut. An arctic plane crash survivor locates the Monster's body, thus enabling Scientist Winslow to retrieve it and transport it to the Frankenstein castle he has bought.. "Mayor Krag quoted me a fair price. Almost immediately I had that exact amount in a neat stack atop his desk" gives you an idea of the story level..full of similar gems. The monster is revived, stolen by a villainous showman and 'destroyed' by the normal torchlight attack by villagers. The accompanying illos are out of order..and leave something to be desired. Sad to say, this is but a cliché-ridden pot-boiler riding on the Frankenstein legend.

THE DAWNING LIGHT is a much better proposition. One of the 'Shrouded 'Robert Randall' Planet' series from Campbell's ASF, telling how Earthmen come to Nidor, purporting to be from 'The Great Light' and planning to free the Nudorians from the iron grasp of tradition (and I hope, the unmanageable names)..and of course, Nidorians oppose any change, so it must be subtle. 'Dawning Light' opens with a bank robbery..Nudor's first, as Kris PeKim seeks to aid his party and by planting the robbery's proceeds on the Earth school at Bel Rogas, thus discredit the Earthmen. His plan seems to be working well..even to the school being destroyed..but then things start to go wrong for Kris. An excellent yarn, very good illustrations..and for an added bonus, an 'afterword' telling revealingly how the series came to be written.

P.S. The Donning Company publish 'Starblaze'..in the U.K., Ken Slater can probably get them for you.



ELFQUEST Book 1.

Wendy & Richard Pini  
STARBLAZE \$9.95

Picture a hefty, 160 page, full-colour, quarto-size comic book..first in the Elfquest Trilogy covering the first five books of the black & white magazine.

Naturally, it isn't 'comic' but opens with a couple of gory battle scenes leading to humans setting out to eliminate the star-elves. Cutter, leader of the Elves guides them into troll caverns and on to a series of adventures which are lively and well illustrated..although the elves are just a bit too 'twee' for my taste..not a child's book I hasten to add. Blood, gore, 'Batdung!' and even a spot of Lesbianism appear. However, if elves, trolls and great sagas are to your taste..then this is an epic.

\*\*\* ZX81 BASIC BOOK

Robin Norman  
Newnes Technical Books  
\$4.95

Long time since we had a \*\*\* title, but this is one.

Similar in format and material to the author's excellent book on the ZX80, this takes you very gently through using the ZX81 from the absolute beginning in steps which never take too much at one bite as they go from what the keys are for, and on through editing, loops, GOSUB, AES, SGN etc. Everything is clearly explained with examples to avoid ambiguity..Flowcharts, printer use, SAVING and LOADING programs, strings, arrays, even a crafty gadget made from a postcard to aid you with binary numbers if you ever need 'em. Then there's a glossary and 14 ready-made programs for fun, games and practical use (such as the one for telephone numbers). All this is highly readable..but an additional 'plus' is that most chapters include exercises, (WITH answers) for you to try your skill. It's a steal at \$4.95 and if you have a ZX81, then you MUST get this little volume. All the things I said about the ZX80 book in ERG 75 apply to this one..now I hope Mr Norman can be persuaded to do a similar job for the new BBC micro I have on order.

LUNAR ATTRACTIONS

Clark Blaise  
Melbourne House  
\$6.95

The biography of young David Greenwood from childhood to adolescence. His father is a boxer turned salesman, his mother a clairvoyant. David is a fat, undersized, under-active child so lives largely in his own dream world based on films and books..when the real world is thrust upon him at school, in college, and by the environment, the results are trauma-laden. We follow him through a strange, perverted sexual encounter and up to the final discovery of the truth about sex. Not a work of SF, but a richly painted canvas of a teenager's involved life in a small American town of the 50s. I particularly enjoyed the sequence of answering pulp ads under assumed names. The author really gets 'inside' David Greenwood without hitting the usual stock situations and events of gang warfare, brutality, victimisation and the like. If you want a change from SF, then this could be for you.

THE ILLUSTRATED BOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION LISTS.

Mike Ashley VIRGIN BOOKS \$2.95

I only have advance notice for this, so no hard details..but it looks as though it will be the sort of title, every SF reader will want on his shelves.... it has a 'name' list which reads like a 'WHO'S WHO' in SF. Further details in the next issue of ERG.

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LAST MINUTE NEWS. Sad to say, the Gestetner broke down whilst running in the red heading for NASA News...which is why the RECENT READING heading is in black. Hopefully, a nice kind (cheap?) man will be coming tomorrow to carry out repairs, but in the meantime, I'll finish off on the Roneo to leave him a clear room to kick the Gestetner. Oh yes..one of those weeks...the Hitachi stereo packed in too. The cassette buttons refused to lock in on 'Playback' ...and last week it was the car.. where will it all end Passworthy ? Best, Terry.



## Ishtar Terra

PHOTO NO.AC78-9126.1

The highest and most dramatic continent-sized highland region on Venus is Ishtar Terra, shown here in an artist's conception, based on topography measurements by the Pioneer Venus Orbiter. The spacecraft has been in orbit about the planet since December 4, 1978, and is expected to continue receiving data for at least three years.

The Pioneer Project is managed by NASA's Ames Research Center. The spacecraft were built by Hughes Aircraft Co. The radar mapper instrument was provided by Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and maps of Venus by the U.S. Geological Survey.

Ishtar is named for the Assyrian goddess of love and war. About the size of Australia or the continental United States (the outline of the continental U.S. is provided for scale), it is a high plateau in the northern hemisphere with several mountain ranges and surrounded by steep escarpments.

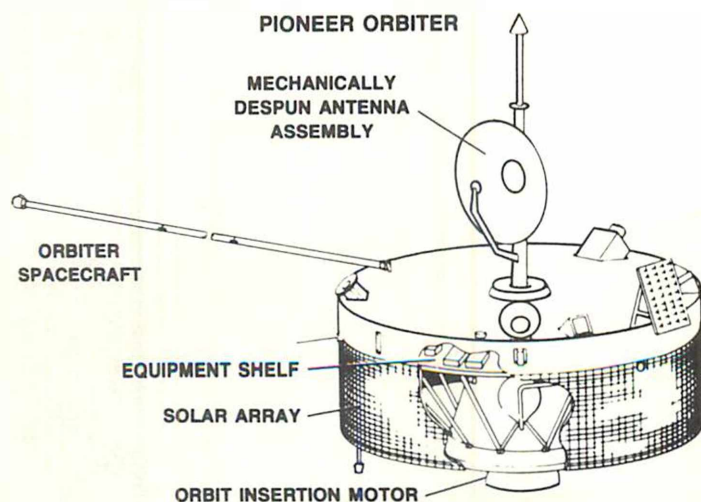
The western part of Ishtar appears to be a smooth plateau, named Lakshmi Planum for the Hindu goddess; it is about 3300 meters (10,000 feet) above "sea level" (mean planetary radius). It is bounded on the west and north by mountains ranging upward from 2300 to 3300 m (7000 to 10,000 ft) above the plateau, and 5700 to 7000 m (17,000 to 20,000 ft) above "sea level." The western mountains have been named Akna Montes, after the Mayan goddess of birth, and the northern range, Freyja Montes, after the Norse goddess. The Ishtar plateau is higher than Earth's Tibetan plateau and twice as large. The central area is smooth in the radar images and may be covered with relatively young lavas.

The highest point yet found on Venus is a mountain massif higher than Mount Everest named Maxwell Montes (right)

after the 19th-century Scottish physicist James Maxwell, discoverer of a basic principle of radar. This huge area of uplifted terrain occupies the entire east end of the Ishtar Terra highland. Its highest point is 10.8 kilometers (35,400 ft) above "sea level" and 8.2 km (27,000 ft) above the adjoining Lakshmi plain. The highest parts of the massif run northwest-southeast with lower projections extending both east and west. Observations from both Earth and Pioneer suggest that this mountain region is the roughest part of the planet with very broken up terrain, changing abruptly from the smooth plateau west of it. On the east flank of Maxwell, Pioneer data shows a circular dark feature more than 900 m (3000 ft) deep. This may be a volcanic caldera.

## For Classroom Discussion

1. Compare the west and north mountain ranges of Ishtar Terra with mountain ranges on Earth (Alps, Rockies, Andes).
2. How is the Ishtar Terra topography similar to that of the U.S.? How different?
3. Compare Maxwell Montes with the Himalayas, and the Lakshmi plateau with the Tibetan plain.
4. What geologic formations might account for the plain, Maxwell Montes, and the sharp escarpments?
5. Superimpose an outline of Australia and compare it with Ishtar Terra.



PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF PIONEER VENUS ORBIT

