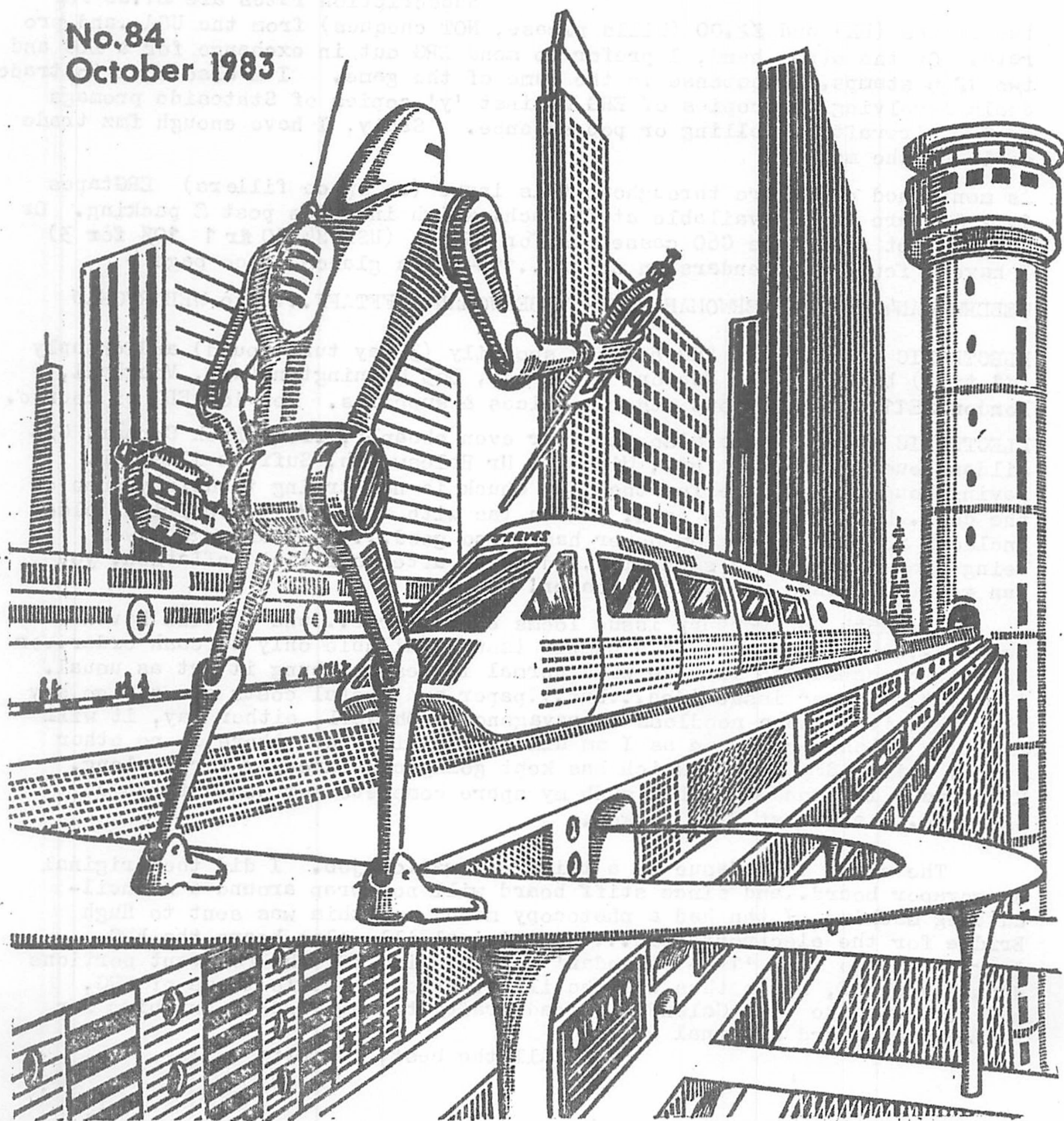


FERG

Quarterly

No.84
October 1983





Terry Jeeves
230 Bannerdale Rd
Sheffield S11 9FE
ENGLAND

Ph 53791

(.....)Status Box. Cabalistic symbols here indicate that something must be done if you want ERG 85..the January 1984 issue.

ERG is produced by Terry Jeeves,
230 Bannerdale Rd.,
SHEFFIELD S11 9FE

Subscription rates are £1.00 for two issues (UK) and \$2.00 (bills please, NOT cheques) from the USA..and pro rata. On the other hand, I prefer to send ERG out in exchange for a LOC and two 12¹/₂p stamps....response is the name of the game. I'm also open to trade deals involving 'x' copies of ERG against 'y' copies of Stateside promags on SF, aircraft, modelling or pop science. Sadly, I have enough fmz trade deals at the moment.

As mentioned elsewhere throughout this issue (as space fillers) ERGtapes 1, 2 & 3 are still available at £2 each..which includes post & packing. Or you can get all three C60 cassettes for £5.50. (USA \$4.00 for 1 10¹/₂ for 3) I have a few ERG calendars on offer ..1984 at a glance...see page 4

WEBERWOMAN4TAFF//WEBERWOMAN4TAFF//WEBERWOMAN4GUFFTAFF...Vote WEBERWOMAN

ELECTRONIC stencils in ERG are cut speedily (3 day turn round) and cheaply (£1 time) by H Bridge, Rectory Row Press, 363 Kennington Lane, Vauxhall, London SE11...and various other services & supplies. Mention ERG of course.

ELECTRONIC stencils are also on offer even cheaper, from Chuck Connor, C/o Sildan House, Chediston Rd., Wissett, Nr Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 0NF. Having bought a machine for the job, Chuck is now trying to defray some of the cost..his price..70p each. which (as with the Rectory Row price) also includes postage. Pandom never had it so good...ten years ago I was being quoted £2 plus a stencil...and here, after all that inflation, you can get the things very much cheaper!

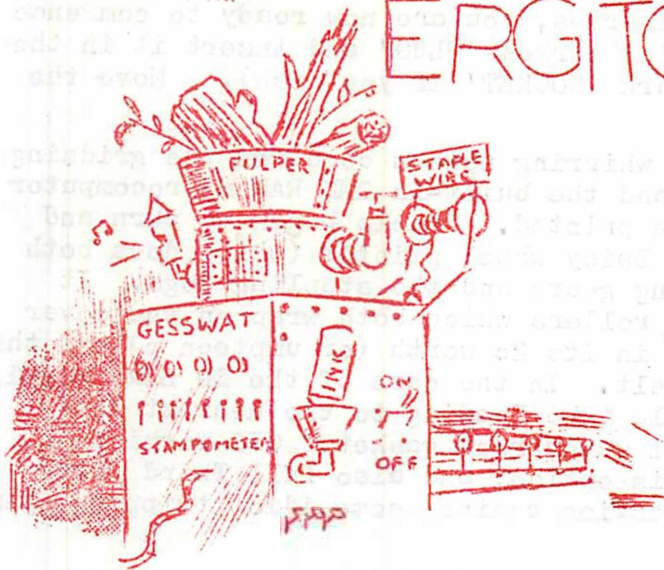
The 25th Anniversary issue looms ever nearer...and I still haven't decided..whether to make it a bumper issue available only to cash order..or keep it commensurate in size with normal issues and bung it out as usual. I like the bumper issue idea...but...paper and postal costs are now so sky high that it seems a needless extravagance. Oh well, either way, it will still be a landmark issue as I am almost positive that there is no other single editor SF fanzine which has kept going continuously for so long. Right now, I'm wondering how much my spare complete set would fetch at Sothebys....at least £2 I reckon.

The cover this issue is a third generation job. I did the original on scraper board..and since stiff board will not wrap around a stencil-cutting machine, I thn had a photocopy made..and this was sent to Hugh Bridge for the electrostencil...the original illo also bears the ERG Quarterly logo AND '1984 Calendar' By masking off the relevant portions during run-off, I can thus use the illustration for this issue of ERG, and also for the 1984 Calendar. Dead crafty these faneds. Any bids for the scraper board original ???

All the best, Terry

ERGITORIAL

3



NEW PRODUCT REVIEW =====

Fan editors who have been considering the investment of large heaps of money in a computer, VDU monitor, twin disc drives, printer and word processor, will be delighted to hear of the latest development. The recent merger between a giant computer firm and a huge duplicator company has led to the marketing of a completely new device...

.... The Gesswat Microduper

Operating the Gesswat is simple, the first step being to drop half a dozen reams of paper into the hopper..the De Luxe model features a grinder-pulper-calender for the direct assimilation of tree trunks or old fanzines from which it can produce its own paper supplies. No messy ink pouring or spreading, the ink bottle is simply dropped into a handy funnel. Rolls of stamps are then fed into the Stampometer slot...in the prototype, the machine was programmed to make its own, but the GPO took exception to some of the special commemoratives which it issued..a pity, since 'St Fanthony's Day', 'ERG's 25th Anniversary' and the 'Paralysis Of The BSFA' sets would have quickly become collector's items.

After the preliminary stages of ensuring full supplies (remember to check for a full reel of wire for staple-making), you can move on to set the various parameters into the memory banks of the Gesswat. This is done by a series of knobs, dials and switches on one side of the machine.

Dial 1 can be adjusted to select the quality of 'fine required..choice rangin from 'Fan Award Winner', 'Semi-Pro', through 'Average' down to 'Crudzine', 'New Wave' and 'Rantings'..the latter for those who are so convinced they are right, they ignore all else.

Dial 2 adjusts the amount of art to be used from zero, up to a staggering 100%..at which level, the resulting fanzine resembles a comic book.

Dial 3 selects the style of artwork..with positions for 'Frank R Paul', 'Virgil Finlay', 'Schoenherr', 'Di Fate' etc..

Dial 4 has a double adjustment..the first selects the number of LOCs, the inner knob adjusts the balance between laudatory and hostile..all of which are created by the machine. Editorial responses may be keyed in via the built in keyboard.

Dial 5 sets the number of items needed and their type..viz: Fiction, LOC, Verse, Article; naughty words .. and so on.

In addition, there are selector switches for number of copies, style of printing, colour of paper, and such items as 'Sercon', 'Faanish', 'in group' or 'Australian natter' etc. With practice, fanzines can be programmed to suit every taste..bar those of 'you know who'.

Having completed all the preliminaries, you are now ready to commence running off your fanzine. Take the plug marked 'PLUG' and insert it in the nearest power socket (which you may mark 'SOCKET' if you wish). Move the mains switch to ON and away you go.

Lights flicker on and off, soft whirring noises come from the gridning unit (if you have the De Luxe model) and the built-in 2MK RAM microcomputer rapidly creates all the material to be printed. Wheels begin to turn and paper is fed through a friction-feed, Daisy wheel printer (which does both sides at one pass), among the collating gears and the stapling cogs. It then passes through the Addressograph rollers which both wrap on the cover and address it. The Stampometer puts in its 2c worth (or umpteen p) and the final fanzine emerges on an endless belt. In the case of the De Luxe model, this can be replaced by a long flexible tube leading to the nearest Post Box, which it enters through a special waterproof gasket. GPO permission must be obtained before installing this option, and also full Third Party Insurance must be taken out as a protection against some idiot tripping over the tube.

It is certain that this machine will take fandom by storm, and there are even rumours of interest being taken by the professional magazines. Analog, IASFM and Amazing have all expressed interest..which is not at all surprising as the Gesswat machine would enable them to dispense with a long string of authors and artists. Messrs Gesswat have offered to add a further dial allowing a choice of author styles if the deal goes ahead.

Future plans involve a bicycle powered variant for use in rural areas, a desert version which would produce fanzines on sandpaper, a bi-lingual version for the Continental market, and a version with its logic unit removed for use by rampant 'libbers'.

The Standard Gesswat Microduper operates off 250v AC and sells for a recommended retail price of £597.57p (plus VAT)

The De Luxe model which can also run from a dry cell torch battery, costs, as you might expect, slightly more..at £597.59 (plus VAT)

Would-be purchasers should write direct to Gesswat Industries enclosing a large (6ft by 3ft) stamped addressed envelope. If ordering by Access, please allow 28 years for delivery.

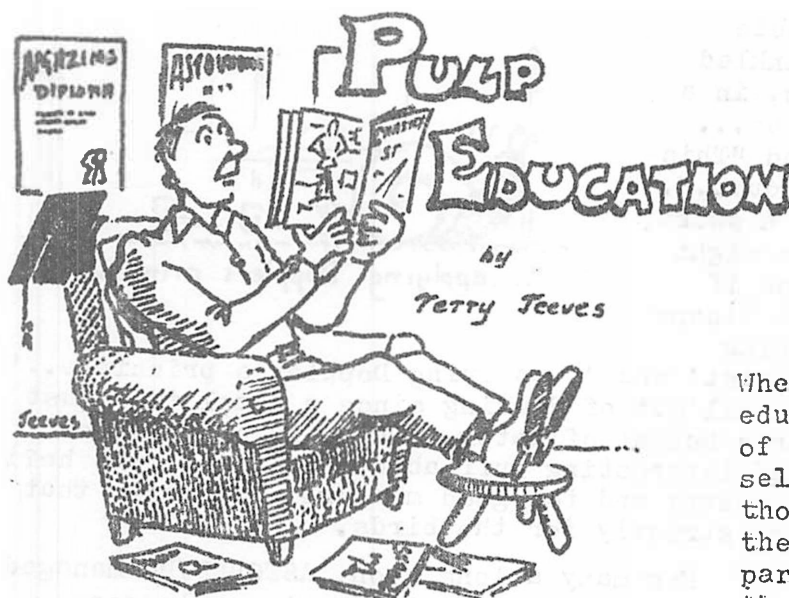
===== Terry Jeeves =====

ERG Calendar for 1984 No longer just an idea...I've pushed ahead, and this calendar featuring 12 previous ERG covers (with title logo removed and date details substituted..plus a front cover illo and a sheet listing details of the artwork) is now available. 80p which includes post and packing (payable in stamps), \$2.00 in USA. Limited number of copies, so order now.

TRIP REPORT..USA 1980 & 1982. Complete in one volume..the two series from back issues of ERG. £1.00, or \$2.00

ERGTAPEs 1, 2 and 3 still available at £2.00 each...selected items from back issues of ERG..plus new and unusual items such as 'Albert & The Monster', 'Jeeves Comes Home' and many others. Readings, sounds, music, humour, verse...they're all in ERGtapes.

(SPECIAL OFFER..all three for £5.50 or \$10.00)



DOWN MEMORY-BANK LANE

Part 6

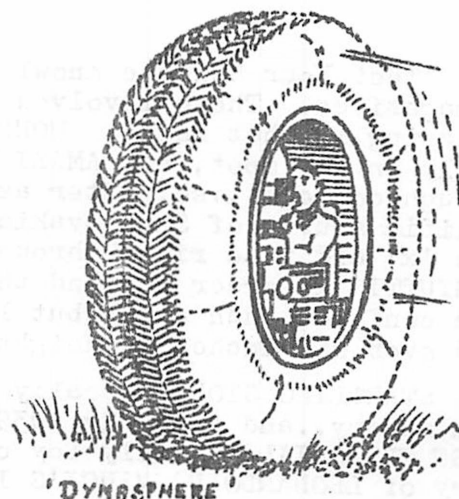
In the early days of the pulps, one of their undeclared intentions seemed to be an attempt to educate the masses.

Whether the masses wanted to be educated was quite another sort of question. Nevertheless, this self-imposed educational scheme, though secondary to bringing in the lolly, formed an integral part of the pulp SF scene. The three main areas for this sugar-coated dissemination of knowledge were editorials, articles and the science quiz...with the stories

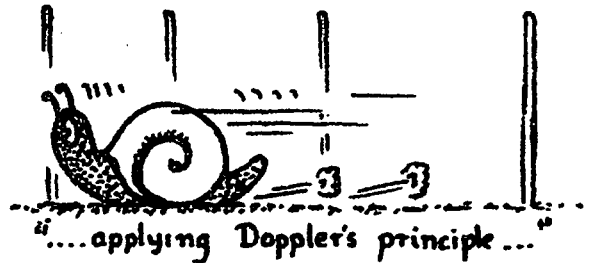
themselves joining in the fun.

Both Gernsback (in the various isotopes of WONDER) and T.O'Connor Sloane (in AMAZING) were fond of using their editorial pages as platforms from which to air their wisdom. Hugo tended to be more sensational and free-wheeling with his ideas on future trends in electronics, science and mechanics. In the last chapter I referred to his editorial on 'The Wonders Of Color', but in 'Everyday Science & Mechanics', he would proselytise on the marvels of current science and the world to come. Anyone who has read his RALPH 124C41+ will have come across details of radio/Tv, radar and a few other things in a yarn written before they were invented. Nor was he alone..it was an era of speculation on such exciting forecasts as mid-ocean platforms designed to permit TransAtlantic passenger flights..and of such weird transport devices as the huge, one-wheel 'Dynasphere' which housed driver and engine within its hub. Guided through a periscope, several models were actually built.

Over in Amazing, Sloane liked to keep his future science firmly rooted in the past and would frequently parade his classical and historical knowledge...gained, I suspect, from a handy stack of reference books. His long-winded editorials would regale us with such fascinating topics as...'The History Of Measurement' or 'The Story of Astrology'. Sloane had the unique ability to take a humdrum, everyday theme, and turn it into an utterly dull, dusty and deadly dry diatribe. Whatever the theme, his final paragraph was usually devoted to a (very)



conservative prophecy and the whole article would be liberally sprinkled with classical references. Thus, in a 1936 editorial we had such gems as... "In the words of Herodotus..." and "This is the sort of reductio ad absurdum...". There was also a reference to: "A swart, sour-visaged maid!..as Coleridge might lend us his words". I don't know if Coleridge ever got 'em back, but Sloane brought in his science by referring obliquely to... 'a famous psychologist' and '...applying Doppler's principle...'. He then wound up by kicking the hell out of dowsing since a hazel twig just won't get excited when held over a bucket of water. Thus, in one little package, you learned all sorts of interesting guff about Herodotus (who he?), the Oracle at Delphi, a spot of poetry and for good measure, the facts that water-divining and Astrology were strictly for the birds.



"The Fallacy of Dowsing"

For many a long moon, ASTOUNDING managed to avoid such potted science lessons. Whenever an editorial page could be squeezed in, it was either devoted to extolling the magazine's virtues or to exhorting everyone to go out and bring in stacks more readers. Frequently, foot-of-page 'fillers' would keep us up to date on such essential items as... 'Safe Flying In Fogs'; 'A Revolutionary Airplane' and 'Robot Pilots'. 1934 saw Charles Fort's LO appearing as a serial and a sporadic 'Science Forum' was also started in 1933. The articles proper began in 1936 with John W. Campbell's series on the Soocar System.. that good old pot-boiler which has stood so many encyclopaedia-reading hacks in good stead over the years.

'Test Your Science knowledge' quizzes were to be found in most of the SF magazines. These involved a dozen or so questions based on stories appearing in that issue. WONDER had the tidy habit of packaging the answers neatly in one spot, but AMAZING firmly believed in making you work your way through college...so, after asking you..."Which terrestrial plant is a prolific source of Slobbovakian Iodide?" you would then be told to turn to page 'x' and read right through the story..'THE CREEPING GREEN PERIL OF PONGTUTTI' in order to find the answer. This not only tended to leave you more confused than ever, but left you with a deep-seated mistrust of any weed over six inches in height.

STARTLING STORIES really piled up the education....quoting entirely from memory..and the July 1939 issue before me..this is what you got. GUEST EDITORIAL by Willy Ley on unexplored areas of the world. The picture story of LEONARDO DA VINCI'S life. THUMBNAILED SKETCHES of great moments in scientist's lives. SCIENCE QUESTION BOX..questions and answers. A SCIENTIFIC CROSSWORD PUZZLE...plus reader's letters, and 'Meet The Author', forerunner to Jay Kay Klein's Biologs in Analog.



"... A MISTRUST OF ANY WEED "

Science lessons continued in the stories. With ASF leaning more to thud and blunder, its science content was in the main, limited to the letter column.. where hot debate flourished to such an extent that Brass Tacks almost succumbed to its offspring Science Discussions. This was not the case with the early WONDER and AMAZING where the narrative would often hang fire for long periods to make room for heavy chunks of scientific explanation. Nor was that all. Footnotes added additional material so keeping the reader fully informed as to the scientific basis of the story. Here, I misquote from a mythical example taken from BLUNDER STORIES...

...as he switched on, a biting electric spark shot from the strange device and momentarily lighting the hawknosed features of Dr Foofniggle. "Feathered ** fornication!" he exclaimed, stepping back.

Following the guidance of the asterisks, we would find several chapters of explanation tucked away at the foot of the page---

**(Dr. Foofniggle is of course referring to the recent investigations into the nocturnal activities of certain Bongovian birds carried out by Messrs Schlapp and Tikkul....)

All this of course meant that the science content was TRUE and could be verified by a quick rush to your friendly downtown library. Moreover, with a bit of hefty swotting, you could emulate the ICS ads and wind up marrying the bosses daughter...assuming you had first shaved with a thin Gillette blade. Since such material was NOT wildcat, fairy tale fodder, the pulps hoped to achieve an aura of respectability. In parentheses, I might add that after WW2, when a dollar embargo made ASF renewal a chancy, whim of government affair, I successfully got my dollars allowed by citing on the form asking 'reason for requirement', that I needed the magazine to use the science articles as class lesson material in my teaching.

Another favourite educational device was to allow one character to display an abysmal ignorance so that someone else could explain at great length how the gadgetry worked. The someone else was usually a bearded scientist..scientists were always bearded,(and always had beautiful daughters) it was a sort of identification badge. A less often cited reason for this explanation was the fact that it added extra footage at several cents a word...a discovery made more recently by Mark Reynolds when time after



Bearded Scientist

time, his Analog yarns would grind to a halt whilst A explained to B all about the social set-up of the world in which they both lived.

Some authors embodied the science into an integral part of their tales. Joseph W Skidmore wrote a series about a know-all proton 'Posi' and his dumb, electron girl, 'Nega'. When they underwent various atomic adventures, Nega was the foil to whom Posi explained what was happening. THRILLING WONDER STORIES featured the 'Tubby' stories about a pop-science addict who invariably fell asleep during lectures..and then experienced fantastic dreams inspired by the topic...A high story level, well suited to 'Chick's Own'. In contrast, John Campbell would ladle huge dollops of physical science into his epics before extrapolating the idea way out of sight.

By the late thirties, ASF was the unchallenged master of the SF field, Wonder and Amazing having degenerated into haphazard collections of dull and trite rubbish with only the occasional redeeming offering. Even so, I did learn one highly important item from W.K.Sonneman's Amazing yarn. 'Greta, Queen of Queens'..concerning life in a bee hive. I learned how to introduce a new queen to a hive by putting her in a hole drilled in a block of wood. Close one end with wire mesh and the other with a plug of sugar. By the time the bees have eaten through the sugar to get at the new queen, she has acquired the hive smell, and is accepted without trouble. I learned that 40 years ago...any time now it may come in useful.

In 1936, WONDER metamorphosed into THRILLING Wonder..and even accompanied by a high pitched whirring noise as Jules Verne rotated in his grave. Stories grew less pedantic and so action-packed, they creaked at the seams. A comic strip.. 'Zarnak' was introduced, but raised so much hostility it sank within a few months. It was about the same period that Ziff-Davis took over AMAZING..and gave it the pep treatment..model-posed photocovers, backcovers and a vast improvement in the art work..which extended the educational line by giving one a much more detailed view of female anatomy than hitherto. Cleavage and luscious leg lines in the illos were matched by more turgid text, as 'brief flashes of pearly white thigh' vied with flimsy garments ripping away...which of course was the high point of MARVEL SCIENCE STORIES.

All this sugar-coated information should have produced a generation of prodigies, but speaking for myself, apart from an innate laziness, I had a total disdain for archaeology, biology, chemistry, zoology, and geology. My tipples were Maths and Physics..both of which, being 'hard' sciences, got short shrift in the magazines. Nevertheless, had I not met frequent mention of Einstein, I would never have plowed through books to find out more about his theories..or about the Michelson/Morley ether drift experiment..the Lorentz/Fitzgerald Contraction theory and so on. I was coaxed on to Jeans 'Stars In Their Courses' and Eddington's 'Expanding Universe' and Rose-Ball's Mathematical works. SF magazines gave me an interest and a direction..it led via a steel analysis lab to 5½ years in R&F radio followed by a teaching career and hefty night school courses in advanced maths and physics. The pulps may not have educated..but they certainly stimulated. I often wonder just how many of today's eminent scientists were pointed along the way via SF..if only they dared to admit it.

'As the twig is bent, so grows the tree' may well be the final epitaph of the pulp era before it finally succumbs to the social and literary significance so sought after by modern devotees.

The 'Ads'



If the educational aspect of SF was arguable one could always turn to the adverts for further personal improvement. In the thirties, it was impossible to read a pulp mag without taking in the fringe benefit of the marvellous offers on view.

Probably the most famous was the Charles, 'have-a-body-like-mine, Atlas ...despite the fact that I would rather have had one like Hedy Lamarr's, I still absorbed the numerous variants of this ad which usually depicted a beefy body posing

like a prima donna alongside a strip cartoon in which a youth resembling a bean pole, gets sand kicked in his face by a big guy. Skinny takes the course and returns to knock the stuffing out of the bully. I always felt sorry for the latter as he only threatened the 110lb weakling..whereas the rebuilt latter belts him a fourpenny one without any warning whatsoever.

This wish-fulfillment technique was a favourite..appearing in another strip plugging Fleischmann's yeast. The format never changed, only the characters. A typical sequence shows a band of teenagers setting out on some happy pursuit..picnic or whatever. One pimple-studded character with enough spots to give a leopard a bad case of inferiority, gets left behind because nobody can stand looking at him. Somebody stokes him up on Fleischmann's Yeast and LO! Our hero is drooled over, becomes the life of the party, and has even acquired banjo-playing skills. (No one seems to notice that his breath smells like a brewery.)

Another user of the strip ad, EVER READY 'Dated Batteries' would feature some hero (G-man, flier, explorer) or whatever...allegedly a real-life person, whose life had been saved by the fact that he (or she) happened to have the life-saving batteries in his torch. These magnificent beams guided rescuers up mountains, down coal mines, under water and out of snow drifts. One was even used to illuminate an aircraft landing strip:..whilst the booby prize winner saved a person buried beneath rubble in a London air raid. Such a bright light would inevitably have drawn a dozen more sticks of bombs on the distressed person's noggin. Each ad was accompanied by a



photograph of the person concerned..so botched up as to be unrecognisable, or so horribly weedy when viewed alongside the heroic cartoon figure. Personally, I never asked for Ever Ready batteries, but it must have been comfortable for anyone who did, to know that should they meet with a rage-maddened grizzly in a coal-cellar at midnight, their super power would save the day..or night.

Then there was the cloth-capped chap who couldn't afford to get married..until the day he mailed off the coupon and in ten easy lessons, learned all there was to know about radio (a feat almost possible in those days). The final pic showed him collecting a wad of folding greenstuff from a grateful customer whose refrigerator sized radio had just been repaired.



Still on Radio, every pulp reader will recall the Midwest ads for a 22-tube receiver. No matter how lavishly I drew up schematics with double RF stages, separate IF oscillators, BFOs and push-pull output stages, I could never find a use for more than a dozen. However, a friend once assured me that many of the tubes in that 22 line, only had their heaters connected, and merely sat there glowing and doing nothing else. I can't vouch for the truth of this..but if anyone out there knows for sure ????

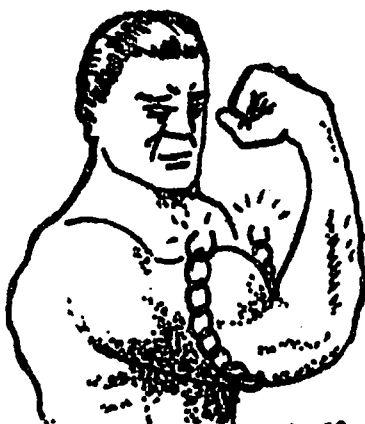
Who can forget the lonely kid who clipped the coupon (no true SF fan would have so desecrated his magazine), took harmonica lessons by post, won a talent contest and was immediately sought after by all the girls to come an liven up their parties. Gillettes had a well-drawn strip series in which the hero would achieve some great crime bust/sea rescue/flying feat..and be called to meet the boss. This always involved his borrowing a handy razor and using a thin Gillette blade..which revealed his rugged handsome jaw-line to the bosses lovely daughter.

A less 'realistic' strip would depict the two old Kentucky gentlemen, Mr. Mattingly & Mr. Moore as they cavorted around reciting jingles designed to sell their particular brand of whisky. Two other characters, less famous, but with even thicker, buskier beards adorned a small ad proffering SMITH BROTHER'S COUGH DROPS...they even got a mention in one of Doc Smith's space epics.. and I often wondered if he got a kick-back for using them.

On the music side, 'They laughed when I sat down to play', became an international catchphrase. No doubt 'they' laughed even louder once the postal taught musician actually began to play...but the ad didn't mention this point.



MATTINGLY & MOORE



MOULDING A MIGHTY ARM
25c

For those who didn't feel like rebuilding the whole of their body in the Charles Atlas mould, there were smaller dealers who let you tackle the job on the instalment plan..for 25c you could 'Build A Mighty Arm'..once that was busy busting chains wrapped around the biceps, you could build up other parts of your anatomy such as 'a mighty thigh/neck/chest/..etc' No doubt you might look a bit lopsided in the process, but at least the rest of you could take it easy whilst only one little bit flaked out with exhaustion.

Most of these ads were designed to get the mark interested in the idea of pulling in the girls. To cater for the successful, who might then wonder what to do next, we had the 'sex' adverts. One of the most frequently seen featured a fully dressed (or so it seemed from the dressing-gowned man and frill-bedecked

woman. Busily engaged in a wrestling match..or spot of vampirism, they were designed to draw your interest to an instruction book carrying such intriguing chapters as..'How To Hold Your Loved One', and 'Secrets Of The Wedding Night Revealed'..no doubt one of the latter was how to make love whilst both parties wore fur-coats.

For those fancying a bit of vicarious adventure in the style of Operator 5, there was the slick, man-about-town seated at his desk, gloves, topper and prestige telephone close to hand; who was passing details of his latest investigation to a hefty, aged, and very subservient flatfoot. This had the double advantage of not only offering you details of how to become a private eye (actually, it didn't..the offer was for a copy of 'the secret reports of Operator 38', but it also hinted that you too, could order policemen to do your bidding and the nasty job of actual arrest.

If sex and vicarious sadism wasn't your tippie..maybe the Rosicrucians could get your lolly. They offered to 'reveal the secret power that dwells within you'and would serve this up piping hot at the drop of a coupon. A friend of mine bunged one in..and for years after, was plagued by successive stream of pamphlets. Starting with a fantastically expensive offer; the price gradually dropped. Sadly, it never got down to the sixpence a week which might have tempted my friend and I to sign on....which of course is why I never did release my secret power,



One particularly droolworthy ad offered casting kits (complete with electric furnace) and moulds for making models of Flash Gordon, Buck Rogers, Wilma and a host of rocket ships. Another page would offer fantabulous prizes for simply selling someone's salve..the purpose of which seemed rather obscure..maybe it was to put on those mighty biceps when they started to ache from chain-busting. Anyway, provided you sold a few (million) measly little ten cent boxes, you could pick your prize..one of which was what the American youth of the day called a 'bicycle' ..this was about the only thing which we didn't envy them for. American bicycles of the era were designed to look like (and weigh as much as) their big, powered brothers..Harley Davison's and the like. Tyres broad enough for a TT racer, dummy petrol tanks, double cross bars, high rise handlebars, sirens, speedometers and enough chrome to sink the Queen Mary. Obviously designed for once-around-the-block-and collapse-on-the-lawn riding..and encourage you to rub those aching leg muscles with some of the salve.

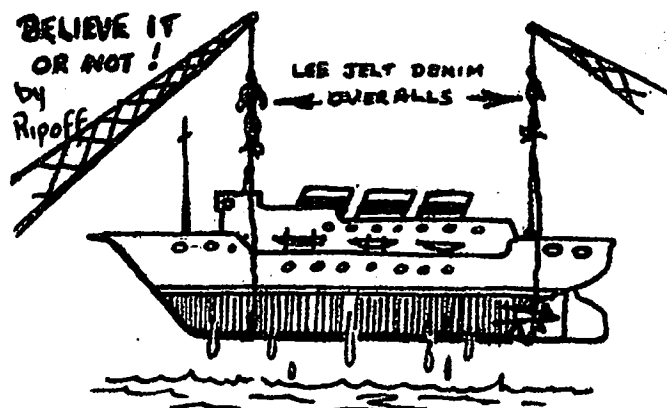
Another favourite was the 'come on' for some competition. The fillo showed a cross roads blocked by umpteen cars packed together like mechanical sardines whilst a bewildered traffic cop gazed in bewilderment. You had to pick the car to remove and thus free the jam. Even a blind moron with figs stuck in his ears could spot the solution...but of course, this merely entitled you to an entry form for the competition proper. I never did find out what that was about..but I suspect it was to see who could sell the most salve to an unwary public.

The back cover of Astounding alternated between Camels and Chesterfield cigarette ads..without being in any way memorable. Inside, Kalamazoo stoves big enough to fill your kitchen were also on offer. On another page, a benevolent soul offered a hearse-like car, simply for selling his coffee. There was also a woman clad in a one-piece bathing suit doing an agonising back bend on a gigantic feather. On reading the fine print, you discovered it wasn't selling females..or even feathers, but rupture appliances. After doing that back bend, you would probably have needed one.

You could re-groove worn tyres by buying a simple tool, or with another, you could cut the things up and make quick-selling bath mats. It was possible to 'Get On Aviation's Payroll'; 'Reduce Your Waist Line' or 'Play The Guitar Like A Hawaiian', all at the clip of a coupon. It was possible to 'Learn How To Stuff Birds' on a taxidermy course, and many other skills.

Then there was the mock Ripley, 'Believe It Or Not' ad for Lee Jelt Denim overalls. In the midst of various incredible items..a hen that laid kippers, a fish with ten legs and a man who could whistle 'Dixie' through his ears, you would come across one simply incredible feat which hinged on the durability of the overalls made by the advertiser.

By comparison, today's ads seem anaemic...like the stories, they have become sophisticated and bland.



ERGmail

My 'Opinion' on Censorship in the last issue drew in a good response...divided about fifty-fifty between full agreement and out and out opposition...and as I had suspected, most of those opposing me, had read their straw men into my words..and were thus attacking what they had wanted me to have said.

To all those who construed my 'labelling' suggestion as rabid censorship, let me just say...Why read book reviews..consumer reports on cars, TVs, safety labels on appliances, 'eat by labels' on food, washing notes on new garments..what I want is similar labelling on porn. Enough of that, on to

...
 Ted HUGHES "Like Phil Harbottle's comment on your non-policy for ERG.
 10 Kenmore Rd The fem-lib stuff by Joy Hfbbert leaves me cold. Both my
 Whitefield daughters got loads of O and A levels..and jacked it in to
 Manchester get married, (Thank God! I love my grandchildren)..and my
 wife does her own thing and neither of us would have it otherwise. DMBL,
 ah, I remember that WONDER STORIES with the coloured dots..and THE POOL OF
 LIFE when you described it. I still have the AMAZING Quarterly with THE
 BRIDGE OF LIGHT in it...very fragile now, showers of confetti when you turn
 the pages. And let us try to kill the canard perpetuated by numerous
 alleged historians. There were NO scantily clad damsels on the covers of
 SF mags before MARVEL SCIENCE STORIES appeared in 1938. Until then, SF
 mags got on tolerably well without sex. Sure, people tore the covers off
 pre-Marvel mags, but that was because of what later became known as BEMS
 decorated them. Further, I'm willing to bet that ASTOUNDING never had a
 sexy cover. Paul couldn't draw real females, Wesso couldn't get the
 jogs off them. Morey couldn't draw (though he could paint. H.V.Brown
 could have, but didn't. Dold was lost in the intricacies of his own
 weirdness. Marchioni produced pix like wiring diagrams. Thomson and Flatos
 hardly counted (((Nor did Swenson, Brush etc...but oh..that superb, great
 artist Schneeman!))) It took artists like Bergey to put the girls on the
 covers.

Vin~~g~~ CLRAKE
 16 Wendover Way
 Welling,
 KENT

I enjoyed DMBL, but I dunno how it'd strike the newer fans...it was quite a mish-mash spreading over 15 or 20 years with hardly a date in sight (((It's not a history book, Vin~~g~~..just wandering reminiscences))) Two things you didn't mention..in the mid-thirties, AMAZING, ASTOUNDING, WONDER had distinctly different stories. Weinbaum's light Manderpootz stories would never have appeared in AS, Skidmore's 'Posi and Nega' yarns would never have appeared in Wonder..etc etc.. These days, most of the stuff is interchangeable (((Yes, like soggy cardboard))) Also, with no paperback or pocketbooks around and only a few gardscovers, SF was magazines. I wholeheartedly agree with your remarks on the Golden Age...was it Harlan Ellison who remarked that the Golden Age was when one was 15 years old.?In view of how many reprints are still being published, maybe the period did have something then that later years lack. (((Vitality ???)))

Pamela BOAL
4 Westfield Way
Charlton Heights
Wantage, Oxon

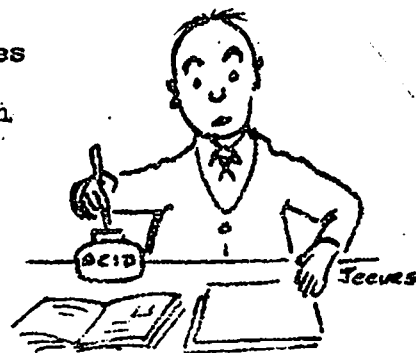
Down Memory Bank Lane continues to enchant and evoke happy memories. I tend to agree with your comments, even now I can pick up some of that old

'Pulp' material and happily shed my critical faculties in order to enjoy the vitality and courage to predict. Not all the futurisation was 'gimmick', there were honest attempts to predict and to view the future in terms of technology. The boom in popular science is perhaps a spin-off from those earnest attempts to inform young readers, first in

the comics, then in the early magazine correspondence. Science and Science Fiction became separated in publications to a large extent..SF mags dealing with fiction and New Scientist etc., dealing with popular science. In a way, despite its modern glossy presentation and style of writing, isn't OMNI a throw back to the intent of some earlier magazines of being Fiction and Fact?? (((Maybe..I can't abide the mag..hate book plugging in the guise of 'novel extracts//single paragraph continuation at the back to put me in among the ads// hefty pseudo real treatment of UFO's// ugghish short stories and over-twee (in many cases) 'science' articles))) Is that really the end of ~~GC~~ WEST OLD FAN ? I have enjoyed it so, maybe you will treat us to some one-off stories that you haven't given in full yet? (((Sorry, Pam, but it was the end..however, anyone wanting a copy of the FULL TRIP REPORT covering both 1980 and 1982 Stateside trips can have a copy for £1.00 (which includes postage. Buy now while stocks last.!!!)))

Mike ASHLEY MBL seems to wander rather extensively this issue. You wonder why Hyatt Verrill set most of his yarns in South America..simply because he was a noted explorer and archaeologist who spent much of his life there and wrote scores of books about the area. Sergeant Saturn didn't crop up until the early 40s. I enjoy reading your memories of those days because I couldn't experience them directly, and would have loved to. I don't understand why people keep yearning to get back to the days when a story had a plot. My god, Terry, any number of books and stories published these days not only have superb plots, but are far better written. (((True, but far fewer of today's yarns have a plot..simply waffle on to a fade-out..or to plug a message))) I think we must be honest with ourselves that although there is a wonderful sense of wonder and goshwow about those stories which is lost today, not one of them can stand up against much of what is being written today (((The converse also applies))) Look at the works of Joan Vinge, Ursula LeGuin, Brian Aldiss, Gene Wolfe, Stephen Donaldson, Piers Anthony and good old Simak and Chandler. How can you hold up any old pulp story in preference to their work? (((I said right along that today's writing quality is far better. No argument there, but so much of today's product is bland, pointless and trite.. a re-hash of what has gone before, but without the old vital spark. For instance..see Vinge's PSION..the old rags-to-riches psi superman...but without the punch ending. As for good old tales..how about Campbell's WHO GOES THERE? Russell's SINISTER BARRIER and HOBBYIST to name but three. What I'd like to see is today's writing quality allied to the inventiveness and vitality of the old stuff. Not to put the clock back...but forward.)))

WAHF Joy Hibbert.



JOHN D.OWEN
4 Highfield Close
Newport Pagnell
Bucks MK16 9AZ

"Dismayed at your decision to close down ERG when you move. 63 seems so young to give up fan publishing, especially when so many of your erstwhile contemporaries seem to be coming back into fandom in their later years.

((Well, I'm trying to find a few prices for alternate methods of repro.. photolith etc..so if you..or anyone else can supply some details, I hope that I can convert to such a system when I have to ditch the duplicators..if so, then ERG will continue as long as I can hammer the typer (and computer).))

ROGER WADDINGTON
4 Commercial St.,
Norton, Malton,
YORKSHIRE

"Enjoying your Memory Bank Lane series, even though my memories are of necessity from a later vintage. I must admit (at the risk of falling foul of Joseph Nicholas again) (((Don't worry, he doesn't read ERG, only pans it))) that I long for the oldtime SF to be written again..something without any literary pretensions, just written for the fun of it (and a healthy cheque landing on the mat)..something that can't be picked apart for different levels of meaning..(((I've just read the lead Analog yarn..'In Whose Name Do We Seek The Quark?'..and wondered why I bothered...dull, dull, dull)))

PHIL WILTSHIRE
2 Chiltern View Rd.,
Uxbridge, Middx.

"The letter by Joy Hibbert stirred things up a bit, as for the comment about full-time housewives being middle class, I never knew we fitted into that, but I still go to work five days a week (or six) if I can get the overtime, and my good lady stays at home looking after the family. We think we are lucky if we can buy a bottle of wine to drink at the end of the week. The best thing with people like that is to ignore them and hope they grow older and wiser. (((One must also hope they don't go into politics and follow that principle that says 'the voters can't be trusted to vote the right way'. Naturally, they NEVER listen to what YOU say...my own comments enent being brought up in a house with no bath, only one cold water tap, and an across the yard loo, were totally ignored..such facts conflict with their warped view of reality)))

PHIL HARBOTTLE
32 Tynedale Ave
Wallsend
Tyne & Wear

"Steve Holland and I have now finished our book on the history of British SF Publishing, 1946-1956, and a pretty incredible history it makes. Now comes the really hard part..finding a publisher. (((Good luck with it Phil, and

I hope every ERG reader buys a copy)))

Roused by the recent (as I write) publicity and antics of the 'Remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki' mob, I wonder when..if ever, we shall see similar publicity to remember Belsen, the Burma Road and Japanese prison camps ??? I also wonder how many survivors of these attend H/N rallies?



I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY THOSE YOBBOES ATTACKED ME MABEL. I TOLD THEM THIS WAS A VIOLENCE-FREE ZONE "

MIKE BANKS
P.O. Box 312
Milford
Ohio 45150
USA

"First, the cover.. I loved it, and it was complete down to the 'Jeeves Publication' Banner'. Except for the phrase, "...stories of stupid science", it could have passed for a legit pulp cover back in the 30s (if it were colored" (((It did..on the first issue of Astounding in 1930!)))

"What is all this women's lib crap? Didn't we go through all of that ten years ago? Why drag it all out again? Since Joy Hibbert must drag it out, let me say that I back all of your comments, sympathise with Bernard's, and must repeat that no one, (not even feminists!) should try to force his or her ideology on someone else. On the macro scale, a lot of the feminist movement smacks of attempts at manipulation for personal gain, as has been the wont of other minorities ('You wronged my ancestors! Because of that, you owe me money! ' That kind of thing..ugh!) What it all boils down to is the fact that few, if any, people are going to have their minds changed by attacks and general pushiness on this issue: (people tend to push back!) My best friend is a woman, and I certainly won't deny her, or my daughter, the right to whatever she wants to be. But I'll be damned if I'm going to take the blame for cultural habits and customs, amplified out of proportion by over-sensitive individuals who seek to rationalise their own disappointments in life and/or their shortcomings by blaming them on something that hasn't held up others in their achievements! (((I couldn't agree with you more, Mike)))

Censorship has, is, and always will be a personal matter, but I agree that some people (and children) need protection from untimely exposure to certain items in the area of sex and violence.

ROBERT MAPSON, Box 7087, Cloisters Sq., WA6000 Australia...

"You advocate 'passive censorship' and also the prohibition of obscenities (an ill defined term) (((Try a good dictionary))) Do you

mean swearing or scenes of refugees on the news while you eat dinner?

Your final para. linking the world's major social problems to lack of censorship is specious and naif. (((I have several newspaper clippings of court cases which establish that link. The accused person actually naming the film or TV show which gave him the idea)))



FANALOG

17

RAFFLES 7.5 14Qto.pp mimeo, from Stu Shiffman C/o 19 Broadway Terrace #10 New York NY 10040. All sorts of odds and ends of natter, opinion and excellent 'on stencil' artwork. This is one of the few 'chatty zines' which manages to steer a neat and entertaining course between the goshwow and the S&C. I enjoyed it, and if you think you would...try LOCs/contrib/or trade...even money

GROGGY TALES 20, 18pp ditto from Eric Mayer, 1771 Ridge Rd East, Rochester, NY 14622.

Last refuge of the ditto fanzine..with more of Eric's superb colour work via masters.

Very much a perzine on topics and incidents impinging on the life of the Mayers..but so well detailed and full of anecdote, it is pulled off in a highly entertaining fashion.

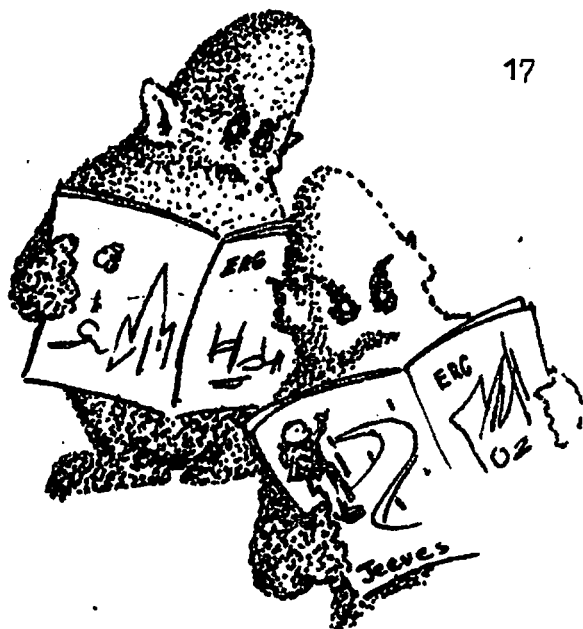
UGLY RUMORS 3 16ppA4 mimeo...on things done, seen or impinging on the Edinburgh SF scene. Very in-group and off-the cuff. No illos, but plenty of Locs. Get it from Owen Whiteoak, Top Flat (left) 112 Polwarth Gdns., Edinburgh EH11 1LH. a nice friendly touch, but unless you know the places and characters involved, it may not ring your bell very loudly.

RATAPLAN 34PP/A4/min No illos..from Leigh Edmonds, PO Box 433, Civic Sq., ACT 2608, Australia. Natterings on politics, the Louvre, opinion on a trip to a National Word Festival, review of Blade Runner, Aussie Fmz, and a large LOC section. Great stuff if any of these topics grab you..otherwise, ho hum.

WEBER WOMAN'S WREVIENCE May 83. 18/A4pp from Jea Weber, C/o CSIRO, GPO Box 1800, Canberra, ACT 2601 Australia. Despite its predilection for castration/rape/lib themes, this is one of the liveliest zines to come from down under. Editorial sees Jean stating her publishing aims...more or less like mine..to run items which interest her. ..which includes a nice bit of 'Real' poetry (albeit doggerel) on cheese. Then there's Joy Window's America trip..full of S.O.W. with which I heartily concur, having had some myself..sadly, it's too brief..but a model for many others. Marc Ortlieb on castration (ho hum here we go again). A ballad and stacks of letters round up the issue..along with some of that doe-eyed artwork. As I said, one of the more spirited Aussie zines.

CULLOWHEE COMMENTS..32pp 1Qto(folded vertically) from Richard Llewellyn, Box 2349, Cullowhee, NC 28723. Long, narrow zine..natter on fan-pubbing problems, personal details..interesting, as Richard is a librarian and has just prepared a NASA exhibit. LOCs, Skycon III con rep, an Andruschak space column, fan comment, reviews, name problems of pro writers, all in all a sparkling little zine.. only wish it had more (and dare I say it..better) artwork. Get it for trade, LOC, contrib..response or even cash....it's well worth it.

WANTED by the editor...GALAXY NOVEL No. 29...and if you have 'em..any Novel after 31..... Give you 65 of trade from my sale list per copy.



FANZINE FANATIQUE QUARTERLY from Keith & Rosemary Walker, 6 Vine St.,

Greaves, Lancaster, Lancs LA1 4UF Capsule reviews of umpteen current fmz., Comment on the latest videotapes and articles on 'Writing For Fanzines' and on the social status/structure of fandom. Trade, LOC send SAE for sample. IDOMO 15 is a massive (60+pp) A4 mimeo offering from Chuck Connor often to be found C/o Sildan House, Chediston Rd., Wissett, Nr. Halesworth, Suffolk. Excellent (large) capsule reviews of fanzines, cassettes etc..many of which I'd never even heard of...also letters, verse and fiction. For anyone wanting to keep up with the fanzine field this zine (and Fanzine Fanatique) must be indispensable.

RATAPLAN 23 from Leigh Edmonds, PO Box 433, Civic Sq., ACT 2608, Australia, 34pp/A4..on film censorship in Australia/elections there/Fmz there..some notes on art criticism, LOCs and a Funcon report, plus a piece on marketing. All tending to the s&c, no artwork and a tendency to in-groupishness, but if you're an Aussie reader...don't miss it.

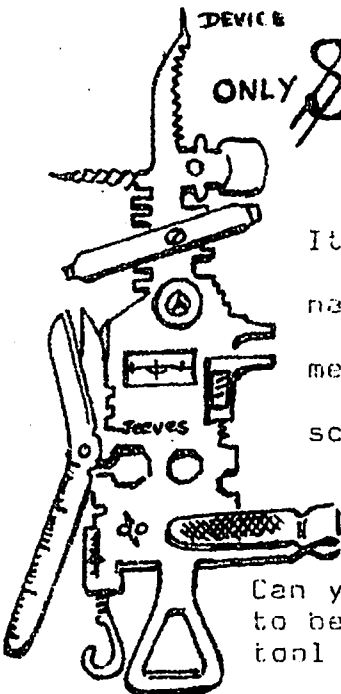
THE MENTOR 44, Ron Clarke, 6 Bellevue Rd, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, Australia. 60 Qto pp mimeo..plenty of artwork (and also some of those doe-eyed things by Julie Vaux. Does she EVER draw anything else? Editorial on the Ditmars, 'Cosmic Conspiracy' on saucers and society, fiction, a Bertram Chandler natter, an essay on society, LOCs and a complete Mentor index. One of the more lively Aussie zines..s&c bias, but a hefty bit of reading with something for most tastes (yes, there's a 'rape' clipping)..get it for LOC, contrib, trade or even cash. A nice touch in the review section, is the reproduction (in miniature) of each title's cover illustration.

ZERO HOUR 1..is a sort of interim Quarts (or Quarz) from Geoff Kemp,, 23 Raygill, Stonydelph, Tamworth, Staffs. It runs to 112 A4 pages with some cryptic (to me) comment on AOA B (Details Geoff??), a fake review and some real ones (The fake flops), an interesting..but of arguable accuracy item on triremes and warrior maids is the best thing in the issue, but there's also a short fiction item and a superb Hunter front cover. No doubt Geoff will let you have a copy for the usual. It's only slim, needs more art, and less spelling mistakes..but it is lively and full of interest.

QUODLIBET 20 24pp/Qto. Offset, from Bill Patterson, 537 Jones St. No.9943, San Francisco, CA 94102 As its name implies this is chock full of discussion by way of LOCs pro, con and sideways on all sorts of issues..little or no art (well two tiny pics), but stimulating reading. Get it for LOC, trade, or contribution...Give my regards to the Yerba Buena hotel near the trolley car (oops..cable car) terminus and just opposite the fire station, will you Bill..and remind 'em their service is lousy.

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Computer Corner

Regular readers of this illustrious journal will know of the considerable trouble I had with my 32K BBC Micro. The original fault,

(Crashing after a 30 minute run) was finally cured..after a six month hassle)..and all seemed well - apart from occasional SAVE/LOAD bother. I put this down to the notorious 'bug' in the original 0.1 Operating System, but strangely enough, despite my keying in numerous versions of the official 'bug fix' program..I still had the odd faulty SAVE.

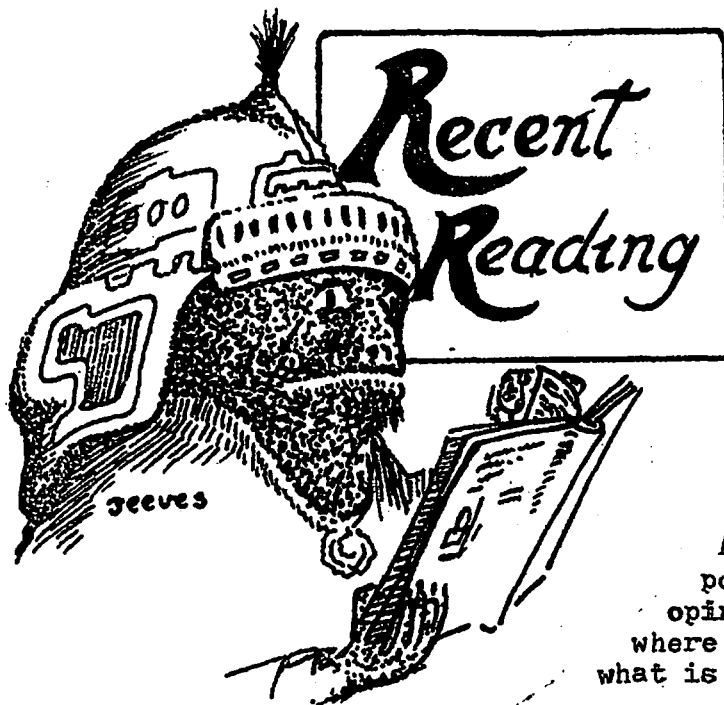
The fault came to a head when I finally managed to get the new 1.2 OS fitted. NOTHING would save or load! Suspecting the newly-fitted ROM, I waltzed the whole shebang (Computer, recorder and leads) back to the Micro Centre, where to my utter chagrin, it performed PERFECTLY. Back home again, and it was as awkward as ever. However, there was one clue..volume seemed to be down. On checking the cassette leads, I discovered a broken Earth lead. Two minutes with a soldering iron, and all my problems were solved. The damned break had been making intermittent contact for Ghu knows how long! Happily, SAVE/LOAD is now 100% reliable..and all is well..or nearly so...

My next step was to lash out £500 on an Epson FX80 printer. This is a superlative job..it can print ENLARGED, EMPHASIZED, or condensed..in plain, Italic styles with a choice of Pica or Elite spacing...in about six different languages if you need 'em..plus a few other tricks. There's only one snag, the Operating Manual might be OK for a Machine Code/Buff/Expert, but to a tiro such as I..it leaves a lot to be desired. It took me about a week and much poring over computer magazines to discover how to get it working. The manual didn't tell me (nor did the Beeb book) that if the book said LPRINT CHR\$(27);CHR\$(D);CHR\$(n)..for example...one had to ignore all that gibberish and type in... VDU ",*,27,1,68,1,n That 1 has to be inserted twice each command. Having discovered that, it required only a few hours to find that when I wanted the thing to print £, I had to key in the hash mark instead.

So now I have my paperback and hardcover sales lists all stored in cassettes..and capable of being printed out at the touch of a key..Ah, joy! Next problem is to put the ERG mailing list through the printer...so if any gen man (or woman) out there can translate the Epson ESC 'D' sequence for a horizontal tab..into BBC Basic to give me four columns of print..I'd like to hear from you..so far the manual has defied all my efforts to sort it out..

I'm also working on a computerised ERG Index running from No.1 I'm using a commercial program for this..and keep meeting two snags. For some esoteric reason, 'MASTERFILE' regularly loses all records after No.18 when using 5 fields/50 records...and steadfastly refuses to PRINT out the data on command. Problems...always problems.

Future plans..once my bank balance has recovered...are for a WORDWISE word processor program..and later, for adding twin disc storage. By that time, I'm hoping that 'motherboards' will be available to upgrade my Beeb to 64K..or more. Talk about carrots on sticks..or grass always being greener over the hill.....but at least, computing takes up less space than two dupers. STOP PRESS...Tab problem licked...Hooray! BTJ



STAYING ALIVE

A Writer's Guide

Norman Spinrad

Donning \$5.95

Arising from a series of columns in Locus, the most useful section of this book is probably the one on agents, contracts (plus analysis of a sample of same) and finances. This is followed by essays on the financial facts of publishing, profits, royalties, advances and on to the mechanics of Awards, literary status, media power...along with high-level opinion as to how the SF market got where it is...what is happening now and what is likely to develop. Written,

'warts and all' (a favourite word is 'shit') plus a few irritating slips of grammar... 'Ouvre' being repeatedly used for 'Oeuvre'; elsewhere, a 'publisher' is said to 'protect itself'; 'whom' or 'who' are used in place of 'which', etc. Quibbling apart, this is not a HOW TO WRITE manual on the mechanics of the job, (If you want that, get the De Camps', SF Handbook) but an excellent, eye-opening and highly personalised inside view of the market as seen by a professional...and from that angle, it's invaluable.

PSION

Joan D. Vinge
Futura £2.95

Street-urchin 'Cat' is picked up by a street patrol, coerced into a psi-training course, then rejected and press-ganged into slave labour in the Telhassium mines of 'Cinder', a tiny wordlet core of the Crab Nebula. A psi-powered race of Spooks sees his latent power released and working with the 'good' psi people, he works against master criminal and renegade psi, 'Quicksilver'. The latter plans to corner the telhassium market away from the ruling FTA and take over their monopoly of interstellar travel which stems from the element. A classic, rags-to-riches yarn with a touch of Slan; Citizen of The Galaxy and several others. Fast-paced, never a dull moment, but somehow lacking that vital spark that could lift it out of the rut. ..and if you think it pricey, have a look at computer paperbacks which cost aroun £7 for 1/3 the thickness.

THE DARK TOWER C.S.Lewis

Fount (Fontana) £1.75

A collection of short stories in a richly descriptive style, plus a preface and assorted notes by the author's contemporaries. 'The Dark Tower' is an incomplete portion of a tale of an alternate world lorded over by a hideous 'Stingingman'. 'The Man Born Blind' is a neat vignette in which the 'Man' encounters an unforeseen problem. With 'Shoddy Lands', a soupcon of telepathy peers into the mind of a female Narcissus..if such there be. A nice breadth of humour is brought to 'Ministering Angels' when succour is brought to celibate Martian explorers. A touch of mythology appears in the fate of Lunar pioneers, as it does in another fragment... 'After 10 Years'. All in all, a refreshing change in style and pace which almost verges on Gothic horror or Wellsian 'romance'.

PRISONERS OF POWER

A & B Strugatsky
Penguin £1.95

Imagine a war-devastated planet..radioactive and scarred. Its people of two kinds..those plagued by a twice a day, splitting headache whilst they undergo the mind control broadcasts of the Creators. The other group of degenerates are immune to the effect, and so are outlaws fighting the regime. Maxim, a near-superman from Earth, crashes on this world when his craft is hit by missiles. At first naive and trusting, we follow his progress from army to prison camp, guerrilla band, and research lab. With each step, he becomes more wordly and cynical as he works towards bringing down the system. The ending is totally deus ex machina..unexpected, but not worthy of the high standard of the rest of the yarn. A plus is the fact that (to my innocent eye) it appears dogma-free...but if any regime is decried, then it is totalitarianism. Incidentally, the Strugatsky's also manage to avoid the common trap of totally black and white characters, with even their hero apt to do the odd stupid act.

THE GHOST DANCE

Robert Faulcon
Arrow £1.60

Third in the series wherein Dan Brady battles against the evil black magic of the Arachne in his search for the wife and child they stole from him. This time an Indian girl, possessed by spirits is sent to defeat him after he has been lured to Casterigg by two Arachne renegades. Unlike the earlier two Yarns (Talisman & Stalking), this one lacks cohesion and seems more a vehicle for violent and unlikely action. The hospital massacre, scattering of police cars and several killings all seem strangely 'off stage'..with nobody doing anything about them. As with Tubb's 'Demarest' quest, I suspect that Brady will never discover his lost family...and frankly, I don't really care. Yarns 1 & 2 were enjoyable (if you like black magic/horror..this one verges on the pot-boiler.

RING-RISE RING-SET

Monica Hughes
Magnet £1.25

Earth faces a coming Ice-Age caused by the break up of a passing comet which creates Saturn-like rings and cuts down the solar heat input. 15-year-old Liza (scatter-brain and malcontent) tires of life in an anti-ice research station and stows away on a field trip. Captured by Ekas (Eskimos), she lives with them until their way of life is threatened by anti-ice research experiments. Liza is a bit tiresome and the ending rather 'in the air'. Nevertheless, overall I'd rate this as an excellent juvenile and that rare bird..one aimed at the feminine market. If you have daughter, niece or friend-of-the-family in this age range, I'm sure they'd love it as a gift.

THE EYES OF THE OVERWORLD

Jack Vance

Pocket Books USA

Published in 1966, but I only just acquired a copy. Cugel the thief is sent on a mission by a magician he had planned to rob. His adventures and eventual come-uppance make for one of the best Vance Yarn I have come across..lovely settings, characters and descriptions..and not a message in a carload. If you can locate a copy, read and enjoy.

TALES OF WONDER

John Russell Fearn
Phil Harbottle £1.00

A 40-page booklet bearing a black and white reproduction of this magazine's first-issue cover (see also ERG 79) and holding inside, a brief history of the venture, plus two John Russell Fearn tales from that first issue (One under the pseudonym of 'Geoffrey Armstrong') SUPERHUMAN concerns a pair of giant human beings at large in London, and 'SEEDS FROM SPACE' sees an invasion from the Red Planet. Both yarns are dated in style, but still excellent examples of the work produced by a writer who came to be known in the USA as 'the cover copper' because of the regularity with which his epics would grab that spot. The first was akin to Wells' 'Food Of The Gods', the latter had many contemporaries. Together with the potted history, they make a real collector's item and a chunk of nostalgia for all those who lament the passing of TOW. Get your copy direct from Phil, at 32 Tynedale Ave., Wallsend, Tyne & Wear...and it would help if you added 20p in postage. Keep 'em coming, Phil!

SCIENCE FICTION PUZZLE TALES

Martin Gardner
Penguin £2.95

36 of those delightfully infuriating puzzles in story form, from the pages of the Asimov SF mag. Each short story poses a problem based on a branch of mathematics..and in many cases, the solution leads to a second (or even third) brain-teaser. For those wishing to pursue any topic, additional information and explanation accompanies most of the answers, plus a bibliography for further reading. Naturally, the fiction is trivial (but often entertaining), though the puzzles are superb fare. Those who love to rouse their brains will find something more stimulating than the tally. Large, (Qto size 147pp) it's a real bargain..and an ideal gift for anyone who loves real puzzles.

CONSTELLATIONS

Ed. Malcolm Edwards
Penguin £1.50

A round dozen yarns which surprisingly, are not 90% ex-Analog. Bob Shaw's 'Light of Other Days' tale of 'slow glass' opens a scintillating variety of humour, near-fantasy cum social message (in the shape of 'Of Mist and Grass and Sand' from Vonda McIntyre; time travel, space adventure, mutants and others from a star-studded author line-up. Leiber, Ballard, Dick, Vonnegut, Harrison and Clarke to name but a few. To my mind, the great strength of this collection lies in its variety. Malcolm Edwards has avoided the theme ruts worn so deeply by other anthologists. As a result, you get a sparkling collection without a single clunker. Now if only this could be achieved every month..or say, every quarter..what a superb SF 'magazine' it would make....not so gentle hint to Penguin ???

WANTED by the editor..GALAXY NOVEL No. and any Novel after No.31 also any pre-1940 SF, Air, G-8, Doc Savage issues. Drop me a line if interested.

WHITE GOLD WIELDER

The first trilogy chronicling the story of Thomas Covenant Stephen Donaldson made a big hit in the Fantasy-reading world. Surprisingly Fontana £2.50 enough (since follow-ons usually prove inferior to their origins), the second trilogy is proving equally popular. Devotees will therefore be delighted with this concluding epic in the second 'Chronicles'. Once again, Covenant, (who started out as an incurable cancer case) continues his battle against Lord Foul in the strange Land to which he is inescapably drawn at irregular intervals when danger threatens. All the old magic is here in this massive, 500+ page volume..along with a map of the territory and a glossary to aid your memory. For newcomers, there is also a brief 'What Has Gone Before' opening. Will there be a third trilogy?..a sort of trilogy of trilogies?..well, this one seems to wrap everything up in a definitive package...but you never can tell.

NEW WORLDS An Anthology Edited By Michael Moorcock

Flamingo £3.50

A hefty 500 or so pages; 30 item (I won't call 'em stories) anthology culled from the Moorcock-edited years of the magazine..with, sadly, only one story from the Carnell, 18-year era. Well, at least this should tell you whether or not you are likely to enjoy this kingsized helping of 'New Wave', 'Experimental' writing..where the experiment becomes the end, rather than a means of attaining an end. A brief Foreword and Introduction detail something of the magazine's history and an Index appears at the back. Material is by Disch, Spinrad, Ballard, Moorcock, Langdon Jones and many others of 'experimental' note. Plenty of copulation and four-letter words wrapped up in a wide range of styles and essays. I'd call the style 'Speculative Free-writing' rather than 'Science ...or Fiction'. No doubt someone will say I don't understand such stuff..and they would be right. On the other hand, who does? Much of the credit, I suspect, stems from what I call the 'Emperor's New Clothes' syndrome. After some 50 years reading Science ..and other, fiction..I still prefer a yarn which has both plot and meaning..not to mention interest. However, if your tastes differ..then this volume will prove a real goldmine of your favourite tipple...to the best of my knowledge; it is a unique collection.

THE BBC MICRO BOOK

McGregor & Watt

Addison-Wesley £7.95

A common fault in computer books is an over-use of analogy..frequently obscuring that which it would clarify. Not so in this excellent book. Written in plain English, a straightforward style and a pleasing layout, its 350 large size pages take you painlessly through the introductory stages of using the Beeb..and on into the murky areas of Loops, IF-Then, lists, PROCedures, Colour, Graphics, Envelopes and even animation. Sample programs and exercises aid the understanding and a further 10 appendices explain editing, cassette files, mode, colour, hex number, ASCII codes and Op System commands..rounding off with a comprehensive index. Read in conjunction with the User Guide, this should prove an invaluable aid to beginner or even the more advanced operator...you simply take each stage as far as you feel like going....oh yes, and it's about twice the size of the average paperback, so at the price, it's a steal in the current high-priced market.



LAST MINUTE ODDS AND ENDS

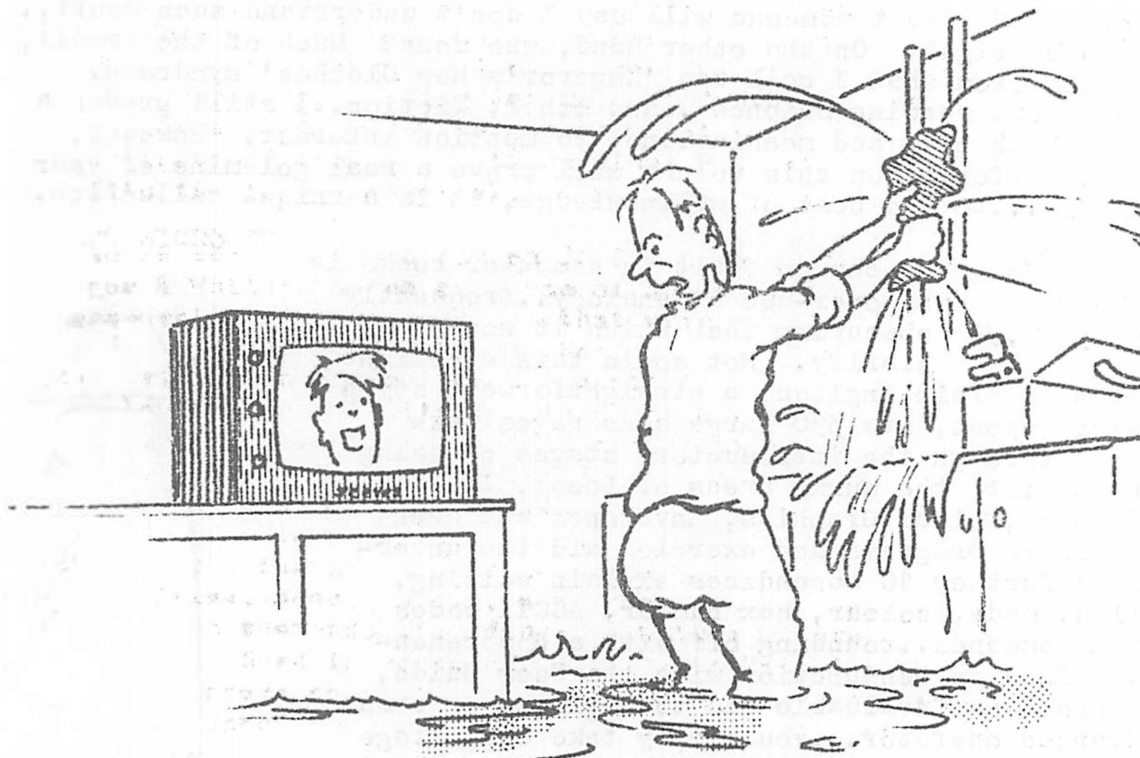
***** Computer buffs...Many moons ago, when the hobby of tape-recording was catching on in fandom (The 50's & 60's Gertrude) I ran a list or two of interested readers and their tape equipment. Reckon it is now time to do a similar job for computer addicts. If you would like your name listing, send along the following details:-

Name, Address, Type of Computer, RAM size, ancillary equipment, Main areas of interest (Games, programming, utilities, business, etc). Alan Burns has offered to collate and stencil the details..so you can either write direct to him or enclose details in that LOC you're going to send to me. Alan's address is... 19 The Crescent Off King's Rd., Wallsend On Tyne.

ASTounding, G-8, Doc Savage..and indæd, almost any pre-1940 pulp magazines are still wanted by the editor by way of trade for modern SF. I'll also sell the stuff, as I'm trying to reduce my collection pending a house move in two or three years. If you'd like a computer printout of hardcovers and paperbacks...just send me a SAE and I'll mail you the lists by return. STATESIDERS..just send me a mint US stamp for 50¢ and I'll mail you the lists (I can trade the stamps when I amass enough..says he hopefully) As stated above, I'll sell..or trade if you have anything I want in the pulp line.

INFORMATION WANTED on details..cost, sizes, etc., on switching ERG over from Mimeo, to photo-lith or offset. If you can give me any help, I'd appreciate it.

.....and if you want the next issue.....DO SOMETHING!



"And tonight's deliberate mistake came when we forgot to tell you to turn off the water before tackling this job."

STARGATE

Originally, the Worldmaker created the immortal Sun Lords, each with his own idyllic planet and people. Now, one by one, they are falling from grace when tempted by the Unmaker's strange book of power. Falia succumbs, Ixellion follows and Ghakazian gets the book. Seeing his way to power, he slays everyone on his world so that their Essences may pass through a stargate and attack the world of Shola by taking over bodies from the inhabitants. The tale is slow to start, and the many names and characters do not help..but once into it, the poetic imagery and vivid word-pictures take over and you have a richly rewarding treat of fantasy.

THE BLACK CLOUD

Fred Hoyle

Penguin £1.75

The earliest (1957) and to my mind, best of this author/ astronomer's SF. Many writers have dabbled with the idea of a cosmic dust cloud intersecting Earth's path through space...Conan Doyle's 'Poison Belt' and Binder's 'Life Disinherited', come to mind.. Hoyle's version opens in a similar manner as routine astronomical techniques reveal the approaching menace...but this time, the cloud turns out to be intelligent and capable of controlling its movements. On reaching the Solar System, it cuts down Earth's sun intake and affects the weather. The problem is how to talk the cloud into going away..or how to attack it. At times, the scientific background tends to be overdrawn, but the interest level remains high so that even after 25 years or so, the yarn holds up surprisingly well. If you haven't had the pleasure of reading it before..then don't miss your chance now. Thought in passing...if the author's 'A For Andromeda' made such a good TV drama..why doesn't someone at the Beeb realise the possibilities in this yarn?

STARSHIP TRAVELLER

Steve Jackson

Puffin £1.50

Fourth in a juvenile series in which the reader uses dice to produce random numbers to determine the outcome of the various struggles and battles which are encountered as he (or she) wends his way via multiple choice questions, through an inter-locking series of Star-Trek-like adventures. It is NOT a story, but a cunningly planned reader-involvement game with each run different from the last (Although I suspect that one would soon find that some steps were being retraced.) Battle rules seem rather involved..and at one point I reached an impasse when Step 216 seemed to reach a dead end. Nevertheless, this should give the younger reader a chance to 'get into' his (and her, ladies) own private journey into space. With Christmas approaching, this one would make a grand gift for any SF-minded youngster on your present list...and if you added a pair of dice and half a dozen photocopies of the score sheet your name would stand high on the list of them whom youthful love has blessed.



WANTED by the editor...Any POGO books in paperback..and a hardcover copy of Asimov's 'COLLAPSING UNIVERSE'...want to trade ???

THE PULP-STYLE ERG QUIZ

How many pairs can you match correctly?

Put the number of each item in the left hand column alongside its pair-bond in the right hand column.

1	OHM	$a^2 = b^2 + c^2$ (in a rt. angle triangle	A....
2	FLEMING	SPECTROSCOPY	B....
3	SHOCKLEY	$(M_1 \times M_2) / d^2$	C....
4	BABBAGE	WEAVING	D....
5	EINSTEIN	QUANTUM THEORY	E....
6	JACQUARD	DYNAMITE	F....
7	CURIE	$C = E/R$	G....
8	HERSCHEL	THE AUTOGYRO	H....
9	PLANCK	WIRE RECORDER	I....
10	NOBEL	THERMIONIC DIODE	J....
11	NEWTON	DISCOVERY OF URANUS	K....
12	GUERICKE	LAWS OF PLANETARY MOTION	L....
13	WHITTLE	STAR CATALOGUES	M....
14	TALBOT	ANTISEPTIC SURGERY	N....
15	PYTHAGORAS	TRANSISTOR DISCOVERY	O....
16	LISTER	DISCOVERY OF RADIUM	P....
17	KEPLER	EARLY COMPUTER	Q....
18	FLAMSTEED	THE VACUUM PUMP	R....
19	PAULSEN	$E = MC^2$	S....
20	CIERVA	THE TURBO JET	T....

Be careful..one or two might lead you astray.

ANSWERS (No peeking)

N-16 0-3 P-7 Q-4 R-12 S-5 T-13

V-15 B-14 C-11 D-6 E-9 F-10 G-1 H-20 I-19 J-2 K-8 L-17 M-18

RATINGS... 20...You are a Bachelor Of ERG (B.E.)

15-19...Very good

10-14...Fair

5-9 ...Poor

1-4 ...Give up SF and stick to Chick's Own.

The judges decision is final, no correspondence will be entered into unless the envelope is big enough. Employees of Arthur Scargill may not enter. The first correct solution opened will be the first one to be read.