

Dave Langford, 22 Northumberland Ave, Reading, Berks RG2 7PW, UK. Subs 6/£1 UK, 5/£1 Europe, 4/£1 elsewhere—or \$s to Burns, 48 Lou Ave, Kings Park, NY 11754. Cartoon: Keith Freeman. Mailing label: Jim Barker. Well, er...



*** MILLIONS OF NEW SKIFFY MAGAZINES ***

EXTRIO Speculative Fiction is the nationwide reincarnation of Robert Allen's ambitious but formerly tatty organ; the print run is said to be 25,000, and Real Distributors will handle the first 'new' issue (mid-September). Familiar names connected with this are R.Allen (boss), Randal Flynn (slushpile master), me ('consultant') and Dorothy Davies (Lord High Everything Else). Plans are for monthly publication, 5/6 stories per issue, fiction rates £15-£25/thousand (ask first before submitting nonfiction); official address 3 Cadels Row, Faringdon, Oxon. (DRL)

INTERZONE is the provisional title of a 'quality' mag planned by a Leeds/London junta featuring David Pringle & Malcolm Edwards (originators, I think) plus Clute, Dorey, Greenland, James, Kaveney, Ounsley. Quarterly publication is planned from Spring '82, via subs and specialist dealers; 'top rates' (second only to *Omni*) for fiction; free HugeNameAuthor story booklet (Ballard is my guess) if you subscribe in 1981: £5 to Ground Zero Publications c/o 28 Duckett Rd, London, N4 1BN. Fiction submissions considered from 1 Oct. After mentioning potential contributors Aldiss, Ballard, Sladek, Moorcock, MJHarrison and Bayley, David P. hastily adds that this *won't* be an exhumed *New Worlds*, perish the thought. New writers are to be encouraged. BSFA publicity support has been arranged in exchange for members' sub discounts. Glory, glory. (David Pringle)

THE OMNI BOOK OF THE FUTURE, described by one Langford in *Vector 103*, is a UK *Omni* spinoff planned as a weekly partwork (assemble five million instalments into sumptuous educational volume, etc) recycling slightly revamped *Omni* articles. A few pages of fiction should appear weekly—*Omni* reprints were originally intended, but too few met the specs of being triffic stories *and* breakable into 2500-3000-word segments to fit the weekly slot *and* accessible to the vast (~100,000) planned audience of non-SF readers. In fact possible consultant Langford read all *Omni*'s fiction to date and could report less than two dozen meeting the first criterion, most of these later being scrapped owing to the second and third. With Michael Scott Rohan (de facto fiction boss at the moment), Langford hoped at least to exert enough influence to avoid *SF Monthly*-type grot when new fiction is bought in: but the signs are that fannish hands are being edged further away from the controls. *Analogish* rates if *TOBotF* survives market testing; hardish SF to Mike c/o Eagleless, 7 Cromwell Rd, London, SW7 2HR. (R.Tappen)

AD ASTRA, still paying only £10/thou despite a circulation of 9,000 (25,000 on ad-rates sheet, coff coff), is late again as I type. Protest to 22 Offerton Rd, London, SW4.

THE PATCHIN REVIEW is Charles Platt's fearless, hard-hitting new fanzine (5/6 issues: c/o 21 The Village St, Leeds, LS4 2PR). This mocks *Locus* for censoring rumours, then prints a (pseudonymous, yet) article on the Nebula ceremony which charts minor indiscretions and carefully omits that event's Big Gossip—re Carl Sagan's *Contact* and rumoured lawsuit threats following the rumoured delivery of the 'not by Sagan' MS. (*Locus*, recording Sagan's extra \$500,000 book-club deal, fearlessly calls the book 'unfinished'—maybe my numerous rumour sources are all wet

at that?) *PR* also features Malzberg, Ellison and reviews with familiar Plattoid reactions to C.Priest: with one critically impartial bound, *An Infinite Summer* is slagged while the newest dreary offerings of Lee Correy, Jack Williamson and even Jacqueline Lichtenberg are not. (DRL)

*** MORE CONVENTIONS I DIDN'T GET TO ***

FANTASYCON :: BIRMINGHAM 10-12 JULY :: NIC HOWARD

Let's start by comparing it to an Eastercon. For one thing, it's much smaller: ~160 members. This had its advantages. Hotel facilities were not overcrowded, and neither was the bar; it seemed possible to get to know everyone personally.

The programme and book room were in adjacent rooms, so there was no need to walk very far. The book room was small, but with plenty of variety, from costly Arkham House books to numerous free badges and magazines—this had advantages for my bank account. The programme itself was interesting. Panels included editors Hugh Lamb, Ramsey Campbell and Francesco Cova talking about letters and unsolicited stories they'd received. When the audience had recovered, Hugh Lamb read a story—'different' to say the least. Ken Bulmer chaired a discussion about world-building in fantasy, during which authors Brian Lumley and David Case said they'd rather like to throw some of the Birmingham rioters through their own broken windows (or words to that effect). Films included the very funny Dracula takeoff *Dance of the Vampires* and the unintentionally hilarious *Hands of Orlac*. Some odd recollections: Ramsey Campbell asking his little daughter about the future of the fantasy film... being buttonholed in the bloomin' 'otel corridor by Ken Bulmer... Karl Edward Wagner announcing that that rumours of his passing away during the night were true... and much more.

British Fantasy Awards: AUGUST DERLETH (BEST NOVEL) *AWARD To Wake the Dead*/Ramsey Campbell; SHORT 'The Stains'/Robert Aickman; FILM *The Empire Strikes Back*; SMALL PRESS *Airgedlanh*/Dave McFerran; ARTIST Dave Carson. (Nic Howard)

BECCON :: BASILDON 31 JULY - 2 AUGUST :: JOSEPH NICHOLAS The GoH was Barrington J Bayley, author of such fine novels as *Collision with Chronos* and *Soul of the Robot*; also present were John Clute, Lionel Fanthorpe and Ian Watson; I'd estimate the attendance at around 150-170. Thus the basic facts: what puzzled me, and others who'd come from further afield (eg. Scotland, not to mention Denver, USA), was the absence of many London-area fans—who missed a generally relaxed, enjoyable, low-key con with a co-operative hotel and some interesting programme items. Not that I saw them all; most of those I did featured me to some extent—I was, for instance, the chairman of a panel ostensibly about 'The Edges of SF', which floundered until Ian Watson came up with a metaphor for the genre as an iceberg being towed through the waters of mainstream literature, melting slowly at its edges. Everyone else promptly got stuck into the possible future of SF in an age of declining literacy, and the coming supremacy of electronic media: somewhat off the subject, but the panellists (particularly John Clute) gave of their best and the audience seemed to enjoy it. Ian and I later battled it out in a game of 'Just a Minute', eclipsing the other contestants Fanthorpe and Webb in a cut-throat race to an eventual draw which, incredibly, an eyeball-to-eyeball tiebreaker failed to resolve; and the audience laughed a lot. They also laughed a lot at Philip Strick's jokes as he introduced the various film-clips he'd brought, themselves wonderfully mirth-making: *Battle-Star Galactica: Conquest of Earth*, for example, in which

the Cylons attacked Los Angeles but seemed unable to cause more than minor disruptions to the traffic-flow, plus the incomprehensible *Glen or Glenda*, ludicrous nonsense about transvestism featuring left-over clips of Bela Lugosi and directed by Edward J Wood, the genius behind the incomparably bad *Plan 9 From Outer Space* (also shown in its own right). Other movies screened included *The Power* (from Frank Robinson's underrated novel of that name), *Demon Seed* and the magnificently camp *Captain Kronos: Vampire Hunter*, set in the 18th century and peppered with such lines as "It is 'time to make our move—time to kill a vampire," as though going out and killing vampires were something one did every other evening.

More seriously, there was a panel on the probable impact of science on society over the next 5-10 years—unfortunately bogged down in a lengthy interchange about microprocessors and the liberating power of computers, though enlivened by an argumentative Gerry Webb. Barry Bayley's Goll speech began with an exposition of Bode's Law and progressed through the harmonics of planetary conjunctions to the possible freakness of Earth's existence and the consequence that we may be alone in the universe. This was challenged by more scientifically literate audience members, but the whole provided food for thought—my main doubt being its suitability for a Goll speech: shouldn't he have used the opportunity to say more about himself and his relationship with SF?

There was a barbecue on Saturday night, pricey but good, and a fireworks display mounted by Hugh Mascetti and other ex-Oxford bombers who, given a legitimate opportunity to play with explosives, took their task ultra-seriously and didn't blow anyone or anything up. (*Shame! —DRL*) From the auction, GUFF raised £37.25 for its UK fund, and Becon generously waived its commission on this. And as the con finished on the sunny Sunday afternoon, England won the Fourth Test: a good end to a good con. (*Joseph Nicholas*)

FAIRCON '81 :: GLASGOW 24-27 JULY :: JOHN DALLMAN
The Friends of Kilgore Trout have run five cons in the last three years: while many normally active fans still don't attend, Faircon was definitely worth the journey. It moved with manic speed: now, three weeks, two cons and one Tun later, a chronological report is out. Some high spots:

The Vagon poetry, from which over half the contestants were ejected before finishing... Fandom's Introduction to Ian Sorenson, acerbic pecunilist* in the planet building panel, which solved the mystery of Haggis... The Fancy Dress, or rather the wait for the results, when we were treated to the first performance of the 'Captive' play: the graphic interrogation scenes were notable for spontaneous dialogue, as not all the cast had scripts... The Starwurst* awards were also presented, these Oscars of Glasgow fandom mostly going to 'The Faircon Strikes Back' (which now has a soundtrack)—a notable exception being Joan Patterson's award as best actress for 'The Novacon Room Party'. More forgettable events included the 9.15am fire alarm due to burning toast (*Jim Barker interjects: "It forced 120 bleary-eyed fans onto the pavement watching fire engines and flashing blue lights. And all we could get out of Ron Bennett was 'Six thousand quid's worth of old comics in there... all insured!'"*), and John Brunner's Goll speech—or perhaps Goll punstring. "And now you're going to suffer," he warned us after 20 minutes: we did... The business meeting was surprisingly popular, running considerably over time. Mostly about the next Faircon, with an amazing number of people promising programme items. Faircon '82 has over 50 members already... (*John Dallman*)

* if this is a typo it isn't one of mine: DRL.

THE ONE TUN :: JULY :: by one of Them :: JONATHAN WAITE
"What I'd really like to see is a Tun report from one of them ['fringies']." (Abi Frost, A19) Oh, all right. Fringie credentials: member of well-known media (fringie) group LPG; looked on with derision by Trekkies, Whoies, Blakies and Hitchies for managing to be all four without falling into mental trap which says if you like one you have to loathe the other three...

The July Tun meeting was exceptional for the fact that it was just as hot outside as inside. Again I suffered from the fact that Famous Fans Mentioned In Ansible do not wear

beanies with downward-pointing arrows stencilled boldly with their names: Abi Frost, John Joyce and even John Clute might well have leapt nimbly from the path of the brimming cider glass that acts as man-with-red-flag to my horseless carriage. I shall never know. (Or shall I?)

The Infernal Machine seems to have stabilized on 'Defender', a game beyond my capabilities, which was a great relief. Ken Mann came up with a very interesting-looking cover wrapped round a couple of very student examples of Prose From Out There. Becon people added to the fun, wandering heroically around with great huge long cardboard boxes of progress reports... What? Oh. No, I don't recall any conspiring as such: most of what fringies talk about is thoroughly open and above board. Plans for our 1982 Mediacon, I gather, went ahead (realfans welcome, native guides and interpreters at reasonable rates)(*see also A18—DRL*). Slartibartday was unveiled. Affairs of the Free Barony of the Fair Isles (*SCA-ish group, I think—DRL*) were discussed in the stentorian tones vital to Tun conversation (leading to that painful condition known as 'tunnitus'). Rubik's Cubes and Octagonal Prismoids were twiddled. Dungeons were gloatingly described to hapless adventurers. No doubt other subjects were touched on: I believe someone mentioned SF, but of course he was immediately suppressed.

To sum up: I think the reason I go is that in some small measure the Tun satisfies my pathetic fantasies about being *really* an SF fan. But in the couple of years I've been going there, in spite of the transition from innocent, clean-cut young displaced yokel to regular London fan, I have never quite lost the impression that really all sorts of exciting deals, feuds, plots and events in general are taking place somehow, without my being let in on it... (*Jonathan Waite*)

*** MAGICAL MEDIA MOMENTS from STEVE GREEN ***

The Empire Strikes Back was named as best SF movie at the recent Academy of SF, Fantasy & Horror Fiction Awards presentations in Los Angeles, as well as receiving awards for best sfx, actor and director... *Somewhere In Time* was chosen as best fantasy film, with best music and costume designs... *Harlequin* received an award for 'outstanding achievement', *Scanners* as best non-US movie, and Angie Dickinson received the best actress award for *Dressed to Kill* despite the fact that all her best scenes used a stand-in.

Critics of the recent *Alien* clone *Inseminoid* include actress Judy Geeson, the ill-fated 'mother': "not the sort of film I would want to see... it is science fiction, fantasy, gone mad. I was led to believe that it was going to be far more sensitive, far more involved in relationships. I don't like it at all..."

Meanwhile, there are unpleasant rumours circulating re the defunct(ish) *Prisoner* society Six of One and its former Number One (if you'll pardon the phrase), Richard Goodman. Goodman, credited for the palace coup which wrecked the society (he drafted extensive rules that gave him complete control, even enabling him to shut down the group without consulting the membership—exactly what appears to have happened), has now handed the exclusive rights to *Prisoner*-related material (negotiated with ITC by the original leadership of the society) to a lawyer friend with the dubious name of Dave Langford (no joke), the same guy who helped him draft those aforementioned rules (*are you sure we aren't talking about the Nova Award?—DRL*) and who has now managed to persuade ITC that only the group he has now formed from the ashes of Six of One should be allowed to publish *Prisoner*-inspired material—much to the chagrin of its membership, who want to form their own (fannish) group... And as if that isn't enough, *Prisoner* fandom also seems to have been infiltrated by a sinister group calling themselves the Federation. Originally their plans involved the centralization of fandom under one leadership (guess whose?), but when this collapsed they settled on the more limited membership of Six of One, most notably at *Prisoner* conventions... is this a case for the Astral Leauge?

RIP: Paddy Chayefsky, author of the Ken Russell movie *Altered States* (credited to 'Sidney Aaron' following an acrimonious argument with KR over the treatment of his writing), after a long battle against cancer. (*Steve Green*)

TAFF TALK NINE *This is the bulletin which was going to appear with (or after) the actual 1981-2 TAFF ballot. Well, well, think of that.*
Another Transatlantic Fan Fund Bulletin from Euro-administrator Dave Langford, 22 Northumberland Ave, Reading, Berks, RG2 7PW, UK. Opinions on TAFF are mine alone; I haven't heard from US Administrator Stu Shiffman (19 Broadway Terrace #1D, New York, NY 10040, USA) since June. Is there anybody out there? Aug/Sept 81.

The TAFF kitty is still just fine, and, amazingly, we actually have some candidates. These are Rog Peyton (whose last bits and pieces are due in any second now) and Kevin Smith (who's been taking advantage of the delay to send in revised bits and pieces, like nomination platforms). I hoped to get the ballot out, but there has been a teensy delay while Rog's US nominators get their official Word through to me. (Roz Kaveney, meanwhile, has added her name to the long and star-studded list of those who nearly stood for TAFF this year but at the last moment decided not to.)

Duncan Lunan's cut-rate goods (last *Taff Talk*) attracted some attention from fans, all of whom wanted the Jupiter poster. It will thus come as no surprise that this poster sold out before my bulk order could be put in—all those who sent money for this can decide what to do with their unexpected credit here. Undeterred, Duncan offers discounted copies of his *New Worlds for Old* to you at £2.50 with 20% going to TAFF—but beware! postage would be £1.10 per copy unless you arrange to collect yours from me somewhere. (List price is £6.95, by the way.) Expressions of interest should be sent in before, say, November.

Greg Pickersgill has Views about TAFF, and has made them known in *Stop Breaking Down ?*. Good for him, because nobody else seems to discuss the fund out loud—not in any way which is to the point, as evidenced by a stultifying Noreascon panel which merely unearthed the dead issue of weighted votes (the sending country should have more say because they know the candidates; the receiving country should have more say because they've got to put up with the results; and so on)—happily coming to no conclusion whatever. Greg says, roughly, that TAFF should be wound up because (a) anyone can afford to go without the fund; (b) from the UK viewpoint, real contact with US fandom can't be made in the swarming masses of a Worldcon; (c) people aren't interested in standing any more; (d) there aren't any deserving candidates anyway.

Administrators traditionally act like the Royal Family etc, and keep their mouths shut, but I don't see why. There are two answers to (a), being firstly that this claim sounds like mere selfishness on the part of such property-owning middle-class fans as Langford or Pickersgill: more and more people are poor each year, more and more are unemployed, and if the next Great White Hope of Britfandom is chronically on the dole I'm sure he/she will be glad to learn TAFF has been cancelled because nobody could possibly find a US holiday expensive. OK, I exaggerate, but... um, a fannish means test? Second comes the Mike Glicksohn Theory of TAFF Prestige, occasionally interpreted as meaning Mike wants to stand one day despite previous visits here: this essentially proposes that TAFF is a triffic accolade to be sought after, irrespective of finance. Certainly it's the last international honour to be voted by 'real' fandom—the fan Hugos not excepted.

Point (b) is a good one, if Anglocentric. It was annoying to find that Noreascon's hugeness had kept away many fans I wanted to meet, and that others were present yet managed to elude me in the teeming millions all weekend long. There's a case for the proposal mooted a few years back, that TAFF should switch to one

of the slightly more fannish and less *Torrent of Faces*-like US conventions, and discussion here is welcome. Note, though, that this doesn't (yet) apply to TAFF trips from There to Here, which are surely worthy of some consideration... a point also to be made about Greg's item (c), the claim of general apathy. There are no less than four Americans eager to come and see us in 1983. I'd like to think that apathy at our end is merely the continued after-effects of the post-Seacon slump, and that the stunning new talent we hear about will shortly get it together—likewise those stunning old talents who spend their time moaning about the lack of new ones. Pause, incidentally, for *argumentum ad hominem*: We might have had a bit less ultimate TAFF apathy this time around if various fannish notables had not helped frighten off the competition by announcing their candidacy, only to drop out rather too late in the day.

Finally—(d)—are there any deserving candidates? No answer from me—I'm supposed to be impartial here, remember. (Despite what Greg seems to think, I haven't even put the arm on potential candidates—merely issued general pleas like *Taff Talk 8*.) As in (a), there are two answers, and the first is almost the same: even if there *should* be no-one worthy this time, what about next time? A thirty-year-old tradition (yay, yay, the Good Old Days) isn't easy to kill off, but it'll be even less easy to revive it after a break in continuity. But the second answer is the clincher here: what do you think the Hold Over Funds slot is for? The TAFF voters are not, I hope, the mindless hordes who crowd the Hugo balloting; they are, or should be, reasonably intelligent fans, and if they share Greg's doubts they should bloody well come out and vote for Hold Over Funds.

Since HOF polled only two votes in the last TAFF race, and likewise in the one before, the inference might be that Greg's dissatisfaction isn't (wasn't) that widespread. Obviously there is some self-interest on the part of the loathsome administrators—I at least have no special wish to be the one who kills off the thirty-year TAFF tradition (besides, even if you think TAFF is ailing, it might well be a cunning wheeze to work a little at a cure before sending for the humane killer). But if HOF actually started to get, and went on getting, a sizeable proportion of the vote, *then* I think we should be worried.

This rambling consideration of this and that is appearing here in defiance of etiquette, I suppose. Suddenly I felt I wanted to mumble right here and right now rather than do the decent thing by sending it in as a letter of comment on *Stop Breaking Down*. Sorry, Greg. Sorry, Linda...

ANSIBLE FALSE LANGUAGE LESSON: Hazel has formally Disowned the Language Lesson
ERATUMS on the back page (inserted by yr humble editor in her absence), for reasons of tedium, excessively good taste, etc. Instead we offer the *real* HAZEL'S LANGUAGE LESSON #12: Tamachek (Tuareg to you and me)—*ARENENAS* a camel with the habit of neighing for joy when it sees something very agreeable; *ENERREGREG* a camel which roars mournfully when it becomes separated from its master or from another camel with whom it has been grazing... MEDIA MIXUPS: I know nothing of media doings, and was duly embarrassed when, after intrepid investigative journalist Steve Green's bit on *Blade Runner* (A18: 'film... from a Phil Dick detective story... don't know which one'), it turned out that even *Omni* readers knew the sourcebook was *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (sans sheep in the film). In Steve's bit this issue I capably altered 'novel' to 'writing' re Chayofsky: research (looking at the poster) indicates the word is 'screenplay'...

More public haranguing on behalf of GUFF from the new UK administrator, Joseph Nicholas, of Room 9, 94 St George's Square, Pimlico, London SW1.

As announced at the end of my rather maudlin stream-of-consciousness piece about my trip to Australia in Ansible 19, GUFF, the Get Up-&-Over Fan Fund, will be running "the other way" in 1982, bringing an antipodean fan to sample the joys and delights of British fandom at next year's Channelcon, and nominations for candidates were then declared open. To my knowledge, there are at least three people interested in standing, and this must bode well for the future of the fund for, as a relative newcomer to a recession-hit (along with the rest of the world) fandom, it can only achieve permanence, support and a momentum of its own through continual activity by all concerned. (Hence my constant pushing of it, anyway....)

By the time you read this, of course, the nomination period will have almost closed -- the deadline is 12 September 1981 -- so if you haven't yet offered your services as a nominator to, or been contacted by, an Australian fan you are instructed to write immediately to the Australian administrator, John Foyster, at 21 Shakespeare Grove, St Kilda, Victoria 3182, Australia, adding your name to the roster of those caught up in this noble endeavour. Although John is a bit fasia at the moment due to the partial flooding of his house at the end of May and various staffing problems at work, he'll surely pass your name along to the people who need it.

In the meantime, fundraising continues apace; while the forthcoming northbound trip will be (largely if not, we hope, wholly) paid for at the Australian end, we in Britain still need to raise money for the next southbound trip in 1983 (to the Worldcon, if the Sydney bid is successful). The fund picked up another £37.25 from the auction at Becon, boosting the total to £143.23; but, given that my Apex ticket cost £606, there's obviously still a fair way to go, and such donations of money and/or material for future auctions as you choose to make will be gratefully received. I have, however, a couple of things to offer for sale on it behalf, as follows:

- (a) The remaining few copies of the first four issues of my fanzine, Napalm In The Morning, for 30p each (including postage), while stocks last; and
- (b) Copies of the By British fanthology of the best British fanwriting of the seventies, edited by Ian Maule and myself and published to commemorate Season 79, featuring much fine stuff by Roy Kettle, Graham Charnock, John Brosnan, Dave Langford, Kevin Smith, Andrew Stephenson, Rob Holdstock, Peter Roberts, Chris Priest, John Piggott, Rob Hansen and Bob Shaw: 80 pages, duplicated, with a card cover by Harry Bell, sold for £1.50 each (including postage).

And in due course -- sometime in October, the schedule having slipped -- my GUFF trip report, entitled Once Upon A Time In Australia, will also be on sale on behalf of the fund; details of its price and such will be announced as soon as I know them myself. Until then, stay loose (or whatever the current jargon phrase might be -- you don't seriously expect an unrepentant Jefferson Airplane fan to be completely in touch with the modern street idiom, do you?).

Joseph Nicholas

Joseph Replies To His Critics I deny it all. Well, some of it, at least. Just that bit there, actually—the bit where Judith denies the rumours linking me with her. Not so; they're all true (I first voiced them, after all). Definitely unfounded, on the other hand, are those linking me (or perhaps me and Valma Brown, or possibly just Valma) to Christine Ashby's wheelchair. Or even Vera Lonergan's cats, for that matter. Not to mention Denny Lien, for it is he who should be linked with a wombat, not Joyce. Never mind the link between Sally Underwood and Chris Evans, or that between Chris Priest and John Foyster, or—but who is the Secret Master of GUFF, and what other hidden dirt does he have on too many people to conveniently name?? Rush only LOTS OF MONEY to Joseph Nicholas under the clock at Waterloo Station, and even less will be revealed. Because now I have to go away and invent it all, of course... (JN)

Judith Hanna adds: "Christine's comment on Joseph [A19]... Marc has misquoted. What she actually said, on the post-Advention Barossa Valley tour, was: 'Joseph is such a nice boy... I wonder what he's like when he's sober.'"

Cultural Studies? *Adrian Mellor (12 Streatham Ave, Greenbank Park, Liverpool, L18 1JG)* has a weirdly terrifying challenge for you all: "I'm to teach a Sociology of Literature course which has a small SF component, and Macmillan's have asked me to dust off my research and produce an essay on SF and fandom for a forthcoming textbook for Communications and Cultural Studies students. As a consequence, I'm getting in touch with old friends and trying to make new contacts in an attempt to update my knowledge of the current state of the culture. I'm particularly interested in what's happened to British fandom in the past few years [and] in anything that comments on the state of British fandom..." OK, all you budding psychohistorians, this is your Big Chance...

Spinoff For moderately boring reasons I recently asked selected Continental fans which authors (UK/US) were popular in their country. ANSIBLE readers would just love to hear the replies, I'm sure—Pascal Thomas (France): "I'm not sure I can answer with absolute certitude: I'm not privy to the publishers' sale figures, but I can guess a few things. A.E.van Vogt is certainly the top seller here (he boasts about it in his usual senile way in an introduction to *New Voices 4*, which has nothing whatsoever to do with the subject). After him, Ray Bradbury (still on the strength of *Martian Chronicles*...) After them should come Arthur C. Clarke (wave the Union Jack), Philip K. Dick, Isaac Asimov, John Brunner, Philip José Farmer and Frank Herbert or Clifford Simak. Not sure about the order, though! ...Now, in terms of 'respect'... That's a toughie. You know as I do that some critics don't respect *anyone* (JN being an outstanding example your side of the Channel). Again, a clear winner: Philip K. Dick (although we are starting to wonder if he has not become as senile as AEV). After that... JG Ballard, Brunner, Silverberg, Herbert, Spinrad, Sturgeon, Farmer. Just a feeling..."

Roelof Goudriaan (Netherlands): "Bestselling foreign Big Heads: Jack Vance, Isaac Asimov; van Vogt, Le Guin, Herbert; Wyndham, Anderson, Heinlein. Jack Vance is, I think, an indisputable number 1, with Astral closely following. After that, things get a bit more shady. Le Guin is very popular right at the moment, some of her newest books are even done in hardcover right away (rare for the Netherlands). Herbert is popular because of his *Dune* (surprise, surprise), which is now available in its 7th printing (rare too in this lowly region)... Maybe Clarke should be mentioned too; I don't think so but others tend to disagree with me (stupid habit). Bradbury is conspicuously missing! Besides this, praise and respect fall to Dick, Disch, Priest, Wilhelm and Sturgeon..." (Lots of thanks: DRL)

COA AL FITZPATRICK, Clear Lake Village (Apt 1601), 1243 Bay Area Blvd, Houston, Texas 77058, USA / RICHARD KENNAWAY, CSA, UEA, Norwich, NR4 7TJ / CHRIS LEWIS, 30 Roberts Road, High Wycombe, Bucks / PETER SINGLETON, *Ruskin* Ward, Park Lane Special Hospital, Maghull, Liverpool, L31 1HW (ward change only...)

CONS DENVENTION will probably happen even as you read this. The latest release I have contains such staggering information as 'There will be a Logan's run taking place at DVII...' Argh. NOVACON 11: people worried about non-processing of memberships can now rest easy—the job has been taken over by dynamic Helen Eling from ailing Jean Frost. Still £5.50 full membership, to Helen at 124 Galton Rd, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B67 5JS. EUROCON 84: John Brunner's plans were further discussed at Faircon, the only sour note coming when Bob 'The Other' Shaw announced that if Albacon 11 failed to get the '83 Eastercon, he would have no choice but to bid against the '84 Eastercon/Eurocon (Mass cringe from other Glaswegians)... TORONTO IN 85 is a possible rumoured Worldcon bid, opposing Madison and (maybe, if they don't win in '83) Australia. Meanwhile, Atlanta is opposing New York and Philadelphia for '86. And in 1984, well...

INFINITELY IMPROBABLE YOU'VE READ IT EVERYWHERE ELSE, WHY NOT IN ANSIBLE? Yes, another absolutely finally retired writer, A.C. Clarke, has been lured by the diminutive charms of Judy-Lynn Del Rey and a \$1,000,000 advance (not necessarily in that order) and has contracted to write *2010: Odyssey Two*, a sequel to some book of his which we momentarily forget. (Source: *SFC*, *Locus*, *The Sun*, *The Beano*, etc) This has greatly grieved Jerry Pournelle, who with Larry Niven had just flogged the unwritten *The Foot* (being the original *Lucifer's Hammer* synopsis, before they took out the aliens) for ~\$600,000 and wanted to claim this as 'the highest advance ever for an sf novel' (media stuff by Sagan and horror stuff by King not counting, of course). Meanwhile, *Timescape* continues to win everything except a Hugo nomination—this time the JWC Memorial Award... RIP: George O Smith of *Venus Equilateral* fame... BIRTHS: Pat and Graham Charnock have produced something weighing 8½lb and called James Stephen (on 1 August)—a brick, they say, but personally I think it must be a cat... LEEDS NOVACON? Well, not quite, but the rumour is that the Leeds mob will be ferried in to spare old and tired Brummies the effort of running Novacon 12. "They run everything else, why not Novacon?" commented ashen-faced TAFF candidate Rog Peyton... DAMMIT! says Judith Hanna, annoyed by Our Joseph's description of her, last issue, as a 'diminutive redhead'. *Ansible* apologises to raven-haired Amazon Judith Hanna... LOST&FOUND: the irrepressibly light-fingered Maules found a carrier-bag in the pub after the Leeds-US wedding reception (4 July): if it was yours, claim your *London A-Z* and *Taff Talk 8* (first version) from them... PAN are spending their entire SF publicity budget on a whopping promotion of *Lord Valentine's Castle* (Oct 9)... LOCUS/SFR/THRUST magazines on the cheap? Such are the plans of indefatigable telephone-user Paul Turner, who reckons 20-45% discounts can be got by group buying: write to 75 Horniman Dr, Forest Hill, SE.23... DARK THEY WERE & GOLDEN-EYED definitely appears to have closed for good... THE FOUNDATION: the official termination of lovely writer-in-residence Colin Greenland provoked a bit in the *Sunday Times*—a 'scurrilous attack' (G.Hay), a 'harmless piece... which went so blasphemously far as to indicate that Colin G had through being housed there helped the Foundation survive and it was a shame he had been sacked' (J.Clute). Anyway, seems *Foundation* is now strong & vital in all ways; though after many Council meetings George Hay 'wonders, while listening to the long and painfully intricate discussions of grants, bursaries, library administration, financial cuts, recovery of debts, etc, whether the academics involved

ever discovered what SF was actually *about*.' (Some folk, like nice Acting Administrator Charles Barren, are excepted from George's mockery)... THE WINIFRED JACKSON MEMORIAL PERPETUAL CHALLENGE CUP FOR THE BEST FRONT FLOWER GARDEN was presented at the annual Horticultural Show in Moreton Pinkney (22 Aug) to a proud but humble Ian Watson. Anticlimactically, he's been commissioned by Channel 4 TV to write the first script (by December) for an original SF series *Mindprobe* devised by I. Watson—and will be commissioned to write more episodes later. *Ansible* would much rather print such joyful news than base rumours of how his novel *Metamorphoses* (the one after *Deathhunter* [Oct 1]) has failed as yet to find a home even with the Old Firm, Gollancz... FOCUS, the BSFA's withered organ, is to be stimulated to new life by fairly dynamic fans David Swinden, Chris Bailey and Allen Sutherland... ROBERT SHECKLEY resigned as *Omni* fiction editor when B. Bova wouldn't allow him time off to finish a novel, and has been replaced by universally celebrated SF personality Ellen Datlow... LIES, LIES: Which editor of an SF line producing numerous Marion Zimmer Bradley novels has never yet been able to finish one? Alas, *Ansible* drunkenly promised not to tell... FLASH! HONESTY MOMENTARILY HITS HUGO RULINGS! After Denvention overrode the rules to 'hold over' *Superman II* to the 1982 Hugos despite its 1980 appearance (and thus 1981-only eligibility), Chicon '82 has decided to stick by the book and refuse 1982 eligibility to this overrated film. One fears they will yet back down; such integrity would be more convincing did they not practically beg fandom to overrule them at the Denvention business meeting, and did they not implicitly subscribe to the notion that items prejudged as 'important' should be given all possible help to get on the Hugo ballot while 'lesser' works (eg. by British authors) without 'enough of a distribution to allow for informed voting' (their phrase for *Superman II*) should not... AUSTRALIAN NEWS keeps coming: I blame Joseph for this. Try subscribing to the newszine on the spot, *Thyme*: 3/\$2A air, 6/\$2A surface, agent is Joseph (address in GUFF flyer)... THE FREE SPACE SOCIETY sends a wad of bumf: pro-space, naturally; anti-'International-zone' laws and especially the UN Moon Treaty; generally eager to get Out There and watch their inferiors snuff it in an 'inevitable' WWII. £10 yearly (or £12.50 if you wish to be a 'Space Settler' under the far-seeing Presidency of George Hay); monthly newsletter; SAE/cheque to 'Ingleneuk', Waterside Rd, Kirkintilloch, Glasgow, G66 3HB... IT CAN'T BE GOOD, IT'S SF: "I do feel that *Solaris* is the least successful of my films because I was never able to eliminate completely the science-fiction association." (Andrei Tarkovsky, *NFT Bulletin*)... TRIPLE FIRST AWARD: send your unpublished first novel to the Bodley Head/Penguin/BCA comp before 1982, and I guarantee that if it's SF it will never even be seen by judge Graham Greene nor published by said three outfits for a £5000 advance. (The award is theoretically wide-open, but Bodley Head's Max Reinhardt patently wants a best-seller and promises to make sure Greene will read 'as few as possible' of 2,500 expected entries)... WORLD FANTASY CON denies censorship, explaining that their phrase 'we will not have any unicorns in the artshow' doesn't mean they won't have any unicorns in the artshow.

HAZEL'S LANGUAGE LESSONS #12

candiru *a minute fish in the Amazon river and its tributaries which has been said to dart into the male urethra when one urinates under water while bathing.*

(*Steaman's Medical Dictionary*)

ANSIBLE 20: 22 Northumberland Ave
Reading, Berkshire, RG2 7PW, U.K.

***** 14

JOE D SICLARI
4599 NW 5TH AVE
BOCA RATON
FL 33431
U.S.A.

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