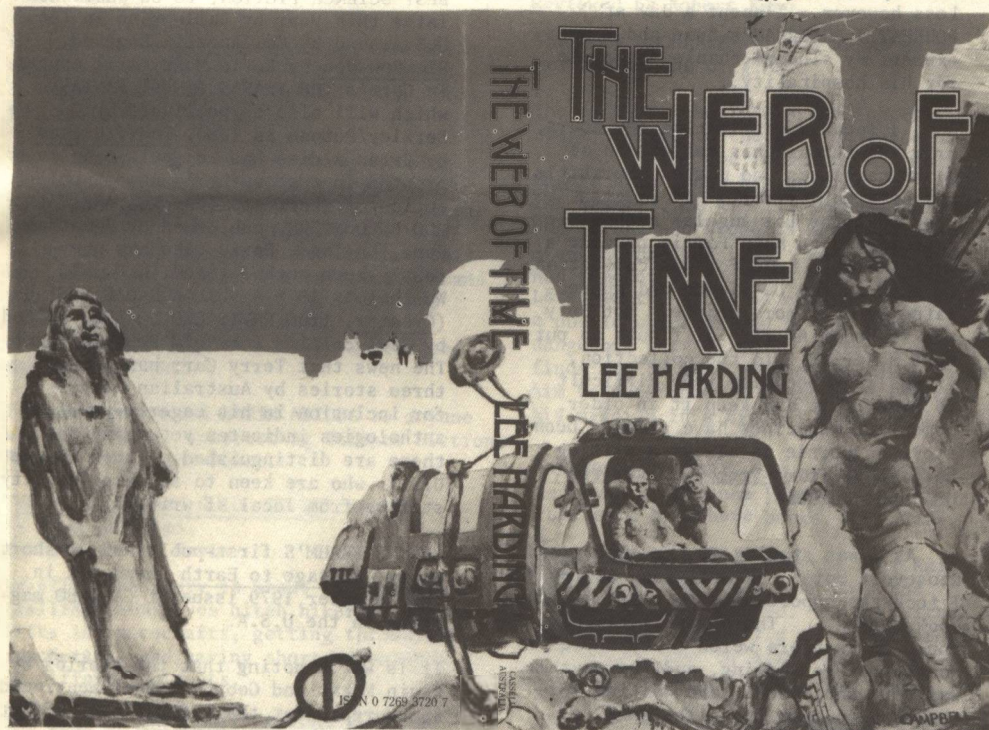


# AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS

Issue # 16

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## NEW LEE HARDING NOVEL PUBLISHED BY CASSELL AUSTRALIA

WEB OF TIME by Lee Harding with cover and interior illustrations by Stephen Campbell, was released by Cassell Australia in February, with an Australian cover, recommended price of \$6.95. The theme of course is time travel, but we will review it fully in the next issues.

## NEWS FROM DON TUCK

Tasmanian SF fan and editor of the ADVENT publication THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY, DON TUCK received a Special Non-Professional Award from the 1979 World Fantasy Convention. He reports that work is well on the way with Volume Three of The Encyclopedia, which will include the paperback and magazine sections. This volume will be very comprehensive and ADVENT is aiming for publication this year. Volume 4, a 1969-75 Supplement is well advanced also, but one would not expect to see that before late 1981 we would say at a guess. Don also reports that the 1976- file is well under way and enable him to provide up to date author story listings, such as we have printed in the NEWS a number of times.

Numerous other reference volumes have been published including a recent

two volume set called SCIENCE FICTION and FANTASY LITERATURE by Robert Reginald published by The Gale Research Company, which is current to 1974. This is nowhere near as detailed in the information given as Don Tuck's Encyclopedia. Don puts all his spare time into his Encyclopedia, and especially considering it is a spare time occupation he has done a tremendous job.

## THE RONALD E. GRAHAM SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY COLLECTION

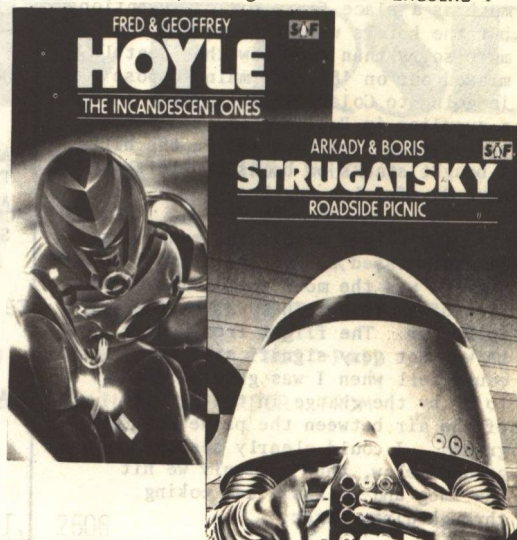
We have been advised by a very reliable source, that The Graham Collection has now been handed over to the University of New South Wales Fisher Library. However numerous duplicates have been auctioned by James R. Lawson Pty. Ltd., Auctioneers and Valuers, whose address is 236 Castlereagh Street, Sydney New South Wales 2000. We suggest you write for a catalogue. Their next auction is to be held on the 18th of March.

While on the subject of collections we will give a plug to SPACE AGE BOOKS, who have just purchased the collection of an early Melbourne SF Club member, Phil Leitch. It consists of paperbacks, hard covers, and magazines from the early pulps to late 1960's issues. A good selection of Australian publications is included. Organisers of the

UNICON VI Convention Auction, to be held at Easter in Melbourne, have selected about 1000 titles to be auctioned at UNICON VI. A list of the books and magazines for sale is now available from SPACE AGE. A listing of the titles for auction should also be available. Please send SAE. They intend to carry a wide range of second hand material now on a regular basis at SAB. They are interested in buying other collections, and that of the late Bob McCubbin is one which they expect to be handling in the near future.

## PENGUIN BOOKS AUSTRALIA MAKE MARCH A SCIENCE FICTION MONTH

PENGUINS have deliberately delayed the publication in Australia of a number of reprints and new titles, so that they could have a massive sf release in March this year. The new titles are: MORE WOMEN OF WONDER edited by Pamela Sargent, THE INFERNO by Fred & Geoffrey Hoyle, ROADSIDE PICNIC by Arkady and Boris Strugatsky, IN SOLITARY by Gary Kilworth, XANTHE AND THE ROBOTS by Shiela MacLeod, and THE INCANDESCENT ONES by Fred and Geoffrey Hoyle. The reprints are: SIRIUS by Olaf Stapledon, THE STATUS CIVILIZATION by Robert Sheckly, APEMAN, SPACEMAN edited by Leon H. Stover and Harry Harrison, THE FIFTH PLANET by Fred and Geoffrey Hoyle, TIGER! TIGER! by Alfred Bester, SEARCH THE SKY and WOLFBANE both by Frederick Pohl and C.M. Kornbluth, ALTER-NATING CURRENTS by Fred Pohl and THE KRAKEN WAKES, THE MIDWICH CUCKOOS, and CONSIDER HER WAYS all by John Wyndham. The cover designs on most of these titles are excellent. They not only illustrate the stories, they are eye-catching, bright and jokey in most cases, but still very different from other series, if not immediately recognisable as PENGUINS.





## TO BRIGHTON & BACK

### A TRAVEL DIARY

By Merv Binns

#### Part Two

I arrived in Washington on the eve of hurrican David. The weather was very humid, but the HOTEL HYATT REGENCY was probably the best I stayed in during my trip. I made a beeline for the AERONAUTICS AND SPACE MUSEUM and spent the rest of the day there. In the evening, the remnants of the hurricane struck, and it rained and rained and rained. In the morning I made for the ART GALLERY and the SMITHSONION INSTITUTE. Seeing all those original great masters was really something. I have never been a great art lover, but actually looking at the real things that I have only read about was a bit of a thrill. I never made it to the Smithsonian. The rain was coming down in torrents. It took me two days to dry my shoes out. After buying a plastic coat and umbrella I did go for another walking tour, and I got as far as the WHITE HOUSE, but again my feet and trousers were swimming so I gave up after that.

The next day I was back in New York again. I had dinner with friends again and we saw the Broadway musical ANNIE, filling a life long ambition to see a musical stage show in New York. The next day is a vague memory, but in the evening I went to a fan gathering at the home of Andy Porter, editor of STARSHIP magazine, and I had an enjoyable night doing what I like best, talking to people. I had a nasty surprise when I got back to my hotel room however, as my camera equipment and films had been stolen. Next time I will know better.

With my heart not really in it, I did a bus tour of the city, a ferry trip to the Statue of Liberty and finished up with a visit to the top of the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING. In the evening I attended another small gathering of fans at SETH BREIDBART's flat on Third Avenue, and that was another enjoyable evening.

On the last leg of my trip I took off for the West. Called into Denver, Colorado, which did not impress me much as a place for a World Convention, but the hotels were impressive. I'm more sorry than ever now that Seattle missed out on '81. My main purpose in going to Colorado was to call into a supplier in Boulder, and Boulder was quite a nice town set in the hills. I bought stacks of books and left next day for Los Angeles.

The flight across the mountains (I just missed seeing the Grand Canyon) was the most impressive aerial view of my trip. That was on the way to Denver. The flight from Denver to LA was not very significant, but I could tell when I was getting close to LA by the change in the density of the air between the plane and the ground. I could clearly see the ground below, then suddenly we hit the smog and it was like looking through dirty water.

Would you believe I had a cough within a few hours of arriving in LA, and then I found that the first day I was there was the highest pollution that LA had ever had. Just my luck. Cash was a bit short also by the time I got to LA and despite a phone call home before I left Denver, it took till the following Friday when I was leaving LA, a week later, for a couple of hundred dollars to turn up. Banks can be a pain in the neck at times.

My time in LA was not a total loss however, I spent a day at FORREST.J.ACKERMAN's home and I must express my sincere thanks to Forrie for his hospitality..

I spent a fascinating few hours browsing through his collection of books, magazines and movie memorabilia and original artwork. It is great to hear that the Los Angeles authorities have agreed to help Forrie provide a more suitable home for his collection, so that it can be viewed and appreciated by many more people. Not only was it becoming very difficult to put more material into the collection, it was also becoming very difficult to protect it and keep it in order. Some rare magazines have already been stolen. Forrie is always a willing host to visitors from all over the USA and overseas.

As I was staying at the 'Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel' on Hollywood Boulevard, I took the opportunity to visit all the bookshops. There was little else I could do as there weren't any movies I wanted to see showing, and the weather was very unpleasant, and waiting for the cash to turn up at the bank, all together fouled up my stay there.

However, thanks to local fan Martin Massoglia who picked me up from my hotel in his car, I got to a LOS ANGELES SF ASSOCIATION meeting. Getting around LA without a car is practically impossible if not very expensive. I sincerely thank Marty and all the other LASFAS members for their hospitality.

The next day I was off home having enjoyed my trip half way around the world again, and finances permitting I will be at Boston this year.

MB

## The Australian Professional Scene

### HONORS FOR AUSTRALIAN SF ANTHOLOGY

American editor TERRY CARR has chosen three stories from ROOMS OF PARADISE - edited by Lee Harding for Quartet, Australia - for inclusion in his forthcoming prestigious YEAR'S BEST collections. Re-Deem The Time by David Lake and In a Petri Dish Upstairs by George Turner will appear in THE YEAR'S BEST SCIENCE FICTION, to be published later this year by Ballantine in the U.S.A. and by Gollancz in England. Pie-Row Joe by Kevin McKay will appear in Carr's THE YEAR'S FINEST FANTASY, which will also be published by Berkley/Putnam in 1980. Indifference by Brian Aldiss has recently been reprinted in that author's newest collection of short stories, NEW ARRIVALS, OLD ENCOUNTERS, published by Jonathan Cape, England. David Lake has previously been anthologised in Donald Wollheim's 1979 ANNUAL WORLD'S BEST SF (Creator, from ENVISAGED WORLDS, edited by Paul Collins for Void Publications). The news that Terry Carr has chosen three stories by Australian writers for inclusion in his eagerly-awaited anthologies indicates yet again that there are distinguished editors in the U.S.A. who are keen to see high-quality stories from local sf writers.

LEANNE FRAHM'S first-published sf short story, Passage to Earth appeared in the December 1979 issue of GALILEO magazine in the U.S.A.

It is worth noting that the stories by Kevin McKay and George Turner mentioned above represent their first-ever efforts in the short story medium.

George Turner's BELOVED SON we believe is eligible for the big annual awards, and we hope that eligible voters for The Hugo and Nebula Awards will remember this. If you have not joined this year's World Convention you still have time. Robin Johnson is the agent. P.O. Box A491, Sydney South, NSW 2000.

## AUSTRALIA IN '83!

### AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS

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# People and Publishing

JACK WILLIAMSON's sequel to 'The Humanoids' will be called THE HUMANOID TOUCH, and will have a limited hard cover publication by Phantasia and later by Holt and Bantam. DAVID BISCHOFF has sold a sequel to 'Nightworld' to Del Rey, and two books to Berkley which will follow 'Starfall' due out in May. CARL LUNDGREN has recently completed twelve new covers for the Berkley Heinlein series. DAVID GERROLD has added twelve chapters to his novel 'Yesterdays Children' which will be published by Popular Library. JOAN VINCE's new novel SNOW QUEEN has been delayed till April to allow for more publicity. ELIZABETH LYNN's forthcoming NORTHERN GIRL has been put off till April.

BARRY LONGYEAR has sold two novels to Berkley/Putnam currently titled LIZARD, ASK NOT, and TOMORROW TESTAMENT.

JACK VANCE has sold the first volume of a new fantasy trilogy, entitled LYONESSE, to Berkley for a high five figure sum.

STARBLAZE BOOKS named Hank Stine to replace Kelly Freas outgoing editor and chief and illustrator. Stine is the author of numerous sf stories and the last editor of Galaxy, where he is likely to continue despite the Galileo take over. He is the producer director of over 250 educational films, documentaries and tv commercials. The standard set by Freas "will be hard to meet" says Stine, particularly the cover art but Starblaze has Michael Whelan, Jack Gaughan, Steve Fabian George Barr and many other new artists lined up to do their covers.

CHELSEA QUINN YARBRO has sold the last two books in her vampire series to New American Library.

FREDERICK POHL has sold two books to Berkley. The first is THREE PLANETS, which is a collection of three novels originally published under the pen name of "James MacCreigh" in the 1940s. The second is THIS IS MY BEST and is an anthology of stories that are the 2% that stick in his mind from the 2% that he's published of the 500,000,000 words of science fiction that he has read as an editor over the last forty years.

ROBERT SILVERBERG's "Lord Valentine's Castle" has been selected as a Literary Guild alternate choice, and KATE WILHELM'S "Somerset Dreams" was the only sf-related title on the American Library Association's list of 50 notable books of 1978.

ROBERT HEINLEIN'S 'Number of the Beast' will not be published by N.E.L. till about June. The American edition will now most like precede the British one from N.E.L., being the reverse of what we reported in the last issue of ASFN.

URSULA LE GUIN'S historical novel MALAFRENA, published last year by Berkley/Putnam and due soon from Gollanzce, has sold around 10,000 copies in the American edition. Her latest novel, THE BEGINNING PLACE is a contemporary fantasy, which takes place in alternate world setting. It is also reported to be selling very well. It is to be hope that the TV version of her LATHE OF HEAVEN is screened over here.

PHILIP JOSE FARMER'S 'Magic Labrynth' has been further delayed, and will not now be published till mid 1980.

Sales of hard covers and paperbacks of ANNE McCAFFREY'S 'Dragon' books still continue to be amazing. Sidgwick and Jackson are reported to be publishing 'Dragondrums' in January U.K. Because of the restrictive closed market set up with their books in Australia, stock of 'White Dragon' has been very limited. The paperback edition is due to be published by Corgi in a few months, so it should be on sale here in time for the author's visit to Australia in August. You never know your luck!

'The Spirit of Dorsai' by GORDON R. DICKSON is a completely new 'Dorsai' book. It was published in the large format Ace edition late 1979, but sold out so quickly that many of the sf specialist book shops did not even get any stock. The ordinary mass market edition will be published in a few months. In general Space Age reports very strong buyer resistance to the large format fiction. Illustrated or not.

ILLUSTRATED F & SF is being done to death by publishers now. There is just so many books published already and more to come, that we do not believe that the market can support them. The quality of some leaves a lot to be desired also. The reproduction of the work of popular cover artists such as MICHAEL WHELAN'S 'Wonderworks' will continue to sell, but some others just using the work of various artists to create a mythical future universe, cater only to a juvenile market. Which I suppose need be catered for to some degree, but some publishers are just jumping on the bandwagon. One which we do highly recommend is BARLOWES GUIDE TO EXTRATERRESTRIALS by Wayne Douglas Barlowe. This is being Published in Australia by Methuen. It features illustrations of famous 'aliens' from highly rated sf stories such as Larry Niven's 'Puppeteer' from the 'Ringworld' stories. Don't miss it! The Michael Whelan book is also receiving Australian distribution, through Tudor Distributors.

Penguin books have bought paperback and hard cover rights to the highly rated fantasy THE BOOK OF THE DUN COW.

## NEW RELEASES FROM AUSTRALIAN DISTRIBUTORS

The last ARROW SF distributed by REVIEW ENTERPRISES in January was THE CLEWISTON TEST by Kate Wilhelm.

PITMAN distributed in January the BBC paperback by Jack Gerson from the TV series THE OMEGA FACTOR.

GORDON and GOTCH February releases in CORGI are FARNHAM'S FREEHOLD by Robert Heinlein, THE NECRONOMICON by George Hay, and VISION by Dean R. Koontz. In PANTHER in February THE AGE OF THE PUSSYFOOT by Frederick Pohl, LETS GO TO GOLGOTHA introduced by Brian Aldiss, EARTHCULT by Trevor Hoyle. TIME AFTER TIME by Karl Alexander based on the excellent movie featuring H.G. Wells v. Jack the Ripper was published in Jan. In rare American editions they have from DELL MASTER OF HAWKS by Linda Bushyager, in FAWCETT ALIEN by Victor Besaw, and in POPULAR LIBRARY THE THIRD BODY by Sam Dunn.

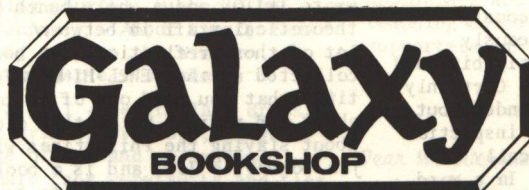
CASSELL/COLLIER MACMILLAN continue the interesting Russian SF series with NOON 22ND CENTURY by Arkady and Boris Strugatsky, (PB) THE UNCERTAINTY PRINCIPLE by Dimitri Bilenkin (PB), and NEW SOVIET SF by Jacobson, Salz and Nakhimovsky (HC) February also saw the publication in Australia of Lee Harding's WEB OF TIME.

WILLIAM COLLINS only have an NAL title for February; A CAT OF SILVERY HUE by Robert Adams

The RICAL/KENNARD & associates have in MAGNUM A HERITAGE OF STARS by Clifford Simak. In HAMLYN they have CITY OF THE SUN by Brian Stableford and THE DEVIL'S COACHORSE by Richard Lewis.

THOMSON HOLDINGS (Formerly Nelson) have for February in SPHERE: two horror stories only: THE CURSE OF LOCH NESS by Peter Tremayne and BAAL by Robert R. MacCammon.

TUDOR DISTRIBUTORS The main release recently was the collection INFINITE DREAMS by Joe Haldeman. They also released the illustrated version of ALIEN edited by Richard Anobile in FUTURA and QUEST FOR THE WHITE WITCH by Tanith Lee.



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# FEATURE REVIEW SAMUEL R. DELANY

AUTHOR OF THE MONTH

by DAMIEN BRODERICK

THE JEWEL - HINGED JAW

Samuel R. Delany. Berkley Windhover \$6.20 PB

EMPIRE

Samuel R. Delany. Illustrated by Howard V. Chaykin \$11.95 PB

THE DELANY INTERSECTION

George Edgar Slusser . Milford Series/Borgo Press \$2.60 PB

Once upon a time, long ago when I was only a strapping youth and you, my smalls, were not yet born, three-quarters of all the world's sf appeared, head to tow, in the form of dwarf siamese paperback twins, with titles like SLAVE BRAINS OF THE FEMALE CENTURIANESSES.

Each such book was born fused at the spine, against all accepted laws of genetics, with another of different parentage. These Ace doubles were terribly embarrassing things to be seen with on the tram, though you could do simple tricks with them like hiding one cover and giving the old lady sitting opposite the queasy sense that you were reading upside down. If she had a printer in the family, or was one herself, this trick would not impress her.

In those far-off days before youth unemployment, my smalls, the young were very poor and had to steal their books once they'd exhausted the municipal library's slender sf stocks. There was one alternative: they could haul on the rope, propelling a wheezing hydraulic lift up it's dusty shaft, and thus enter the vast trove of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club. (You'll notice certain constraints here, gang. For example, it would have been harder for Perth fans to follow this formula. Perhaps this explains the absence, at that time, of large numbers of Perth fans.)

Cast your minds back, therefore, to those fabled virgin days on 1963, and imagine encountering on Merv Binn's shelves a Double with the title CAPTIVE OF THE FLAME. Yetch. One recoiled. This was due to the fact that a year earlier Ace had brought out THE JEWELS OF APTOR, which had been endorsed by P. Schuyler Miller as "butrageously fantastic, romantic and gorgeously implausible...full of fantastic bits and glimpses of bizarre beauty." Certainly sounded like good old sensawonder, but Miller's claim proved, after inspection of the goods, to be fantastically outrageous and implausible. In a word, this new guy Delany's maiden effort stank.

Yet CAPTIVES was announced as the first of three. An industrious feller at least. Time roared on, and the trilogy was completed, and THE BALLAD OF BETA-2 came out in 1965, and the following year the last of the Delany Ace Doubles hit Merv's shelves. The title turned my knees to jelly, folks. EMPIRE STAR. God, what a ripper! Just gotta try the man again. And it was

4

great. Romantic and gorgeously implausible, god damn! Full of little lit'ry jokes. A character called Muels Aranlyde who was obviously 'Samuel R. Delany' with one letter changed (why?). (A point which was not resolved in his following book, actually written earlier, where Muels Aranlyde "author of EMPIRE STAR" is mentioned.)

As it happens, the famous critic John Foyster did not agree with this estimate of EMPIRE STAR, and supported his disapproval with a letter from Delany explaining that the book was written in 11 days. "I don't write as quickly as this normally, and don't want to do so again," was Delany's summary. However, it primed your reviewer to be on the lookout for more of the product, and in 1966 BABEL 17 came out in an Ace volume all by itself, amazingly clean and attractive, and ran off with part of a Nebula. I read it on the Sydney-to-Melbourne train some days after first kicking the nicotine habit, and I didn't want a smoke the whole time.

I like Delany pretty much by now, and went back and read the trilogy. It was awful, but bits of the final volume were more ambitious than most sf I'd ever read before. Delany was drunk on words and word-structures, and a lot of people thought he was pretentious and purple and he was, but what the hell. Eventually he worked for years on DHALGREN, going mad in the process, and discovering he was gay (to go with his black skin and high IF, a triple play which must surely make him worth a Reader's Digest award of some kind), and wrote TRITON and a whole bunch of theoretical stuff in between. The first lot of those reflections has been collected as the JEWEL-HINGED JAW, a title that you need one of it to say it, okay? and reminds me of that old joke about slaying the Philistines with the jaw-bone of a Jew, and is a book I hereby heartily recommend to each of you.

It's riddled with a peculiarly nasty kind of critical language called Structuralism, but that can be mentally edited out with a little careful inattention. The same disease has afflicted George Edgar Slusser's 64-page study of Delany, but in his case it's virtually terminal. After tremendous dedicated struggle I finished THE DELANY INTERSECTION, and it makes just enough points to justify the work if you have an academic turn of mind but

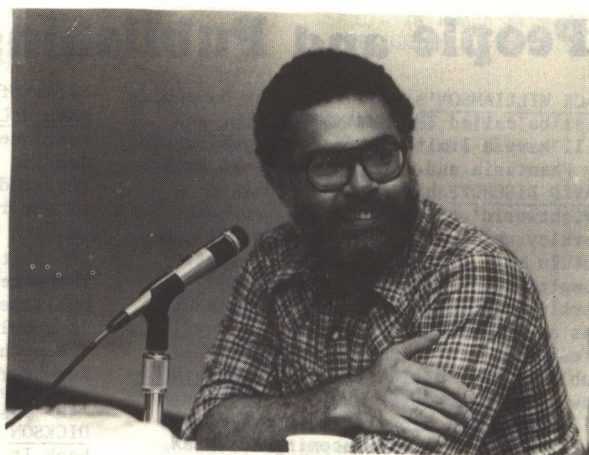


PHOTO BY JAY KAT KLEIN

not otherwise. (Example: he explains DHALGREN as Gren-dal, which had not occurred to me.)

JAW, though, is a treat. "I was in a remedial reading class in elementary school," says Delany on p.5. "Reading for me has always been hard work. I want a lot out of it because I don't do it easily." In fact, he is dyslexic. His correspondence and manuscripts are said to be easier to interpret than alphabet soup, but not much. This is a drawback for a writer. It can sometimes be mistaken for retardation, though Delany had the benefit of a groovy school and expensive parents (compensation for the black skin, one imagines.)

Put this alongside of another personal note, from p.46: "When I was a child, I used to play the violin. At 12, I developed a not wholly innocent passion for a boy of 13 who was something of a violin prodigy...I wrote a violin concerto for him--it took me four months. It's three movements ran about half an hour. I supplied (I thought then) a marvellous cadenza." Little wonder that Fred Pohl has called Delany "perhaps the only true genius in our field."

His fiction is notable for combining a quite excruciating intellectuality with a visual sense which might easily seem garish. Remember this Star Wars-style bit from Babel-17? "Drop a gem in thick oil. The brilliance yellows slowly, ambers, goes red at last, dies. That was the leap into hyperstatic space...Fling a jewel into a glut of jewels. This is the leap out of hyperstasis..." It might not be very good writing, but it's pictorial in the prismatic manner of expensive movie special effects.

The basis for this variety of metaphor is Delany's distinctive brand of heightened visual imagination, described and employed in some detail in JAW. The words of a story create images, he argues, and additional words modify those images.

"A Story begins" The What is the image thrown on your mind?" (A rather cinematic metaphor in that question itself, you'll note.) "Whatever it is, it is going to be changed many, many times before the tale is over. My own unmodified, rather whimsical The is a grayish ellipsoid about four feet high that balances on the floor perhaps a



yard away...My a, for example...is either much farther away, or much smaller and nearer."

To me, my smalls, this is absolutely astonishing news. I've never had a literal mental image in all my births. It took me two and half years studying Eng.Lit. at Uni to realize that the reason they kept using the word 'image' about poetry was because most people get pictures in their heads when they read words. My god, images! I cobble my stuff together by thinking it through, mate, not by jotting down quick notes on the free mental movie. So reading Delany's account of his own procedure fascinates me, at least; it should grab anyone who enjoys thinking about writing.

Half the book, to boot, is astute criticism of Tom Disch, Roger Zelazny and Joanna Russ, climaxing in a very long and enthralling axe-murder of LeGuin's *THE DISPOSSESSED*. You might bark your knee from time to time on things like "Together, the convention of ideohistories and the convention of idiocentric omissions (or opacities) generate the basic s-f dialectic", but when he gets down and runs his long sensitive fingers over Ursula's prose it'll make your back ridge and jump. (By the way, I think he means "ideocentric" back there, but that's dyslexia for you.)

There are many pretty little insights along the way. Take his guess that the spaceport on Trantor was actually Asimov's image of Grand Central Railway Station, rather than of an international airport. Or his suggestion that pliant cowering heroines on the movie screen are derided by the male adolescent because "it looks all too much like an allegory of what he has come to the movies to escape: an encroaching social role in which, he has been told, the responsibility is all his." True or false? You could argue for hours.

Having said these nice things about *THE JEWEL-HINGED JAW*, it's depressing (brow-smitingly, hand-wringingly depressing) to read *EMPIRE*, a big fat comic written by Delany and drawn by Chaykin (advertised as 'illustrator of *Star Wars*', whatever that means). *EMPIRE* is a foul piece of stupidity. Cross the street if you see it coming. A technical study of why it's so awful would take too long, but a couple of points might be mentioned.

Delany uses Catastrophe Theory (a mathematical innovation for analyzing jumps in rates of change) as a metaphor for social revolution, in somewhat the same way Lawrence Durrell used Relativity as a metaphor in *The Alexandria Quartet*; that is, for it's flash buzz value, without caring what it really means. And by doing it in graphic form he reduces an attenuated cerebral gag or pun to a cretinously over-literal embodiment.

As in a Doctor Who episode, our heroes must battle through the galaxy searching for the fragments of the Meta-Max. Joined, these will allow the pure at heart to throw off the horrid tyranny of the Kunduke, whose Empire has an

information stranglehold on humanity. "We had learned to freeze information itself, to halt its free flow through society... All our information about information -- we call it meta-information -- we re-crystallized in the separate shape of a demon: and we called her Meta-Max." This, gang, is painful, offensive gibberish, the same kind of dumbbo silliness which once explained that rockets fly because their exhausts push against the air.

More specifically, it is exactly that magic use of the emblems of science which early comic superheroes went in for, mumbling the secret formula which, lie a mantra or spell, changed them into their invulnerable and smartly caped superforms. Delany is undoubtedly echoing that tradition, at a higher level of fancy obfuscation (just like my use of the word 'obfuscation', gang), but it doesn't work. It just grates horribly.

Am I disillusioned, my smalls? Certainly not. I forced myself to read the first 100 pages of *DHALGREN* and then slid joyously through the next 800. Even *TRITON*'s tormented prose is worth it, for the exploration Delany leads us on. He makes John Varley's jolly games with sex-changes look like jolly games. His next novel will probably be an ambiguous pleasure to read, but I'll be there with my eyes primed.

In the meantime: do yourself a favour and buy *THE JEWEL-HINGED JAW*. But unless you're a completist, give Slusser and *EMPIRE* a big miss.

Damien Broderick.

## Obituaries

DR CHRISTOPHER EVANS died on October 10th. He was 48 and by profession a psychologist and computer scientist. He edited two sf anthologies, *MIND AT BAY* and *MIND IN CHAINS*. Was science editor for *NEW WORLDS* from issues 175-194 and was a contributing editor for *OMNI*. His book *CULTS OF UNREASON* was a study of scientology and other pseudo-science. A recent book *THE MIGHTY MICRO* was also presented as a TV series. He spoke on machine intelligence at the World SF Convention 'Seacon'. Malcolm Edwards reports in 'Locus' that Dr Evans had been ill early in the year but by Seacon was apparently recovered. However he became ill again soon after Seacon. "Those are the facts. What should be added is that he was a friendly, un-pretentious, enthusiastic and extremely intelligent man." Malcom Edwards in *Locus*.

HARRY N. ABRAHAMS, pioneer of art publishing, died at his home in New York City November 25. He was 74.

He formed Harry N. Abrams Inc., in 1949 which became one of the largest art book publishers in the world. More recently they published such tiems as *GNOMES* and *GIANTS*. He sold out to the Times Mirror Company in 1966, but later started a new company Abbeville press which among other things published the excellent large books on the Disney characters 'Mickey Mouse', 'Donald Duck', 'Goofy', and 'Uncle Scrooge'.

BEVERLY C. FINLAY, 64, widow of artist Virgil Finlay died October 18th in St Petersburg, Florida. Mrs Finlay who was married to Virgil Finlay in 1938 had been living with her daughter since her husbands death in 1971.

IMMANUEL VELIKOVSKY, 84, died in Princeton NJ late last year. He is known to sf readers and others as the writer of a number of books proposing revolutionary theories on cosmic evolution. He was very widely read and had a large following, but his theories were never entirely accepted by the scientific community.



## EDITORIAL COMMENT

The sf collection we bought at SAB last month took a lot of time to organise and price, consequently I am way behind again with this issue of the *NEWS*. However another one is already in the works and will be out well before Easter. All reviews on hand will be in that issue, but I have stacks of books on hand and also need special features on particular authors, like Damien Broderick's coverage of Samuel Delany in this issue.

After my report on SEACON I did a survey on British sf publishers, which I based largely on Charlie Brown's article in *LOCUS* plus my comments. I have not had space to use it and will revise it, however amongst it I said that at last a British publisher had picked up Bert Chandlers GRIMES series. Consequently I have not mentioned in *The NEWS* that Allison and Busby intend to publish all of the series in hard cover and simultaneous trade paperback editions. *MATILDA'S STEPCHILDREN* by Bert Chandler is also due from Robert Hale any minute.

Another well known Australian author has finished his second sf book which is currently in the hands of his publisher. Wild and Woolley Publishers are publishing mid-year an illustrated art book on the work of RON COBB. More details later.

The inconsistency of air fares is a ridiculous situation at present. The cost of flying with my Father to New Zealand and back is just under \$400 for the two of us, but the cost of just one person flying to Perth is more than \$400, and in fact is almost half as much to fly to the USA and back. Consequently if I find I can afford a trip to Boston for the World Con in August I do not think I will be able to afford the cost or the time to go to Perth for SWANCON, only two weeks before. I would very much like to publish details on the fares by train, plane or road, and if people want to share or hitch a ride I will be happy to publish their requests. Merv Binns

Editor/Publisher

### BOOK REVIEWERS WANTED

We have stacks of books we want reviewed as well as author of the month features. We have specific books available and particular authors we want to cover, so please contact me if you can help.





#### BOLO

The Annals of the Dinochrome Brigade  
by Keith Laumer.

Published by Millington (1977)  
Reviewed by John Litchen

The Bolos are fighting machines that think and feel. Robots that are half human, half machine. They suffer pain, experience fear, and glory in the winning of battles. They grieve and feel remorse for their fallen comrades. They are the ultimate in armoured fighting machines.

The book contains a history of the machines then six short stories follow. Each is set progressively further into the future, and these stories are about people, and the fear, hatred and awe that is generated in them by the fighting machines themselves.

This is vintage Laumer at his best. If you like the macho adventure that Keith Laumer expounds, than this book is one for you.

#### THE WEB OF THE WORLDS.

by Charles Sheffield.

Published by ACE (1979) TPB \$6.70  
Reviewed by John Litchen

The second novel to appear in which the idea of a satellite in a geosynchronous orbit is connected to the Earth by a cable, in this case two metres in diameter, along which large payloads can be sent up into space with very little expenditure of energy.

It is a grand idea first proposed some nineteen years ago by a Soviet scientist Yuri Artsutanov.

If I hadn't just read the first novel to use this idea, A. C. Clarke's 'Fountains of Paradise', I would have been captivated by this book of Charles Sheffield. As it was I enjoyed it immensely for its scientific content, but it doesn't have the same sense of wonder I found in the 'Fountains of Paradise'. The characters are even more wooden than those of Clarke and certainly more improbable.

Where but in a James Bond film would you find a man who controls a vast personal empire in space, whose ability, power and money is greater than any government on Earth? 'Web Between the Worlds' does have its moments and it is a captivating book. I look forward to what other authors can and will do with the idea of the space elevator or orbital tower, or whatever they will call it. It's a brand new idea and a lot will use it, there is nothing surer.

#### XENO by D. F. Jones.

Paperback title was 'Earth Has Been Found'  
Published by Sidgwick and Jackson

HC \$13.40

Reviewed by John Litchen

Tying in past mysterious disappearances of planes with an equally mysterious return in the near future makes for an

interesting beginning. The passengers of these planes find that they have been seeded with eggs that grow into alien insects that are monstrous and indestructable. The insects are intelligent, have an extremely fast reaction time, a highly developed breathing system that pumps oxygen in and out, and are deadly to anything or anyone who attacks them. They can't be destroyed and proceed to take over the world after hibernating for the winter and reappearing as something even more vicious and deadly than before.

The writing is fast paced and it gets you in. The descriptions of the emergence of the first insects are particularly horrific. Unfortunately the book doesn't answer any questions. Who or what took the planes and seeded the passengers with (its) eggs as a wasp does to a spider? Why? Where in space do they come from? And why did they choose Earth?

Nothing is explained and the book just stops when the rest of the world presumably will be conquered by a third metamorphosis which is never described but only hinted at in the last moments of the book.

An epilogue set further in the future shows us a small group has survived uninfected and presumably will fight on to the bitter end.

The book is unsatisfactory because it just stops before anything is resolved. I imagine a sequel has been planned which will finish the story started here, but it could be a long time before that appears.

#### TWO FACES OF TOMORROW

By James P. Hogan

Published by Ballantine/Del Rey PB \$2.95  
Reviewed by George Turner

Nut-and-bolts sf is not dead while Hal Clement lives. And if Hal steps aside tomorrow, here is James P. Hogan moving into his place - but less than smoothly.

I have nothing against n.a.b. sf; Larry Niven, Arthur Clarke and others have written it very entertainingly, but too many others have not. Even Clement, acceptable in short story and novella where the span of attention on some crucial technical point is not unduly stretched, is a shocking novelist. (Nice bloke, though - I met him at Seacon.)

Hogan also is no novelist. The critics who hailed his 'THE GENESIS MACHINE' with tears of intellectual joy are welcome to their ecstasies, but I imagine another like 'TWO FACES' will cure them of that nonsense.

The plot of this lengthy thriller hangs on the old question of whether or not a computer can think like a human being (why not, if we first find out what 'thinking' is?) and on the group who super-programmed one to improve on itself by incorporating a 'learning ability' into its circuits. Well and good. Then the asses gave it a self-preservation directive to see if it would behave like a human being when attached to be predictably

surprised when it did so and gave them a slaughter-strewn run for their money.

Fair enough. We accept all of this if the author writes a good novel round the interminable discussion of how computers operate, learn and react. I'm quite willing to be told about them, but not so willing to be bored to extinction by action sequences dragged out to a definite analysis of every word, step and gesture, by characters who have name tags but no distinguishing features or by dialogue that makes even Clement's seem epigrammatic.

Here, in fact, is a first class theme mishandled. A good editor would at least have shown Hogan how to cut the script to give some impression of narrative flow. A better one might have found him a collaborator to turn a fine idea into a really gripping story, but I suspect that Pb firms find good editing too expensive in these tight-belted days.

But this is Hogan's third novel, which means that his publisher finds him saleable. And what publisher gives a damn what the readers think while they keep on paying for the 'right to complain' (Exit publisher and his accountant, gesturing with index fingers.)

#### THE DRAWING OF THE DARK Tim Powers.

Reviewed by Rowena Cory.

This book was a refreshing change from the usual sword and sorcery. The general plot was the same, good versus evil.

It is the main character which makes it such an entertaining story. The hero Brian Duffy, a grey-haired Irishman, who had reached his middle years, and who in his rare lucid moments, thinks he might be succumbing to the grape. However, after a few drinks he doesn't let this depress him. He is approached by a fat sorcerer in Venice and hired as a bouncer for the Herzwosten Inn. The Herzwosten beer is famous throughout Europe. He agrees to this as Venice has become unfriendly, and he intends to look up an old flame in Vienna.

It is set in the year 1529, the Turks are threatening Europe, they represent the dark forces and the west are the good. The inn is the focal point of the good forces, Western Heart. The brewery has been in production for three thousand years. It is a very special brew. It develops as a nice mystery with plenty of exciting episodes, but to tell more would be giving away the story.

There are some delightful characters, a hunchback who wishes to be cremated, an old artist who can foretell the future, and a clairvoyant who thinks he is King Arthur. At one point, a ship load of retired Vikings run aground in the canal. Only Aurelianus can speak their language, they spend the rest of the novel wandering around looking for something tangible to fight. There are a host of mythical monsters, some good some bad, but all very real. Then there is Aurelianus who likes to smoke his cured snakes, and hints at



being more than he appears. He leads poor Duffy a merry chase, and it is the character of the Irishman who dominates the book. Most heroes are young muscle-bound apes who tend to be bland. Duffy could never be accused of this. There is also his different perspective from the young hero, he is more concerned with keeping Brian Duffy in one piece, than upholding honour.

A very entertaining tale, which when finished leaves one wishing there were more.

CLASSIC SCIENCE FICTION - THE FIRST GOLDEN AGE. Edited by Terry Carr.  
ROBSON BOOKS, London.  
445 PP. 5.95p

REVIEWED BY DOUG BATES.

In this book Terry Carr has attempted to recreate the feeling of the 1940's by reprinting twelve stories from the magazines of the times. Nine of the twelve are from Astounding, two from Super Science Stories, one from Future Fantasy and Science Fiction.

I found the stories fell into two halves. The better ones such as 'Nightfall', 'The Twonky', 'The Mechanical Mice', '-And He Built A Crooked House-' have been anthologized before in better collections. The others seem dated - the action slow, the dialogue stilted, they showed their age. It might fill a gap in a collection, but I do not think the enjoyment gained would be worth the price.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO STAR TREK?

THE FATE OF THE PHOENIX by Sondra Marshak & Myrna Culbreath.  
BANTAM BOOKS. 262 PP. \$2.60  
REVIEWED BY GEORGE TURNER.

I was never a Star Trek fan, but watched a dozen or so of the TV series at odd times, enjoying the rather endearing simplicity of action and naive characterisation that made it a sort of superior comic strip with real actors uttering the balloons. But I find the novels being hastily assembled on the production line, now that ST has become big business, thoroughly unloveable.

Something deadly has happened to the original conception - Spock has become a Superman with steel muscles and some sort of mental link with Kirk; Kirk has changed from the commander of an exploratory vessel to a hero known across the reaches of the galaxy, important enough to be designated 'Ambassador-plenipotentiary' (an appointment next to supreme command of the universe if the authors' conception of politics is to be followed) at the drop of an interstellar hat; the unknown areas of the galaxy being explored by 'Enterprise' turn out to be very well known and infested by federations, empires and political enmities forever on the brink of war.

It is all painfully 'mindblowing' and doesn't feature a single idea you haven't been bored with a dozen times before. And is it complicated! Not only is this a sequel to 'The Price of the Phoenix', but the various short-cut references to the earlier book left me completely fogged as to why anything at the beginning of this one should be as it is.

Item: There are two Kirks, James and Jim, one of them created by a villain called Omne after the death of Jim - or was it

James? Item: There are also two Omnes, created by the Phoenix (apparently you have to read the earlier book to discover what that is or does) and they don't like each other or anybody else. Item: The two Omnes can establish mental links with Spock and the Kirks and appear in their bodies - or in anyone else's. The resulting confusing dwarfs even the cabin scene in 'A Night At The Opera'. I found it impossible at any point to be sure that I knew what was happening to whom.

There is, for good measure, a matriarchal empire of amazonian warriors with beautifully subservient men (the authors are women) and a set of self-destructive customs that would in reality have destroyed their culture before it got properly going.

There is also a black hole to end all black holes, surrounded by 'rolling clouds of force' (I kid you not), and a series of hairbreadth escapes wherein Kirk, Omne, Spock, amazons and anyone handy escapes destruction by 'somehow clinging on', 'somehow finding a hold'.... Without 'somehow' (a word showing that the authors don't know how to get out of their own traps) the book would have petered out at about Chapter 3. And why not? I pinpointed six impossible 'somehows'; there may be more.

Star Trek will never be the same again - and I can do without this version.

DR WHO AND THE WAR GAMES  
by Malcolm Hulke Wyndham \$2.75  
Reviewed by Shayne Keenan

Human's have been transported to the War Lord's planet. Survivors of the War Games will form the ultimate galactic army. A random factor: Doctor Who (Patrick Troughton) arrives with Zoe and Jamie. What is to be done? Can the Doctor help?

The 144 page book is a blow by blow description of the TV 10 series. It is unlikely the ABC will repeat it. Character are flat. The novel lacks depth. It offers none of the writing value of Star Trek Log books.

But it does have a theme, and with greater writing care could have been much improved.

BATTLESTAR GALACTICA - THE PHOTONovel.  
Berkley Books \$3.50  
Review by Shane Keenan.

The movie arrived, everyone seemed to compare it less favourably to the Star Trek series.

After the Star Trek series of twelve photo novels there are bound to be further comparisons.

This photo novel is the television series starting point. Almost everyone has complained about the plot(s), I'll say nothing.

The book's layout is not as good as Star Trek. The photo captions don't always provide an even story flow. The book advertises some seven hundred photos. What I don't particularly like are pages with red tinted photos - it adds nothing.

Review by Shane Keenan.  
LORD OF THE RINGS FOTO NOVEL  
\$2.95 Foto novel publications.

Not having been interested in Tolkien before, I look at this from a photographic and artistic viewpoint.

I had to force myself to read the words, which sometimes unfortunately became mixed with the background.

I don't really understand the plot, but the drawings are a delight to the eye. Colors are appealing. Some photos have been over blown and distorted.

THE ADVENTURES OF K9 AND OTHER MECHANICAL CREATURES - A DOCTOR WHO SPECIAL by Terrance Dicks.  
Wyndham \$2.95

Did you take the title in?  
The book cashes in on Doctor Who fans. K9 is the Doctor's mechanical pet dog. Very kiddie stuff. A book for junior for Christmas, or the hardcore Who fan. It has monster photos from William Hartnell onwards, plus puzzles - WOW!!!  
Overpriced - 96 pages at \$2.95

## MORE PEOPLE & PUBLISHING

THE STAR TREK publications from the movie have been slow in coming, but we believe some of them are now showing up in the USA. No indication at all on British distribution apart from the novel from Futura. THE BLACK HOLE Calendar sold out in the USA and SAB for one did not get stock, and an announced poster book has been cancelled. THE BLACK HOLE novel by Alan Dean Foster in NEL is being distributed by William Collins March. They will also have the third book in the James Gunn series 'The Road to Science Fiction.

In the hard cover department NEL will be publishing Heinlein's NUMBER OF THE BEAST, and they have recently published new editions of Frank Herbert's WHIPPING STAR and THE GREEN BRAIN.

VALERIE PARV of Aussietrek, 104 Alexander Street, Crows Nest, N.S.W 2065, has produced another Star Trek publication. This time a story entitled THE PRISONER OF GENDER. Write direct to her for details.

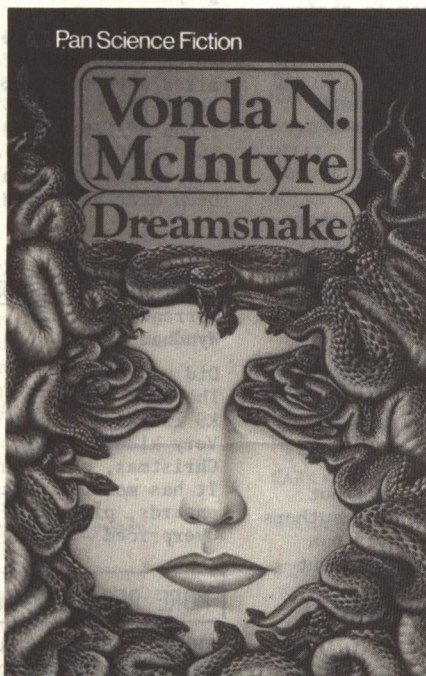
JOHN NORMAN's "Gor" books figured in a recent murder case in which a 16 year old girl was tied up and attacked with a knife. The accused said that "Tying someone up wouldn't seem to me to be hurting anyone."

## MOCKINGBIRD.

Walter Tevis, author of THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH, has produced a new novel, MOCKINGBIRD (Doubleday), of which we have received a proof copy. It is a very different style of work from the earlier book. Behind a facade of familiar sf ideas Tevis presents a view of man and his future subtly different from the usual; he has thought about his future instead of merely sketching it in. This will be one of the 'class' novels of 1980, and a full review will appear in due course.

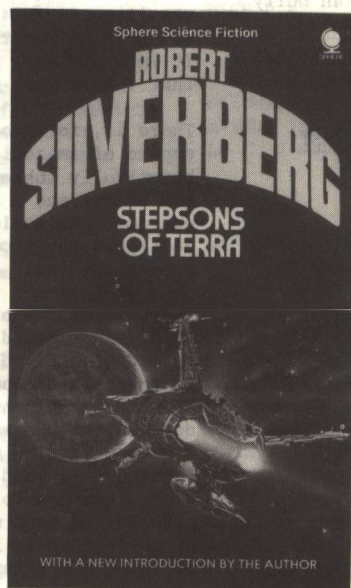


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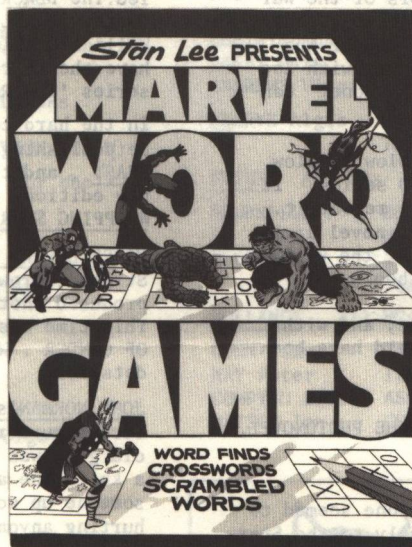
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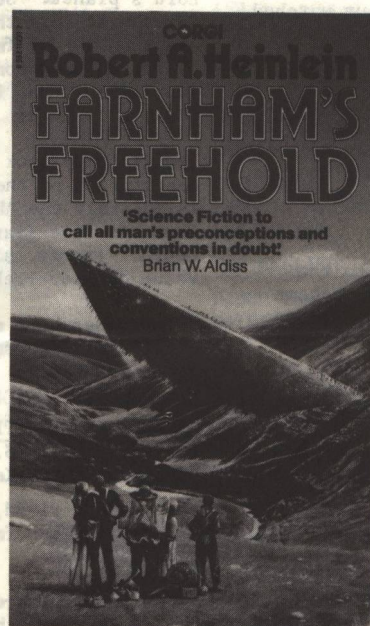
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# AUSTRALIA '83

THE LEIGH EDMONDS STEAM ZOMBIE HAS JUST PUSHED THE A83 HEAD-QUARTERS/OPERA HOUSE INTO SYDNEY HARBOUR. HAVE OUR MARSUPIALS DROWNED?

RUMBLE... RUMBLE... SPLASH!

AND... DOWN HERE VALMA WE KEEP ALL OUR BLOOG & BOOZE SUPPLIES

WHAT'S THAT FUNNY NOISE? SOUNDS LIKE AN OPERA HOUSE BEING DROPPED INTO A HARBOUR!

IN THE BASEMENT, THE A'83 MARSUPIALS ARE GIVING A VISITOR (VALMA, THE BELOVED OF THE LATE LEIGH.) THE GUIDED TOUR.

ARGH! THE OPERA HOUSE HAS GONE! THERE'S A MONSTER IN RESIDENCE... WITH SIZE 15 BOOTS!

KILL CHUFF CHUFF KILL CHUFF KILL CHUFF

MADE IN AUSTRALIA

COME TO ME, MY BELOVED! KISS, KISS, SMOOTCH... NOW WE CAN BE MARRIED LIKE I... ...ER... WE PLANNED.

SIZE 15 BOOTS! IT'S MY LEIGH, BACK FROM THE GRAVE!!

HAS ANTI-FAN FAILED ONCE AGAIN?... WILL IT MATTER TO VALMA THAT LEIGH'S BRAIN HAS BEEN REMOVED?... IS IT LEGAL TO MARRY A STEAM ZOMBIE?... WHO COULD REFUSE A STEAM ZOMBIE ANYTHING? STAY TUNED FOR MORE SEX & VIOLENCE

PLOT: PAUL J. STEVENS.  
ART: CHRIS (I WAS ONLY FOLLOWING ORDERS) JOHNSTON.



## Conventions

### UNICON VI

EASTER APRIL 4TH TO 7TH 1980  
THE VICTORIA HOTEL  
215 LITTLE COLLINS ST. MELBOURNE

GUEST OF HONOUR: JOE HALDEMAN  
FAN GUEST (USA): GAY HALDEMAN  
FAN GUEST (AUS): MERV BINNS

\* Memberships: \$20.00 until con.  
Daily Membership: \$5.00 perday for any period less than 4 days  
Supporting Mem.: \$4.00 .Conversion to full membership is according to the rate current when the original supporting membership was paid.

There will be a picnic on Tuesday after the convention on the banks of the Yarra River. The writers workshop has been cancelled.

Further details may be obtained from The Monash University SF A, c/o The Union, Monash University Wellington Road, Clayton 3168 or by ringing

Daryl Mannell 03 578 2517  
Alf Katz 03 783 7053  
Gerald Smith 03 783 9068

\* Lee Harding has withdrawn as Australian pro-guest of honour. (What was that noise? I thought that the MOOMBA Parade wasn't on till next week!)

### TREKCON

APRIL 12TH AND 13TH 1980  
THE SHERATON HOTEL  
SPRING STREET, MELBOURNE

Guest of Honour:  
JOE HALDEMAN

For further details contact:  
AUSTREK CONVENTION COMMITTEE  
c/o P.O.Box 46, Rosanna, 3084 Vic.

### SWANCON 1980

19TH AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL  
SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION  
AUGUST 15TH TO 18TH 1980

PARK TOWERS HOTEL  
Perth, Western Australia

GUEST OF HONOUR: ANNE McCAFFREY

FAN GUEST OF HONOUR: SHAYNE McCORMACK

Further details will appear in the next issue of the NEWS, but meanwhile we suggest you write to  
SWANCON, P.O.Box N1060  
Perth,  
6001, Western Australia

### WELLCON 1980

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND  
MAY 30TH TO JUNE 2ND  
GUEST OF HONOUR: MERV BINNS

For Further Details Contact:  
Bruce Ferguson,  
13 Burnside Street,  
Lower Hutt, NEW ZEALAND  
AUSTRALIAN AGENT: Vera Lonergan  
14 Clarke St., Earlwood, 2206 NSW

### NOREASCON TWO

38TH WORLD SF CONVENTION  
AUGUST 29TH TO SEPTEMBER 1ST 1980

THE SHERATON BOSTON HOTEL  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, U.S.A.

GUESTS OF HONOUR:  
DAMON KNIGHT and  
KATE WILHELM

FAN GUEST:  
BRUCE PELZ

The Australian Agent is Robin Johnson P.O.Box A 491, Sydney South, NSW 2000, who will accept your membership and provide other information required. Those who have already joined should have had their HUGO Nomination Ballots by now.

(We will give more information on other conventions including the 1981 WORLDCON, DENVENTION, to be held in Denver, Colorado USA, and which all fans wanting to vote for the 1983 sight - Australia of course - must be members of. For further details on Denvention and the A83 bid contact Carey Handfield, P.O.Box A 491, Sydney South, N.S.W 2000, Australia)



# PUBLISHERS ANNOUNCEMENTS

This list is of books announced to be published. Most are out by now but very often actual publication is delayed for numerous reasons. The titles marked \* were missed off our last list having been announced late 1979. A further explanation of future lists of F & SF publications will be found at the end of this list.

## EXPLANATION:

NB N - Novel A -Anthology  
C-one author collection  
PB -paperback HC-Hardcover  
SF-science fiction F-Fantasy  
HF-horror fantasy FILM-F&SF Film  
NF-non fiction F/A-F&SF Art  
LC-Literary criticism  
TPB-trade or large size pb.

Titles in upper case are to our knowledge first publication anywhere. Titles in lower case have been published previously either in the USA or UK in HC or PB. First paperbacks are underlined.

## BRITISH PUBLISHERS

All titles may be assumed to be SF Novels unless otherwise marked.

### ABELARD

WALTERS Hugh FIRST FAMILY ON THE MOON  
PB and HC Juv

W.H.ALLEN All HC SF unless marked  
DR WHO SERIES

DICKS Terrance  
Destiny of the Daleks  
THE UNDERWORLD

MARTER Ian THE RIBOS OPERATION (Dr W)

HULKE Malcolm THE WAR GAMES (Dr Who)\*

GARDNER John GOLGOTHA Spy/SF ?

### ALLISON & BUSBY

BROPHY Brigid Hackenfeller's Ape \*  
HC and PB F

### ARROW

All pbs  
BRADLEY M.Z. Planet Savers  
World Wreckers  
WILHELM Kate Clewiston Test \*  
TUBB E.C. Spectrum of a Forgotten Sun

BRADLEY M.Z. Forbidden Tower  
HOYLE Trevor Blakes 7  
BURGESS Anthony 1985

### ASLAN PUBLS.

JACKMAN Stuart BURNING MEN NFD \*  
SLINGSHOT NFD \*

### BBC PB

GERSON Jack THE OMEGA FACTOR Occ/FN\*

### BCA -Book Club

CLARKE A.C. The Fountains of Paradise  
BRAN'SHEAD BOOKS

ALDISS Brian SCIENCE FICTION AS SCIENCE  
FICTION PB NF/LC \*  
GOOCH Stan ENTITIES OF SF AND MYTHS:  
Alternative Persons  
PB NF LC \*  
BARBOUR D. WORLDS OUT OF WORDS  
NF NFD

### DOBSON All HCs

TUBB E.C. THE LUCK MACHINE  
WESTON Peter ANDROMEDA 3 SF/A  
LUPOFF R. Triune Man  
RANKINE John THE VORT PROGRAMME

### CORGI Transworld All PBs

CHAYEFSKY Paddy Altered States  
HAY George The Necronomicon Occ/NF  
HEINLEIN R. Farnham's Freehold \*

KOONTZ Dean R. Vision Occ F/N  
MILLER W.M. Canticle for Liebowitz \*  
(Hugo Winner R/P)

NOLAN William A Sea of Space SF/A  
EKLUND Gordon Starless World

### CORONET All PBs

SILVERBERG R. Feast of St. Dionysius  
COOPER Edmund Death Worms of Kratos \*  
The Rings of Tantalus \*  
BURKE John THE BLACK CHARADE HF/N

### ENCOUNTERS Book Club HCs

HERBERT Frank The Jesus Incident  
& RANSOM Bill  
CARR Terry Classic SF:The First  
Golden Age SF/A

BALLARD J.G. The Unlimited Dream  
Company

POHL Frederick Jem  
ORBILL Douglas The Sixth Winter NFD  
& GRIBBIN John

### FABER HCs

HARRIS Rosemary BEAUTY & THE BEAST Juv\*  
GOLDING William DARKNESS VISIBLE N \*  
(Fantasy ?)  
WALTERS Hugh BLUE AURA Juv

### FONTANA All PBs

TAYLOR Bernard The Godsend Occ HF/N  
HAINING Peter The Screaming Skull HF/A  
BERNARD C. TRUE GHOSTS HF/A Juv  
CHETWYND-HAYES R. 5th Armada Ghost Book  
DANBY Mary 11th Armada Ghost Book  
ANDREWS Virginia Flowers in the Attic

BUDRYS Algis Rogue Moon  
The Iron Thorn

### FUTURA All PBs

POURNELLE J FUTURE HISTORY SF ? NFD  
Black Holes  
LEE Tanith Stormlord F/N  
Shadowfire F/N

### GOLLANCZ All HCs

GUNN James THE DREAMERS ( Re.t.?)  
WAY Peter ICARUS  
COMPTON D.G. ASCENDENCIES  
WATSON Ian GOD'S WORLD

### GRANADA HCs

ALLBEURY Ted THE CONSEQUENCES OF  
FEAR N nfd  
NICHOLLS Peter THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SF\*

### PANTHER PBs

SILVERBERG R. Son of Man  
ALEXANDER Karl TIME AFTER TIME  
DICK P.K. A Handfull of Darkness  
ALDISS Brian Lets Go To Golgotha  
(Intro) Retitle 'Sunday Times  
Best SF

DEIGHTON Len SS-GB F/N (What if ?)  
WATSON Ian The Miracle Visitors  
LE GUIN Ursula The Left Hand of  
Darkness  
The Word for World is  
Forest

SMITH E.E. Skylark Duquesne  
Second Stage Lensman  
Spacehounds of I.P.C  
Skylark of Valeron  
Foundation  
Times Last Gift

### ROBERT HALE All HCs

ANDERSON Paul A Circus of Hells SF/C  
CHANDLER A.B. MATILDA'S STEPCILDREN\*  
DOUGLAS Ian POINT OF IMPACT\*  
JAKES Mark IN HIS OWN IMAGE\*  
MASON David THE DEEP GODS\*  
SAVARIN J.J. ARENA  
SILVERBERG R. Trips in Time SF/A  
TUBB E.C. DEATH WEARS A WHITE FACE  
Starflight

PAGE Michael A NASTY LITTLE WAR  
MACGOWAN Jonathan DEATH AT THE GAMES  
ANDERSON Poul People of the Wind  
MC QUEEN Ronald THE COSMIC ASSASSIN

### HAMLYN PBs

DOZOIS Gardner Strangers  
KUTNER Henry Clash By Night  
LEWIS Richard THE DEVIL'S COACH HORSE  
HF/N

### WILLIAM KIMBER HCs

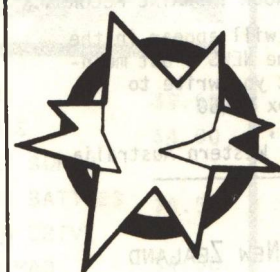
YOUNG B.A. THE COLONISTS FROM SPACE  
CHETWYND-HAYES R. BRATS HF/A

### MAGNUM PBs

GUNN James The Magicians  
PANSHIN Alexei Rite of Passage  
BARING Tom THE OLYMPIC SLEEPER

### NEW ENGLISH LIBRARY PBs

DISCH Tom The Prisoner F/N  
ERICSON Eric THE WOMAN WHO SLEPT WITH  
DEMONS HF/N  
STERLING Bruce Involution Ocean  
KING Stephen The Stand  
HERBERT Frank Dune  
HEINLEIN R. Stranger in a Strange  
Land



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BRITTON David NEW WAVE SWORD & SORCERY  
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SKINNER A. MIND'S EYE HC nfd

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WYNDHAM John Exiles on Asperus

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ROBERTS Keith Ladies from Hell SF/C  
GRANT John Aries 1 SF/A  
SIMAK Clifford Fellowship of the  
Talisman F/N  
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BENFORD Gregory The Stars in Shroud  
COOPER Edmund Jupiter Laughs SF/C  
COWPER Richard The Web of the Magi  
LEIBER Fritz Ship of Shadows F/C  
BRUNNER John Times Without Number  
POHL Fredericks The Way the Future Was  
N/F Biog  
CONEY Michael The Girl With Symphony in  
Her Eyes  
Synergy

#### SIDGEWICK AND JACKSON All Hcs

BOVA Ben Kinsman  
McCAFFREY Dragondrums

#### SPHERE All Pbs

RADNOR A. RED LIGHT RED nfd  
POYER Joe North Cape  
DALEY Brian Han Solo's Revenge  
Han Solo At Stars End  
SEARLS Hank The Big X  
The Pilgrim Project  
McCAFFREY Anne To Ride Pegasus SF/C  
Dragonquest  
RUSSELL Ray Prince of Darkness HF/N  
BISHOP Michael Stolen Faces  
BENFORD Gregory If the Stars Are Gods  
& EKLUND Gordon  
CUSSLER Clive Raise the Titanic  
DE CAMP L. Sprague The Incomplete  
& PRATT Fletcher Enchanter F/N

#### SPRINGWOOD (See note end of list)

EDELSTEIN Scott Future Pastimes SF/A HC  
NOLAN William The Human Equation SF/C  
HC and PB  
EARLEY George Encounters With Aliens  
SF/A HC and PB

#### VIRAGO

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ADAMS Douglas Hitch Hiker's Guide to  
The Galaxy F/HC SF/Scr.

#### WYNDHAM All PBs

DR WHO SERIES  
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MARTER Ian The Ribos Operation R/P  
DICKS Terrance Time Warrior R/P  
Invasion of Time F/P  
The Auton Invasion R/P  
Talons of Weng Chiang R/P  
Destiny of the Daleks R/P  
Death to the Daleks R/P  
The Mutants R/P  
The Giant Robot R/P  
The Underworld F/P  
Genesis of the Daleks R/P  
Hand of Fear R/P

DICKS Terrance Starquest: Roboworld Juv  
GARDNER John Founder Member SF/Spy ?

Many of the titles listed we have taken from other lists, which do not specify if sf or fantasy, we have assumed they are whichever we have noted. Our apologies if we are incorrect. More details and corrections will be given in our projected F&SF CHECKLIST.

SPRINGWOOD Publishers are a prime example of how hard publishers make it to trace and order their books. Titles ordered from the above were supplied by GEORGE PHILIP and were then found to be published by CHARTER HOUSE established in London and New York, and distributed by TWO CONTINENTS!

#### FURTHER EDITORIAL RAMBLINGS.

I am not going to get the American Jan. and Feb. titles in this space, so they will have to wait till next issue. Just to mention a few of the most important titles we have: Small paperback editions in ACE of DAUGHTER OF THE BRIGHT SUN by Lynn Abbey, and Colin Kapp's THE WIZARD OF ANHARITE available again at last. THE RETURN OF NATHAN BRAZIL by Jack Chalker is a new title in the 'Well

World' series from Ballantine, and will be followed by it's sequel or second half later in the year. Ballantine/Del Rey are publishing THE FOUNTAINS OF PARADISE by Arthur C. Clarke in February and PAN will publish soon after. Expect it on sale here about June. VISION OF TAROT, the second in the current Pier's Anthony series was published in January by Berkley who have taken over all the Jove list. FAITH OF TAROT is also due out very soon. Berkley have a new P.K. Dick collection called THE GOLDEN MAN. DAW books most significant title is a new edition of Jack Vance's THE FIVE GOLD BANDS. I loved that when I read it in Startling Stories or T.W.S years ago. The latest from Dell in the 'Binary Star' Series is LEGACY by Joan Vinge and EQUATION by Stephen Spruill. Holt Rinehart are doing the regular hard cover edition of RINGWORLD ENGINEERS and Gollancz will publish in a few months in U.K. Pocket Books have a lot of titles but most are Star Trek titles due but not necessarily published even yet, while the rest of the list for Jan/Feb seems to have nothing very spectacular. And that is about it, but there are a lot of good things coming later and we will cover the March announcements also in the next listing.

The complete listing of all F & SF for 1979 that I promised will not be done.

Also I plan to drop the detailed listing from the SPACE AGE NEWSLETTER, and list only titles available with very brief details, and meanwhile do a complete checklist every few months of all F & SF titles published in English, which I hope will have wider interest. Details next issue.

With future 'Author of the Month' features we hope to have booklistings by Don Tuck. Meanwhile we will be happy to advise on titles available by authors covered. Of particular interest from Samuel Delany is his autobiographical HEAVENLY BREAKFAST, which was published by Bantam last year.

#### THE QUATERMASS MYSTERY

Last October ARROW Books published four books in the series featuring the character played by John Mills in a new movie, Professor Quatermass. They should have been on sale in Australia at least this month. Other October UK titles have been released but not this series. A new distribution arrangement starts with the November UK releases, but the new Australian distributor RICAL/KENNARD has not been given the QUATERMASS titles. Correspondence to ARROW direct and the previous distributor REVIEW ENTERPRISES a subsidiary of HUTCHINSON Australia, have been completely ignored, so we do not know if they are ever going to be released or by whom. It is apparently a state secret. Stock we have been advised is in this country, but the chances are the books will finish up remaindered in Coles or Myers or in sample bags at the next Royal Show. This is a typical example of the complete disregard by publishers for the needs and requirements of the small and specialist booksellers.

Our thanks to LOCUS for some news items, particularly in 'People & Publishing'. We are agents for LOCUS The American SF Newspaper and the Subscription rates are: Airmail: 12 issues \$19.00 24 - \$35.80 Aust. Seamail 12 issues \$12.40 24 - \$22.95



# WELLCON '79

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

OCTOBER 19 TH - 22ND 1979

ST GEORGE HOTEL, WELLINGTON

A REPORT BY VERA LONERGAN

New Zealanders just had their very first Science Fiction Convention, and I was the only Aussie fan there. This historic event passed almost unnoticed in Australia, where fen were preoccupied trying to get to the local cons, and those with the cash, were planning to attend Seacon.

My indulgent husband persuaded me to go to Wellcon, to console me for the loss of two of my kittens, Gummitch and Cleindori, who were killed on the first night of Syncon.

As the only attending Aussie, I also became the representative for A in 83, and helped Greg Hills, the NZ agent, to promote the cause.

I arrived in NZ early, on the Tuesday before the Con, to discover that the hotel was booked out until Friday. As Wellington is the national capital and centre of commerce, the hotels are filled during the week with business executives on expense accounts. At weekends the hotels are almost empty, thereby causing the unusual situation of weekend rates being lower than those during the working week. However I easily found interim accommodation at the Melksham Towers, a luxurious apartment block, more comfortable, and cheaper than the hotel would have been.

I contacted Mervyn Barrett the con organiser, and gained his approval of my trying to raise money and interest for A in 83 and selling Denvention memberships.

Mervyn explained how Wellcon had originated; he had heard that the National Association for Science Fiction were thinking of putting on a con, but as none of their members had ever been to a con, they had little idea of how to go about it. Mervyn had attended several Worldcons, and rather than let them bummer up this important project, he took it upon himself. Brian Thurogood was enlisted to help with advertising and the programme book, and several knowledgeable persons were asked to prepare talks.

It was decided to limit the size of the con, and keep advertising to a minimum, so as not to be swamped with hordes of eager fen. The idea was to make this first con small and exclusive, and with its success, arouse loads of interest for the next con, which, of course, would be someone else's headache.

Because this was a historic event, it was given historical affiliations by setting it on the 43rd anniversary of the first SF con of 22nd October, 1936. That this timing placed the con in the middle of University exams, was all to the good. Advertising was restricted to NZ fanzines and a few mentions in ASFN. Mervyn had hoped to limit attendance to around 70 people, and grew a little nervous as the date approached, and still the applications kept arriving.

He had refused my previous offer of help with preparations as unnecessary. Comes Friday, and he rings asking my aid to "write out a few receipts". Ha! If only I'd known what I was letting myself in for. After I'd waded through the pile of applications and cheques, entered all the new members in the register, cut apart, punched and safety-pinned piles of ID-tags, and helped endorse and stuff large envelopes with con boooks, programmes, ID-tags, etc, Brain Thurogood, Kath and I, had to carry everything (including two boxes of Noumenons), a mile to the hotel. Halfway there, I remembered leaving the membership register on Mervyn's desk, and had to race back for it.

Registration was already underway when I finally reached the hotel, and during the two minutes it took to change into one of my vulgar Mike McGann teeshirts and return, I missed both introductory speeches and the credits of the evening movie, THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME.

Nobody had remembered to arrange refreshments for the crowd emerging after the film, so the hundred or so people were still strangers, and all far to polite to hang around and interrupt the few chatting groups of friends and acquaintances that had formed around the room. I watched in dismay, as all these potential A in 83 supporters wandered out the door and into the cold night.

The better informed fen had heard of con parties, and were eagerly anticipating that I would have arranged something. Alas, I had delayed getting in supplies as my hotel room had no fridge, and helping Mervyn had occupied my whole afternoon. All I had was a duty-free bottle of Johnny Walker. Now everything was closed, and the only bar open in the hotel, was in the crowded and extremely noisy disco, which was completely unsuited to our purpose, and there was nowhere else that we could go. There remained nothing to do but plan better for the morrow.

Next morning my oversight was rectified. Numerous interesting bottles and spare glasses were cached in my room, in readiness for the evening's festivities.

The inexperienced organisation was apparent in too many lectures and an overheavy movie programme. The full day Saturday session had four long lectures scheduled, plus a slide-and-talk show by Mervyn, which despite negligible SFish connections, was one of the highlights of the con. All the talks were very erudite and educational, but to the neophyte NZ audience, it was all marvelously new.

Such enthusiasm as they expressed, hasn't been seen in fandom since the early American cons of the 30's and 40's. The con guests showed a vast disparity in age, SF knowledge and tastes, and fan experience, but they were all uniform in their delight. The con was an emotional awakening for them, and they loved every bit of it.

There is a small coterie of mainly youthful NZ fen, engaged in producing and writing to each others fanzines, but the vast majority of con members had been starved of interaction and exchange of fannish talk with other lovers of the genre. Now that they had the opportunity, they certainly made the most of it.

There was energetic audience discussion following each talk. Everything was a novelty, and the guests made sure they didn't miss a single word of any lecture, nor a frame of any film. This eager attentiveness was extremely refreshing, and their enthusiasm highly infectious.

I have never enjoyed any event so much as Wellcon. Saturday evening at 6.00 pm there was a special programme at the Planetarium for interested convention goers, but our group elected instead to have a long and very enjoyable three-hour dinner at a nearby Italian restaurant. That was a meal to remember.

Being the sole Aussie had wonderful advantages. I received VIP treatment. The NASF president, Bruce Ferguson, and his wife Robyn, soon became true friends; they introduced me to the local notables, and made sure that I never lacked for congenial company, and with Bruce Clement, we made a happy foursome for most of the weekend.

Robyn in particular was fascinated by my sales spiel, and watched in awe as I collected donations. Not that this was difficult. After sampling some of the pleasures of Wellcon, the NZers were eager for more, and quickly appreciative of the possible benefits of a Worldcon on their doorstep. They were queueing up to join the A in 83 bid and Denvention. Unfortunately, there wasn't sufficient time between programmed items, to sign them all up, and some people had to try several times, before I finally got their money.

That night we made history with NZ's first con party. A tremendous success, but like all great parties, difficult to describe. We talked a lot, drank continuously, and somehow managed to stay at the happy level, with nobody getting drunk. There was one hilarious incident when a warm coke bottle exploded, showering Dave Bimler, who was doing the honours, the entire bathroom, and me, with gobbets of foam. Mostly we sat and talked, and drank and talked, and had a generally lovely time. The party started to break up at 3.00 am., and I finally got to bed at 6.00.

Slept till noon Sunday, and missed the NASF displays of SF posters, models, and wargaming, at the WEA rooms on the Terrace. As I neglected to pick up one of the free maps, I still don't know where this was, but some of the attendees assured me later that it was very interesting.

Sunday's programme commenced at 1.30 pm., with METROPOLIS, then a second talk-and-show by Mervyn, which I found boring, but everyone else loved. I had a nap during the second half of his talk, and when the next item was announced as loud as rock 'n' roll, I hastily exited and retired to my room for a leisurely bath and shampoo.

My new friends were puzzled that I would willingly miss a programmed item, but forgave my eccentricity. We had a smorgasbord tea, more films, and followed with another party in my room. As this was our last night together, nobody wanted to break up, and at 5.00 am. six of us squeezed into Robyn's Datsun 120Y, and drove to Mount Victoria to watch the sun



rise over Wellington. We hadn't noticed that it had started to rain, and none of us were dressed for the cold. Clouds obscured the sunrise, and we were all glad to get out of the freezing windy drizzle, into the little car and back to the hotel.

On public holidays breakfast was served at 8.30. Nobody was willing to wait that long, so the Fergusons invited us to their home in Lower Hutt for the morning meal.

Later, there was consternation at the business meeting, when a very eager, and very young trekkie declared an impassioned bid for Auckland for the second NZ con. Eventually he was shouted down, and the Bruces, Clement and Ferguson, won the rights to Wellcon B for the NZ Queen's Birthday holiday weekend.

After the business session, we were regaled with the world premieres of two short amateur movies, produced especially for the con by the Wellington fans. GROSS ENCOUNTERS OF THE WORST KIND and COLESLAWTER were both very well done, and enormously funny. Then lunch, and the trip to the airport, and regretfully farewells.

Next year's con should be even better than this one was, and hopefully, Australia will be better represented. Wellcon B will be from Friday 30th May through to Monday 2nd June, 1980. Venue and rates will be announced in the near future. Any persons interested in attending or wishing to run hucksters tables, or enter art in the planned competition please contact me early so we can finalise all the little details beforehand.

I am the official agent for Wellcon B in Australia. And that's it!!!

VERA LONERGAN

(Thank you very much for that report Vera. I am doubly sorry I was not able to be there myself, but I had only just returned from a trip to England and the USA for The World Convention, and what is more I had all my shop ordering to do for Christmas. Seeing that I had been trying to talk Merv Barrett into organising New Zealand's first con, I felt particularly bad about it. However I have now accepted a very kind invitation to be the guest of this years WELLCON, and I am very much looking forward to it.

Merv Binns )

**WANTED!** We have decided that we want to carry on our Fanzine Review column, but as Leigh Edmonds has moved up to Canberra it is not practical to have him still on the job. If any Melbourne fans are willing to help, please let us know.

The Ed.

#### SCIENCE FICTION 'FAN' CALENDAR 1981

The Australian SF Foundation is publishing a Calendar for 1981. They hope to have it available by SWANCON in August and for the World Con in Boston. Over a dozen artists have been asked to contribute, but so far we only have six promises. Proceeds from the sale of the Calendar will go to The Foundation, ASFN and A83. More details can be obtained from Merv Binns care of Space Age Books, 305/307 Swanston Street, Melbourne, 3000. If you are able to contribute the ASFF will be very pleased to hear from you.

## FAN NEWS



KEITH CURTIS and LAURA O'BRIEN are being married at St Christopher's Church, Panania, N.S.W on March 1st. Our congratulations to them both. Eric Lindsay will be best man. Time: 6 PM.

JOHN AND SALLY BANGSUND have moved and their new postal address is : P.O.Box 171, Fairfield, 3078, Vic.

Keith has recently been reviewing books on radio 2SER -FM.

VAN IKIN has retired from the editorship of ENIGMA (after being editor 1972-1979). The new editor will be David Wraight, assisted by Richard Faulder. All the correspondence to ENIGMA should now be sent to Box 249 Holme Building, University of Sydney, NSW 2006.

In early April Van will be moving to Perth to take up a position as Senior Tutor at the University of Western Australia. SCIENCE FICTION will continue to be published but from Perth. His new address is not yet available, but the old is ok for the moment.

(Van Ikin's leaving ENIGMA brings to mind the disgusting state of affairs regarding THE 1978 DITMARS. Most winners of the Awards that were supposed to be presented at UNICON IV, including ENIGMA, have not yet received their 'blue wedges', which represented the Ditmar Awards that year. If the Melbourne University SF Association do not present these awards to the recipients by SWANCON this year, I suggest that additional copies of this years model be provided and suitably inscribed. The cost of which could be paid for in a number of ways which I will not detail at this stage, but this lamentable state of affairs which was conveniently shelved when mentioned at SYNCON '79, must be put to rights. I will welcome and print any comments from readers on this matter. Ed.)

#### A REPORT FROM OUR SOCIETY COLUMNIST

Yet another fannish wedding! Leigh Edmonds and Valma Brown (who recently moved to Canberra) were married at the Uniting Church, Dimboola on the 5th of January. About twenty fans made the long trip to the Wimmera, fortunately in perfect weather.

Valma wore a full-length lace dress and veil in primrose yellow, Leigh wore a beige blazer and an amazing number of male fans wore suits and ties. The ceremony was followed by a reception at the Parish Hall. Officially this was a "dry" event, but at least a wine trifle sneaked onto the groaning board.

After the newly-weds left for their honeymoon at Warracknabeal proceedings concluded at the Motel Dimboola with DIMCON I; the programme consisted largely of decaffeinated coffee and speculations as to whether Gary Mason's venerable car would make it back to Adelaide in the morning.

Christine Ashby

## LETTER COLUMN



17 Teauguer Street,  
WILSON. WA. 6107.

Dear Mr Binns,

I first came across Australian SF News at a meeting of WASFA, and until volume 2 number 5, I have been impressed with the accuracy of its book reviews.

Alas, all good things must come to an end. I am referring, of course, to Lee Harding's myopic and sycophantic review of Rob Gerrard's anthology 'TRANSMUTATIONS'.

Harding seems to be caught in the dilemma that for some reason overtakes so many critics: ie, they start to think that the name at the top of their article is more important than the reviewed work. Apart from such nonsense as claiming Brian Aldiss' fatuous introduction as 'the best piece in the book', I take exception to the arbitrary mudslinging meted out to two fine stories: 'The Paradigm' by Randall Flynn, and 'Third Person Infinite' by David King.

The latter story I found to be absorbing, original, and full of subtle irony. (I especially liked the oblique reference to the protagonist's discovery of the Koran in the library of superstitious books). To say that this was written for a 'tail and sting' - whatever that is - is phillistine. What a treat to read a story that actually has an ending (and one that can be interpreted in at least four ways, at that!)

And if Lee Harding cannot find the obvious brilliance in 'The Paradigm' then no mitigation that I can offer can save his credibility.

His perspicacious appraisal of 'The Wide Waters Waiting' notwithstanding, I suggest you find a more competent reviewer for your otherwise excellent periodical. Lee Harding should find an occupation more appropriate and more in demand; say, teaching disco dancing to geriatric supporters of the Ayatollah Khomeini?

Yours disgustedly,

Jeffrey Buchanan.

Dear Mr Buchanan,

I appreciate your opinions but do not necessarily agree with them, however I am pleased to see that somebody is at least taking the time to write and criticise what I publish. I welcome any letters of comment, no matter how critical they may get of what I or my contributors write.

John.J. Alderson,  
HAVELOCK. VIC. 3465/ 29.1.80

Dear Merv,

I note with interest your report



that Wynne Whiteford is to have BREATHING SPACE ONLY published by Void Publications and that you follow up the announcement with..."set in an authentic Australian background, but proof that you do not have to have ockers and koalas running around everywhere". How bloody condescending of you! Whilst I have only a vague idea what an ocker is, though I suspect it is something rather like Merv Binns, your attitude is one of the most grovelling cultural cringe, the type of thing that we of the Australian litterateur have been trying to abolish for nearly two centuries. What right have you, or anyone else, to say what we writers should put in, or leave out of our literary work? I believe I can speak for every writer of any credit at all when I say that we don't need censorship, or you as a censor, or anyone else as a censor. Our own artistic honesty is the only guide as to what we writers, as individuals, put in, or leave out of our work.

We don't want censorship, however well directed, as for instance.... Cecil B. de Mille Much against his will, Was forced to leave Moses Out of the War of Roses.

That was still censorship, however well directed. But yours springs from an inferiority complex. Nobody, who is ashamed of his country or his countrymen is ever going to be a writer worth reading, nor can any writer write with the necessary honesty if he has this cultural cringe that says his country is inferior. We have enough censorship in the world without adding to it in Australia.

Yours etc,  
John J. Alderson.

NOTE: Nothing personal of course Merv.

Dear John,

*The wording of my report on Wynne's book was not exactly mine, but I did use it and I will accept the consequences. I do not think personally that there is anything wrong with having dinky die Australian things in sf stories, but by the same token I do not think that these things are absolutely necessary to make the stories dinky die Australian.*

Ed.

87 Westbury Street,  
BALACLAVA. 3183.

Dear Merv,

Miss Dorian (ASFN Dec/Jan 'Letters') would be better off not submitting 'outlines' to editors. Outlines never do justice to the story conception and give the editor no idea of what the actual performance will be like. Only established writers, whose style and standard are known, can risk it.

As regards 'characterisation' in general, I must first pick up Miss Dorian on her reference to sf as the 'most exacting of all fields'. SF is more likely the least exacting of all literary fields (except sword-and-sorcery), because it places so few

constraints on the writer. Imaginative fiction offers too many ways out for the author's problem. The SF writer can, and too often does, simply evade his problems; the mainstream writer has to solve them.

This is in part because the mainstream writer depends so much on effective characterisation (which is the ultimate test of a writer's talent) where the fantasist and the SF writer use stock characters with a few understanding traits to fix them in the reader's mind. This I call 'luggage label' characterisation. You can tell the folk apart because one is fat, one is green, one is a cyborg, and so on....

SF gets away with this because the social and physical components are much more important than the characters, who serve mainly to demonstrate how the alien civilization, or whatever, works. Fantasy gets away with it because the accent is on the inhuman, not the human aspects, and any old stock characters will do so long as the 'mindblowing' (gordelpus!) gimmickry is piled on.

What Miss Dorian's rejecting editor probably means is that her piece reads a bit flatly and needs some livening in dialogue and action. In SF and Fantasy (and crime fiction) characters are only what they say and do. There are no depths to be explored, and easy recognition is what prevents the reader's attention from wandering. But they must have some life in them - and Shakespeare, Heinlein and I together can't tell you exactly how that is achieved. Life is the difference between proper observation and mere verbal mechanics. I can't go much further than that.

Very few SF or Fantasy stories have good characterisation. I doubt if there are six really memorable characters in the whole range of Science Fiction. But, despite Miss Dorian's strictures, Bilbo and Samwise and Gandalf and particularly Gollum do remain powerfully in memory 20 years later. (That's a rule-of-thumb test.) Granted, they are 'luggage label' characters, but they are well designed labels. And where sf (being mainly escapist or theme-oriented) has little room for deeply investigated characters, the sensible thing to do is lard your fiction with instantly identifiable folk. That is what Tolkien did.

And that is almost certainly what editors want. The result won't be art, but it may keep the so-and-sos quiet.

George. Turner

Dear George,

*The opportunity presents itself to thank you and the people such as Rowena Corey, Lee Harding, John Litchen and many more who have been helping me with news, reviews and comments. The letter column is an integral part of the NEWS and I hope even more people will write in and tell me what they think.* Ed

C/- 28 Lynch Street,  
BRIGHTON. 3180.

Dear Mr Binns,

Just a quick thanks, firstly for publishing my letter in the last SF NEWS, and secondly to advise of my new address. On the first score, I trust I wasn't too harsh in picking on Tolkien to demonstrate the characterisation points I mentioned. I could also have used E.E. 'Doc' Smith, Harry Harrison or numerous other male SF writers who have given male Entics great character and totally ignored or slighted female characters. In 'FIRST LENS MEN' for instance, as early as P.39, Smith has a female actually slighting her own sex by saying: "...women's minds and Lenses don't fit. There's a sex-based incompatibility. Lenses are as masculine as whiskers.....(you) are men with tremendous force, drive and scope. Pure killers all of you... No more to be stopped than a glacier and twice as hard and ten times as cold. A woman simply can't have that kind of a mind..." "What rot, the more up to date female will say! The subject of women in SF has to be better developed. Films have concentrated on a glamour or unusual aspect of femaleness ('Tarantula!') 'Mantis' of 'Them' do nothing to improve our images. Nor does the continual stream of lewd junk products with titles like 'Sex Odyssey') I am pleased to see a recent T.V. series of 'Logan's Run' which included an episode wherein a Female Master Mind protected her Cybernaut children by defending them to the ultimate death of her planet. She was a gorgeous array of lights, metals and machinery and ruled males and females equitably. There's nothing against a female Darth Vader, or as the "Star Trek" makers proved and inclusion of a feminine robot-Transfer, less subservient females. I'd like to hear from other female writers about this - maybe you'd like to publish their views? Trust you can read some of this. The typewriters about to pack up.

I love reading the NEWS and look forward to the next copy.

Sincerely,

Josephine M. Dorian.

Dear Miss Dorian,

*I do thank you for your letters. These are basically the type of things I want to see commented on. I will welcome any letters discussing things in the NEWS or relating to F & SF subjects, and the more they get people going enough to reply all the better.*

Ed

## NEXT ISSUE:

A REPORT ON A NEW COMPLEX TO BE BUILT IN THE U.S.A TO RIVAL 'DISNEYLAND', 'SCIENCE FICTION LAND', SF FILMS IN PRODUCTION, REVIEWS OF FANTASY BOOKS, REPORT ON AMERICAN TRIP BY JILL CURTIN, FANZINE LISTING, BALANCE OF JANUARY FEBRUARY PUBLISHERS RELEASES IN THE USA AND MARCH USA AND UK, THE AUSTRALIAN SF FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT, LATEST DETAILS ON UNICON SIX AND A FEATURE ON THE GOH JOE HALDEMAN ....





## Book Reviews by young readers

We have received the following reviews from young SF readers. They give some fresh new views on books generally well known.

### EARTH ABIDES

George R. Stewart.

Briefly the book is about a disease which wipes out 99% of the Earth's population. A few survivors form a colony which tries to create a new world.

The book was very well written, holding the reader at all times in suspense. The theme was a very enjoyable one, but at the same time very scary. Imagine yourself being the last person on the earth. This book moves at an alarming rate which means you must keep reading in order to stop where the tenseness dies down. This I think, is the sign of a very experienced and good author.

I highly recommend EARTH ABIDES to anyone who enjoys very interesting Science Fiction. Reviewed by Shane Power.

### THE HITCH HIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

By Douglas Adams.

Reviewed by M. Davis.

Briefly, the story is about two travellers (calling themselves hitch hikers) getting lifts in spacecrafts, getting thrown out of spacecrafts and having short adventures on different planets.

The book is very well written, I think, for the type of book it is. It was very fast moving and technical with words and phrases that had to be remembered for future reference. It was also very jumpy. Each chapter, (these were short - about a couple of pages long) was on something different, although they all added up very difficultly in the end. The thing that stood out the most in the story was the humour - it was almost zany, a bit like the goons or maybe Monty Python. All through the story humour was used no matter if the atmosphere was tense or easy going, and it was used very well.

I would recommend this book for age groups 16 onwards.

### THE PUPPET MASTERS

by Robert Heinlein.

Review by Neah Xathusi.

The Puppet Masters, is a story about a fight against a race of sluglike invaders who plan to take-over the world through mass hypnosis. The story is well written as it could easily be feasible and keeps moving. Heinlein didn't stay on one point too long and in this way he kept the reader's interest right up to the climax in the last pages of the book.

### SPACE FAMILY STONE

by R. A. Heinlein.

Reviewer's name not given.

This is a pathetic book about a family

which includes two 'heavenly twins', little brats that get their own way always in the end. The story is full of constant domestic arguments; as if we don't get enough of them now!!

Some of the scientific facts in this novel are quite impossible eg: In space where everyone is in self contained breathing apparatus (space suits) a contagious disease spreads causing an epidemic. How?

### MOONRAKER

by Christopher Wood (Panther)

Reviewed by Robert Kemp.

The book MOONRAKER is now an up dated version of the original.

The story is about NASA who loaned the space shuttle to the British which was stolen. After the incident 'M', James Bond's boss sends him to find and locate the shuttle. Who has it? Multi-millionaire Hugh Drax, who supports NASA, thinks it might be the Russians. But James Bond has some other thoughts about the incident. Later in the story he obtains pieces to a puzzle which is one of the most dangerous acts of human destruction and finds out he must prevent it which sends him to outerspace. Where he completes his mission in a typical James Bond style.

### HAN SOLO AT STAR'S END by Brian Daley

Reviewed by Miranda Foyster

Published by Sphere books. \$3.25

This book is based upon the Star Wars, using two characters, Han Solo and Chewbacca the Wookiee. It is written in much the same style as 'Splinter of the Mind's Eye' by Alan Dean Foster - which is also based on 'Star Wars'.

It's not for the casual reader. If you're not really into Science Fiction, you won't understand one word in ten. The book is for a fairly young person, about 8-19, I think. Older readers would find impossible things, and so not enjoy it. I have a query as to

when the book is set. Was it before the particular events of Star Wars, or after. Most things point to it being before, however, it could have been afterwards.

It has a good plot, something I have never come across before (not a good plot, I mean a plot like the one in Han Solo at Star's End).

The descriptions of the battles were, in my mind, very clear. One could almost see the smoke hanging over the lines of red and blue.....

I liked the idea of 'Blue Max'. In him, was the childish part of the author, it seemed. This precocious, intelligent and, to a very wide extent for a computer, feeling box of fun, added life to the story.

I enjoyed the book because I had to think hard and use my imagination to understand it. I didn't know what would happen next, which is a good character-istic. I think it was a good book all round.

Del & Dennis Stocks,  
P.O. Box 235  
ALBION. QLD. 4010. 27.1.80.

Dear Merv,

Would you be kind enough to mention my following request in a forthcoming issue of Australian SF News?

I am currently involved in a course in Soviet studies at Queensland University - specifically looking at the Russian intelligentsia and the concept of Russian Utopias. I am in need of a photocopy or loan of RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY 2(1966) no 3 R.Milch's article "Science Fiction in Russia Today". Naturally, I will pay copying costs, postage etc, and would much appreciate if it a reader can help me out.

Regards,  
Dennis.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ....

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