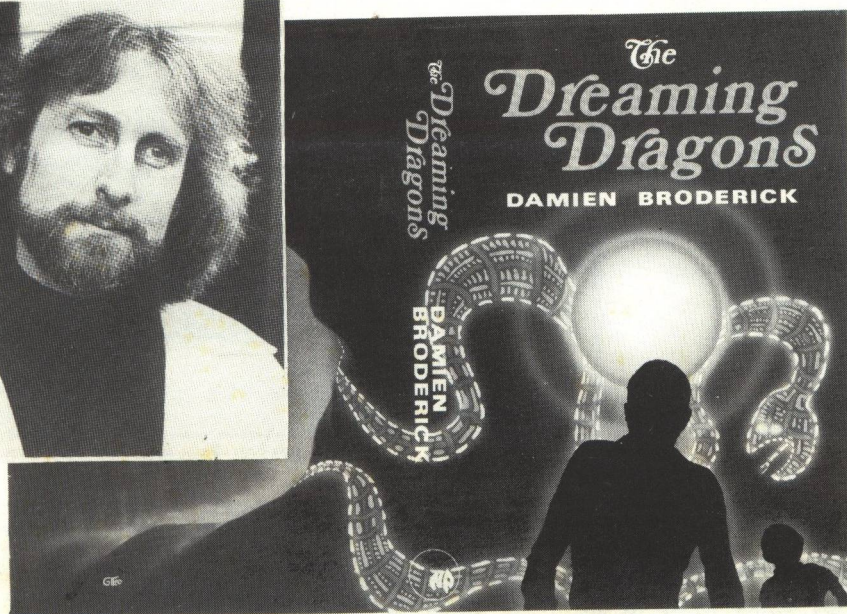
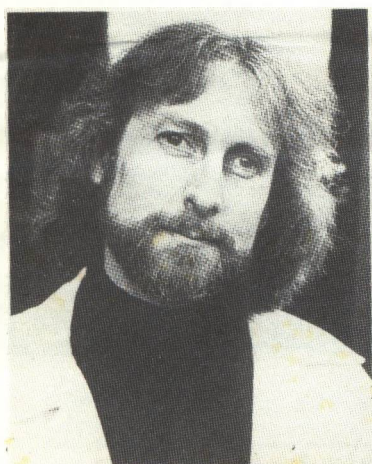


AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS

VOLUME TWO / NUMBER TEN

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1980

New DAMIEN BRODERICK Novel Published



NORSTRILIA PRESS HAVE FOLLOWED UP THEIR RECENT FIRST ENTRY INTO THE NOVEL FIELD, "MOON IN THE GROUND" BY KEITH ANTILL, WITH A NEW NOVEL BY DAMIEN BRODERICK CALLED "THE DREAMING DRAGONS".

This is DAMIEN BRODERICK'S second novel, having had a sword and sorcery novel published in the U.S.A., "Sorcerer's World" by Signet Publishers. He has been writing and editing science fiction in Australia since the late 1960s. His most significant contribution to the field is the anthology published by Angus and Robertson, "The Zeitgeist Machine", but he has long been a champion of science fiction writing and publishing in this country. "Dreaming Dragons" will also be published in the U.S.A. by Pocket Books soon. A brief survey of the work of Damien Broderick, by Lee Harding, is included in this issue.

Norstrilia Press have also just published an original collection of poetry by ROGER ZELAZNY called "When Pussywillows Late In The Catyard Bloomed". Both paper back and a signed cloth edition are available.

The HUGO AWARD Winners

THE ANNUAL HUGO AWARDS voted on by the members of the World Science Fiction Convention were presented at the convention, NOREASCON, held over the weekend of August 29th to September 1st. Reports indicate that this was the largest World SF Convention yet held, with around 6000 people attending over the weekend in Boston, U.S.A.

THE WINNERS OF THE AWARDS ARE:

BEST NOVEL:

THE FOUNTAINS OF PARADISE
by Arthur C. Clarke
(Gollancz/Harcourt- Pan/Ballantine)

BEST NOVELLA:

ENEMY MINE by Barry Longyear
(Isaac Asimov's Magazine -9/79)

BEST NOVELETTE:

SANDKINGS by George R.R. Martin
(Omni 8/79)

SHORT STORY:

THE WAY OF CROSS AND DRAGON
by George R.R. Martin (Omni 6/79)

BEST NON-FICTION:

THE SCIENCE FICTION ENCYCLOPEDIA
ed Peter Nicholls
(Granada / Doubleday)

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION:

ALIEN

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST:

MICHAEL WHELAN

BEST FAN ARTIST:

ALEXIS GILLILAND

BEST EDITOR:

GEORGE SCITHERS

BEST FANZINE:

LOCUS

BEST FAN WRITER:

BOB SHAW

Other Awards:

THE JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD
BARRY LONGYEAR

GANDALF AWARD For Grand Master of
Fantasy:

RAY BRADBURY

THE FIRST FANDO:

GEORGE O. SMITH

THE BIG HEART AWARD:

LOU TABAKOW

THE PAT TERRY AWARD: (For Humour in SF)

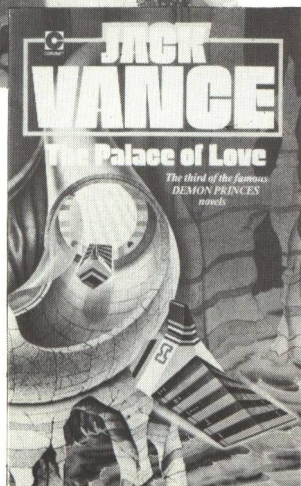
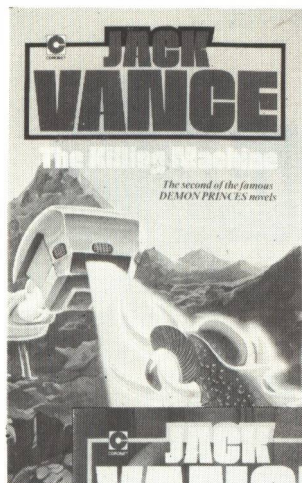
DOUGLAS ADAMS for "Hitchiker's Guide
To The Galaxy"

CHICAGO Won the Bid to hold the World
SF Convention in 1972

We expect to have a report from the Australian fans who attended NOREASCON in the next issue. DUFF WINNER Keith Curtis rang us through the Hugo results and told us he was having a great time, and had met an incredible number of people.

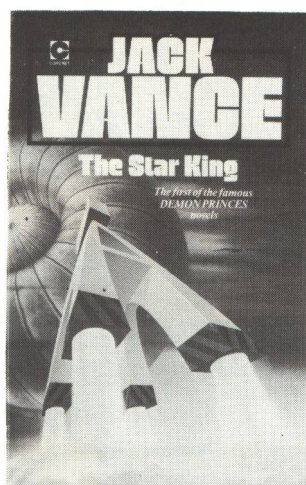
Keith also reported a very good reaction and lots of support for the Australia in '83 World Convention bid.

We attended THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL CONVENTION in Perth, Western Australia, SWANCON, and a report with photographs is inside along with the DITMAR winners. The Guest of Honour was ANNE McCAFFREY, who was a great hit with everybody in Perth and the other cities on her trip across Australia after SWANCON.



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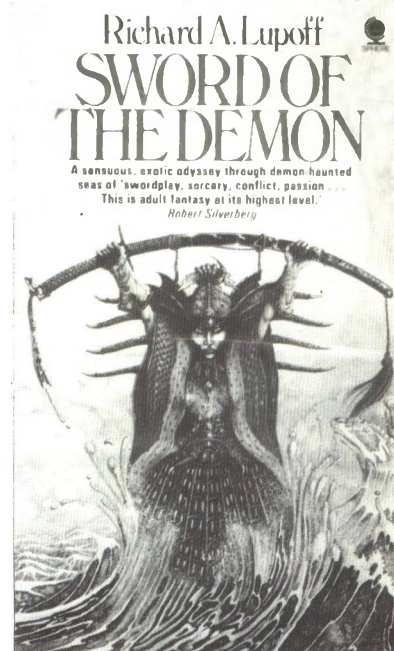
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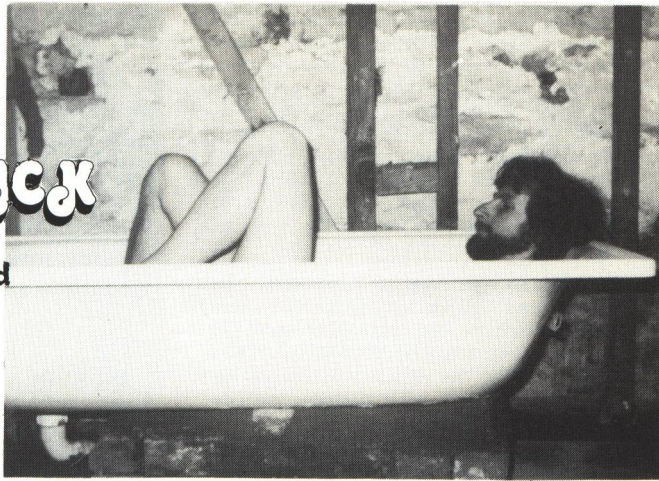


DAMIAN BRODERICK

A Writer Returned

A PROFILE

by Lee Harding



Damien Broderick, Australia's most stylish science fiction writer, sold his first sf story at the age of 19. The story had been written two years previously. It was published in the first volume of *NEW WRITINGS IN SCIENCE FICTION*, edited by John Carnell and published in England by Dennis Dobson and Corgi Books in 1964. The title was *The Sea's Furthest End*, and editor Carnell waxed enthusiastic (and in private) about a quality that was "rather like the young Bradbury". The story exhibited a fine technique and a florid imagination, and Broderick seemed a bright new star in the sf sky.

In those early days, most local sf writers concentrated their efforts on writing for the British magazines. Perhaps driven by a desire to support himself by writing, Broderick followed a different course. Instead of concentrating on the long-term rewards to be had by submitting stories to overseas markets, he decided to work as a freelance for the Australian markets. He was soon selling steadily to the 'slick' magazines of the time, of which the most prominent were those published under the banner of K.G. Murray: *MAN*, *MAN JUNIOR*, *ADAM*, and etc. In time Broderick increased his output and was soon publishing a variety of stories and articles for magazines other than the 'men's' market.

In 1965, Horwitz published a collection of these early stories under the general title of *A MAN RETURNED*. This was significant, in that it marked the publication in Australia, for the first time, of a collection of sf stories by a local writer - an achievement which has not since been followed up. The book is now a rare collector's item.

Broderick had a story in the *FIRST PACIFIC BOOK OF AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION*, edited by another native Australian, John Baxter. The book remains in print, although the word 'PACIFIC' has been removed. This title and its successor did much to encourage serious critical recognition of sf in Australia.

The Baxter anthologies were published in 1968 and 1970. In between, Ron Graham launched the ill-fated *VISION OF TOMORROW* magazine, published in England and edited there by Phil Harbottle, but courageously financed by Graham, a well-known Australian sf enthusiast. The magazine lasted

only eleven monthly issues, but in that time it showcased a lot of fiction by local writers. Broderick contributed several excellent stories, demonstrating how much he had developed in the interim: gone was the gosh-wow Harlan Ellison-style of story which he had hastily written for Australian magazines, and in its place was a cool intellectualism.

In 1970 Signet Books, New York, also published Broderick's first novel, *SORCEROR'S WORLD*. This book was the result of a commission from Ron Smith, who was then editor at Horwitz Books. Unfortunately it was never published locally, but, if you can find a copy, *SORCEROR'S WORLD* is a superior example of the sword and sorcery genre.

When *VISION OF TOMORROW* ceased publication, Broderick was for a few short, dizzy months, editor of *MAN* magazine. During this period he actively sought sf stories by local writers, and published at least one by Jack Wodhams. Upon leaving the magazine (having boldly raised the level of the female nipple on the front cover of that magazine in those heady, halcyon days before the flood of superior U.S. publications forced K.G. Murray out of the 'girlie' magazine race), Broderick expanded his field of activity. He began writing sf criticism for newspapers such as *The National Times* and magazines like the A.B.C. publication *24 Hours*. He was also eagerly sought as an expert on paranormal science, and in this capacity was often heard on the A.B.C. radio programme, "Science Bookshop".

Broderick struggled for several years to see a new anthology of Australian sf successfully launched by Angus & Robertson. But the result was worth the long delay: *THE ZEITGEIST MACHINE* was a handsome large-format paperback with a glossy presentation far superior to A&R's previous packages for John Baxter. The stories rather patchily exhibited a cross-section of contemporary Australian sf, but publication of the book seemed to herald the first 'golden age' for the genre in terms of the local product.

In 1977 Broderick was fortunate in gaining a U.S. agent. He immediately sold a short story, *Growing Up* to *GALILEO* magazine (the story later appeared in *THE ZEITGEIST MACHINE*), and then went on to write the remarkable *A Passage In Earth*, which I was delighted to include in my anthology of original stories, *ROOMS OF PARADISE*. Soon after this, Broderick sold a second novel, *THE DREAMING DRAGONS*, to Pocket Books in New York and Norstrilia Press in Melbourne.

I was privileged to read *THE DREAMING DRAGONS* in manuscript form, and immediately recognised it as the imaginative sf thriller so many of us have always hoped would come out of Australia. It is in all respects a major work, quite unlike any sf novel previously written by an Australian. The flavour is uniquely Broderick's and it presages even more exciting work to come.

Norstrilia Press will publish *THE DREAMING DRAGONS* in September, well ahead of the U.S. edition. I urge you to read it. The novel carries my most enthusiastic endorsement and, if your taste runs to classical 'mind-blowing' sf of the van Vogt school, but with a modicum of common sense keeping everything under control and humour and verbal pyrotechnics thrown in for good measure, then you won't be disappointed.

Broderick has spent most of his professional writing life 'out in the cold', working without compromise. I welcome this new novel as a major literary event, for it demonstrates once again that a quality book can be entertaining and challenging to the imagination.

Welcome back, Damien.

Lee Harding

August 1st 1980

AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS

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An Interview With GORDON R. DICKSON

GUEST OF HONOUR "SYNCON '79"

INTERVIEWED FOR ASFN
BY PAUL J. STEVENS

Part One :

PS : What books can we expect to see coming from you in the future?

GRD: Well, between now and the end of 1980 I hope to get most of my older novels back in print. That could give me 30 - 40 titles in print at the same time, which is something I've always been working for. This September there'll be SPACE SWIMMERS, which is the sequel to HOME FROM THE SHORE. In October there's publication of SPIRIT OF DORSAI, which is a lavishly illustrated trade edition, along the lines established by my earlier HOME FROM THE SHORE, Larry Niven's THE MAGIC GOES AWAY, or - and this may not have reached Australia yet - Jerry Pournelle's JANISSARIES. SPIRIT OF DORSAI will contain "Brothers", and a new novella; both are what I call 'illuminations' because they throw light on the Childe Cycle but aren't necessary to it. "Amanda Morgan", the new one, is about the defence of the area where the Graemes live on the Dorsai.

EARTHMAN'S BURDEN will be out from Avon in December, and in January a new novel from Ace called MASTERS OF EVERON. I don't know if EARTHMAN'S BURDEN will be using the original cover; I don't think so. There was quite a competition among artists to get the final assignment, but I don't know who was finally settled on. I hope to have delivered THE FINAL ENCYCLOPEDIA by mid-summer of 1980, but then it won't see print until 1981. And I'm currently collaborating on an occult novel - not sure of the title yet - with Charles Grant

Also on the list, waiting until I get time to write it - which might be in 1980 - is THE DRAGON KNIGHT, which will be a sequel to THE DRAGON AND THE GEORGE. Also in 1981 I may be able to finish up and deliver for publication within 6 - 8 months thereafter, a novel called THE WAY OF THE PILGRIM. This is a novel I've been very slow about; it starts with the short novelet called "Enter a Pilgrim", which appeared in ANALOG some time ago. The other parts, or at least some of them, may also be published there as I write them - but I should warn people that the delay in magazine publishing and the fact that these stories have to be published well before the publication date of the book, could squeeze some of the later ones out of magazine publication.

While I was flying to Australia I finished the last scene of a short story I'm doing for Ben Bova at OMNI - which is where you'll be seeing it providing Ben likes it enough. It's called "God Bless Them," and is rather a bitter, propagandistic short punching my own country in the nose for not having done better about the space program - or at least, punching the responsible people the nose.

PJS: The British editions of your books have been coming out steadily, too. You've seen the Sphere editions of the three DORSAI books, plus NECROMANCER, TIME STORM and THE FAR CALL. How do you feel these British editions compare to the American originals?

GRD: Britain does a better book, and if you put the English against the American, it'll appear to be a thicker book. Also, the covers tend to be a little more responsible. Of course you never know what you're going to get. I was going to give as an example the Sphere edition of TIME STORM as being better. But while I do like the cover, the cover of the Bantam edition is an unusually good one. It was done by Len Leoni, Sr., who is an art director who in this case liked the story enough to do the painting himself. Little by little sf writers in general are getting better covers. But, as I say, you tend to get better margins, slightly larger type and, on the average, slightly better covers in the English editions, in my experience.

PJS: And how does the British publisher compare to the American publisher, as far as making an author worthwhile getting published by one or the other?

GRD: Now, this is all subjective - that is, it's from my own point of view, since I can't speak for the field generally. For example: I see the British covers in general tend to be a little bit better. I get the feeling that one reason for this is that American publishers on the other hand, tend to follow trends a little bit more. The idea of a cover is to show a scene from the novel ideally. If it can't do that, it should show at least a couple of the main characters. And it should be essentially a realistic cover, rather than a cover which the publisher thinks will make people's ears wiggle - deep space battleships and the like.

American contracts and advances are very much larger, as you know, and so they tend to wag the dog. There is no set deal, but on average the English advance will be a fifth to a tenth of the American. Variation will arise depending on the author's popularity in England, the particular book, or something like that. I've heard shop talk to the effect that England considers science fiction to be in a kind of a slump right now. This kind of startles me because science fiction is undeniably exploding on the American side of the water: advances are climbing, there's a great deal of publisher interest--not maybe so much over the run of the mill science fiction novel, now that the main gold rush is over, but there's a great deal of interest in established authors and they're beginning to put some weight behind people like--to pull names out of the woodwork--Ted Sturgeon,



Photo by Paul Stevens at SYNCON '79

Fred Pohl, and such. People who the publishers know are going to give them a book, and who already have a set audience to go with. This is the kind of thing that I'm convinced is going to make a large difference to your already established authors like Bert Chandler, for instance. He's an ideal underrated bluechip, in financial terms. With him, a little investment in the way of promotion and handling and things like that could pay off tremendously. And I think we're going to see that in the next few years.

As I say, this is all a subjective impression from my point of view--but the English publishers have always struck me as being a little more conservative and a little less likely to treat science fiction as something that might be larger than just a category fiction. American publishers also have this attitude, but they've been beginning to open up for some time. For American publishers it's now an established fact, for example, that sometimes there are books that transcend the category limits of science fiction. Robert Heinlein's books have sold millions of copies, Clarke does well, Chip Delany did well with DHALGREN, and Ursula Le Guin.

Now, they're specific reasons in the case of each author why it happened. When Joe Haldeman got the first large advance--I think it was \$70,000--the tendency of American publishers was to say that if it makes money, it's not science fiction. But that attitude is cracking on the American side. I don't yet see it doing so on the English side.

Now, admittedly, England has a problem. They have very bad inflation--of course, America has, too now--and they have high taxation and a number of problems. Nonetheless, from my looking in to it, English publishing doesn't seem to be that crippled by the situation they're in. They do seem to have money to spend, they do seem to have books that do well, they do seem to turn a profit.

They may be doing this by supreme efforts, but the point is it is not a dead area. I'm afraid a number of my fellow authors in America tend to think that the British market is dead, or at least very quiet, compared to the American. Certainly there are a lot less sky-rockets and dancing up and down in the streets--but it's a good, wheelable market. Now, from the standpoint of the author, his overseas sales can make all the difference between barely making entry and being somewhat comfortable. It's very important. And, in fact, it is to all authors everywhere, since we now live in an international community--sales outside of one's own country are very important. And moreso for writers from Australia and Canada. This will have to be sorted out in the long run: publishing is going to trend toward an international position. Authors--and, for that matter, fans (the science fiction area is a novelty; you can't equate its fans with ordinary readers or even mystery fans)--already belong to an international community. If Putnam/Berkley has a flood in their warehouse--which they did--which destroys a number of titles, and tells the authors that they don't know if they'll reprint or not--that's a matter of interest not just to the fans, the readers, in the USA, but to fans all over the world. It's all hooked together, it all ties in.

PJS: Gordy, we were talking before about the ideas of science fiction. What actually is your idea of what science fiction should be? Do you have any particular structure to science fiction, an idea that you put in all your novels, or do you like to use a free range?

GRD: I have something definite, as you know, but I think science fiction in general is an explorative fiction. One that pushes the frontier back both in the crafts and ideas sense. It's also by design an ideal literature for allegory and philosophical fiction. Essentially what we have been getting at, since the 1960's, is philosophical fiction. It started out as hard science, then soft science, and went from there into philosophy.

The one requirement upon science fiction --any serious science fiction at all-- is that the reader has to think a little bit. There's a level where this isn't necessary--it's perfectly respectable to read the present-day version of the old PLANET STORIES, the science fiction shoot-em-ups, which can be an awful lot of fun, too. And this is a legitimate story-telling thing, but the real heart and thrust of science fiction is any sort of literature that tests an explorer's attitudes. Science fiction, by its own definition, cannot ignore any new attitude or feeling. It was impossible for it to ignore the rise of feminism for example. It had ignored that, it would not have been science fiction. If science fiction wants to be treated responsibly in the future, it can't ignore any trend nowadays simply because it may not be eternally palatable.

Empire. Do you have anything to say on this?

GRD: You may have heard me speak of the Child Cycle as my showpiece, and any of my other novels as non-critical laboratory experiments. All my novels are laboratory experiments--I learn from them and I push what I am doing a little bit farther, which develops my techniques a little bit more. The ones outside the Cycle are non-critical experiments. THE ALIEN WAY was very successful. NONE BUT MAN was very successful. Both did what I set out to do with them, and they were deliberately exploited, deliberately set up to try to do something. I have a certain view of where I think the human race is going. I see it going onward and upward. I believe the human race has developed from its very beginning, it's developing now, and it's going to develop more. Frankly, I think we're gonna get better and better. Not in the sense of getting fatter and sassier, but simply reaching out and training ourselves to be more capable, to be better living instruments in our worlds.

PJS: Would you consider this an evolution?

GRD: Yes, because that's what I am mainly concerned with in the Child Cycle, but you'll see it mirrored in my other books, too. All my books deal with the same family of concerns. It's like being able to speak the language of a country but having no idea of the cultural meanings of that language. There is a great blindness, not in the US alone, but in the world generally, to the fact that the word is not the thing. A western man can say "democracy" to an Eastern man, and the Eastern man can say the word "democracy back". And the word is identical, but the image and the attitude that goes with it are two entirely different things. It is the difference which is important; not the similarity. It's as if two armies with white flags met each other in the field and decided to fight. And since they had both agreed that their flags were white, they were fighting over whose flag was dirtier, or whose was squarer. What they should be fighting over is the fact that white flag is merely a tag, and thus reflects the

essential differences that make them want to fight.

PJS: Is it a matter of communication?

GRD: Yes, entirely; and of course since writing is the art of communication, it's its responsibility to get into this area. All out writers do it. Science Fiction is an area in which most of the writers consciously feel a responsibility. I shouldn't be too parochial about that because writers everywhere feel this kind of responsibility-- it's a built-in thing. It's just that science fiction is a new literature that's attempting to come to grips with 20th century man, technological man, trying to fit faith and love and honor and decency and all the things we need as feeling individuals, in order to exist as close as we do to each other without chewing on each other, into a situation in which there is hard metal all around us, metaphorically speaking.

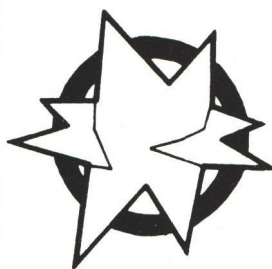
That completes part one of this interview with Gordon Dickson. Part two will be included in the next issue. In later issues we expect to be running another two interviews by Paul Stevens with first of all Joe Haldeman, and later on Anne McCaffrey.

EDITORIAL NOTES:

Unfortunately we do not have room for the usual booklist in this issue. It is not prepared even, so rather than cut something else out we will catch up with the next issue. We also have a lot of reviews ready to use, so reviewers do not think we have forgotten you. We could have gone to 20 pages of course, but we could not afford the extra cost. We are already two issues behind with our printers and it is not helping that some people do owe us money for advertising and such. We have received a number of letters which we will answer. Particularly those who wrote criticising our comments on some of the local magazines. Our comment on those magazines was mainly levelled at presentation, but more on that next issue.

N.S

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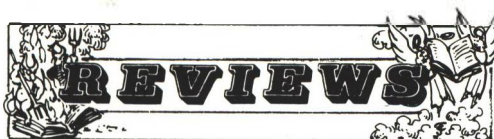
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THE FOURTH HEMISPHERE by David Lake
Void Publications. 208 pp. HC \$12.95
PB \$3.95

REVIEW By Wynne Whiteford

The planet Eran, background of THE FOURTH HEMISPHERE, is a solidly believable world.

It has depth, the convincing complexity of some of the environments constructed by Jack Vance and Ursula Le Guin. A double-page map of its surface backs up the well-thought-out geography and history - even pre-history - that David Lake has created as the stage on which his characters act out their lives.

In the early part of the book you find yourself referring to the map at the beginning. Later on, you find you know it by heart.

Central character, Andrew Adams, has been sent on a one-man mission to an Earthlike planet of the star 54 Piscium, 34 light-years from the Solar System. A long journey, because the author doesn't take too many liberties with what is possible - his spacecraft do not exceed the velocity of light.

Consequently, Adams knows at the outset that his journey will be one-way, the vast distance making it necessary for him to be frozen into controlled hibernation for the duration of the voyage.

Before we go further - a word of warning!

Don't make a snap judgement of THE FOURTH HEMISPHERE by looking at the first few pages and then the end. Browsing through a bookstore, you might start with the opening scene where Adams is selected for the mission, read some of the President's views on "Russkies" and "Commies", then see the word "Peace" on the closing page and decide the book was just another propaganda vehicle. A pity, because it isn't.

Eran has humanoid populations that have developed in parallel with ours, but on two hemispheres which have been separated for aeons, as Gondwanaland was once separated from Laurasia. This has given the author a chance to show different possible alternatives to our style of civilization.

Adams, crash-landing on the planet, is forced to eject from his lander when a violent storm rips off one of its wings, and he parachutes to the surface with no weapon other than a sheath-knife.

Instead of his expected 'Take me to your leader' approach, he is forced to infiltrate the alien races gradually, learning as he goes, helped by the diversity of types of people on the planet and the poor communication between the various parts.

It's hard to convey the vivid complexity of Eran in a few paragraphs, and perhaps the most economical way of doing it is by describing not what it is, but what it isn't. It's not one of those future stories set in an oversimplified world where there are only two races of people, one agreeing with the author's views and the other agin 'em, and where everyone in the Universe speaks understandable English, like the characters in Doctor Who.

Adams has to learn languages as he goes along. He is quick to learn, but we accept this, for on the very first page we have been told that one of the reasons for his selection for the mission was that he had been a brilliant linguist. Also, he has to learn fast to survive.

This may slow the tempo a little, but it gives intense reality. Adams' gradual discovery of the complexities of Eran, and his adjustment to them, build depth and solidity into a subtle, intricate story that reveals a succession of different cultures in great detail.

The first population he encounters has reached a level of technology roughly comparable with that of Europe or East Asia a few hundred years ago, but with primitive steam-power. This may suggest a world like the "Tidor" of THE DAWNING LIGHT by Robert Randall - the 1950's collaboration between Bob Silverberg and Randy Garrett - but David Lake has not simply taken over Elizabethan England and put yellow fur on the inhabitants. The comparison with earlier Earth cultures is deliberately ragged - inventions have appeared in different order than on Earth.

A realist might quibble at a few minor points- for instance, the fact that Adams leaves the Solar System in the year 2123 and arrives 34 light years away in 2157 - 34 years later. Even if he used enough power to move at nearly the speed of light, the acceleration and the stop at the end would be a real cruncher.

Still, the voyage is not what the book is really about. It's predominantly a story of conflict between different cultures. Perhaps David Lake's own background was of help here - his life in India, and as a teacher of English in Vietnam and Thailand - and Queensland. Plenty of variety to select from there!

The novel is too complicated to give you an outline here, but I can recommend it. Start at the beginning, and explore the planet Eran set-by-step alongside Andrew Adams.

Wynne Whiteford

LOOKING FOR BLUCHER by Jack Wodhams
207 pgs, Void Publications \$12.95 hc
PB \$3.95

Reviewed by John Alderson

Ho! Wodhams has written a book! A most unusual and original book at that (and far be it from us to suggest that we haven't got the vaguest idea what it's all about). Actually the mechanics seem unimportant. One man has a Simulator (in the spaceship) with which apparently he whiles away his time. With this he builds up a realistic dream world, so real in fact that to die in it is to die in reality. Outside the spaceship is a group of "scientists" who are managing things. They are able to insinuate

themselves into the dreams of the Simulator, and indeed at least two of them seem to be there fairly permanently but in a passive manner. However the boss introduces himself in a dominant manner as Napoleon and starts looking for someone else who has illegally introduced himself as Blucher. More and more real people are introduced into the Simulator dreams and the dreams are more and more taken out of the hands of their architect, to his increasing irritation, until at last, with Blucher caught, the dreamer rebels and walks out of the whole thing.

Well, I suppose that we would do the like if someone started mucking around in our dreams.

But that, the above, is only the mechanics of the story. The real value lies in the dreams and their manipulation, and the vivid writing that has gone into them. This highlights the somewhat slippery grasp the man at the Simulator seems to have of reality. This is shown up in particular with the weird metamorphoses of names in particular- and these are very clever indeed. Indeed Wodhams's use of names is amusing to say the least. The Director is Baldcock, his assistants Ramsey Weegals, and Miss Miriam Pischhoff, and so on.

To our mind this book is one of the most original and amusing contributions made to science fiction for a long time, adding depth and solidity to the Australian sf scene. Jack's handling of the erotic is excellent, a marked contrast to the American way, for the latter just don't know what it's all about and are always squalid and sordid.

Not so Wodhams. We have thought for a long time that the Australian treatment of the erotic is more in line with the French, the Scots and the Irish (Gaelic) and this book strengthens that conclusion. Its nice to get a book where the sex is not dirty and disgusting. Finally the treatment of scientists is again an Australian one, they do not have that great respectability of the British, the sacred-cowism of the Americans. Here they are rascals like everyone else, perhaps not in it for what they can get, but certainly willing to get what they can while they are in it. Nor does anyone save their country, the world or even a Galactic Federation, which is a great relief.

Congratulations Jack on a wonderful book.

John Alderson

BREATHING SPACE ONLY by Wynne Whiteford
Void Publications \$12.95 HC \$3.95 PB
Reviewed by Lee Harding

Wynne Whiteford has probably published more science fiction stories than any other Australian writer. Most of them appeared in the magazine boom years of the late Fifties, when he achieved a modest reputation as a writer of good, solid adventure sf. A series of novelettes was published in the British SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES in 1959, and this was followed by a long silence which has only been broken in recent years, since he began writing for the Paul Collins publications.

BREATHING SPACE ONLY is Whiteford's first published novel and it demonstrates that he has lost none of his earlier fluency and has acquired a cooler style that nowadays owes little to American influences.

The opening premise of the novel invites attention: the setting is a post-catastrophe Australia, with the action taking place in the Alps. With most of the world drowned in pollution, only the higher reaches of the world remain habitable. The inhabitants of these regions apparently maintain a hostile balance with those living in the Outlands, and there is much violence in the book which I found disquieting.

The idea is promising. Regrettably, searing sociological extrapolation of the sort that George Turner excels in, is not Whiteford's forte. He opts for melodrama, and by page 35 the alpine survivors have been contacted by an orbiting manned starship, apparently controlled by the descendants of human spacefarers who left Earth several hundreds of years earlier - and they have been brought face to face with the possibility of immortality as a boon from the stars. From here on the novel devolves into a rather routine sf adventure, replete with familiar gimmicks and clichés. However, the writing, despite some glaring flaws that a good copy-editor might have picked up and excised, is consistently entertaining. The ending is rather von Daniken-ish and abrupt, suggesting that Whiteford was either running out of steam or was writing to a predetermined length.

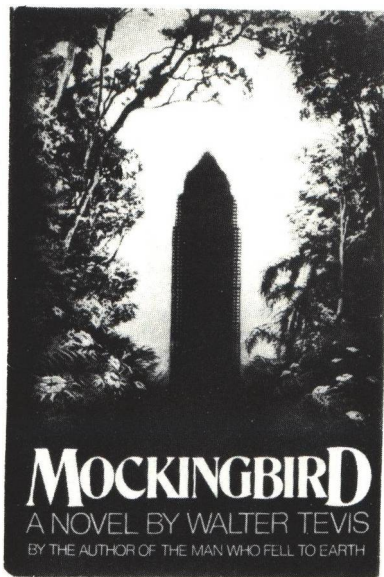
BREATHING SPACE ONLY reads as curiously old-fashioned - but then so does so much of the sf published nowadays. And the book is not helped by having a rather shallow and uninteresting protagonist; one finds it difficult to feel sympathetic to the character of Roy, and this feeling is carried over to the other characters. This would not have been so disappointing if the opening pages of the novel had not led the reader to expect more rounded characters than we have here. It seems that, faced with a potentially demanding narrative, Whiteford has fallen back on the tried and true - which is a pity. The book could have been so much better, but as it now stands it is certainly worthy of your attention. The story moves at a cracking pace and it is just the sort of book that will interest libraries, demonstrating as it does the beginning of an indigenous sf movement in Australia. I look forward to Wynne Whiteford's next novel.

About the cover: a technically well done bit of work by Grant Gittus (of the space hardware variety) loses much of its impact by the rather sombre choice of colours: deep blue to purple, contrasted with a yucky shade of brown-orange. Also, the logo is unnecessarily cluttered and difficult to read. Together with its two companion volumes, this makes for a rather dull and unappealing package.

The hardcover edition is paperback size, and, at the price, of interest only to collectors. It is also very poorly bound. The back of both editions has some five pages of advertisements for 'Voids'

other publications and this rather detracts from the rather nice typesetting. At \$2.95, this book is well worth having.

Lee Harding



MOCKINGBIRD - THE NOVEL OF THE YEAR?

Review by George Turner. (£5.95 UK)
Hodder and Stoughton. US edition Doubleday

'Only the mockingbird sings at the edge of the wood'. The words are taken (if we are to accept the text of the novel) from a title in an old silent film. What they mean in the context I am not sure; they could mean many things, but above all they seem to express the sense of loss, and yet of latent springtime, which runs through the book.

Walter Tevis - author of the very different 'Man Who Fell To Earth' - offers a world three centuries from now wherein man has run his race to the edge of extinction, not by the usual nuclear holocaust or biological interference but by allowing technology to overtake him. His marvellous robots have taken the drudgery out of life but in their unrelenting service have nearly taken him with it.

The final creation has been the Mark Nine, an android rather than a robot (Tevis uses the word interchangeably) who runs the disintegrating world and whose greatest wish is to die, which his programming will not permit while a true human remains alive.

Human beings exist in a drugged state, occasionally opting out in a petrol-soaked immolation. Literacy is forgotten. Fertility also has been eliminated (how and why is one of the minor surprises of the text), the race is in its final generation and soon Mark Nine will be able to die.

But robot inefficiency has left a fertile woman at large and a concatenation of circumstances has resulted in an intelligent man learning to read.

And if you think that here we go again on the old tale of two determined people setting out to regenerate the world - well, they don't set out to do anything of the sort, except by accident. What

happens is that Spofforth Mark Nine observes their meeting and mating and separates them for reasons of his own.

Most of the story deals with the odyssey of the man, Bentley, in his escape from gaol and his contacts with unusual humans and deteriorating robots in his struggle to reach New York and his pregnant woman. The climax which follows his success is predictable but works on a level of power and pathos unusual in science fiction.

Most of the action concentrates on the two humans but it is the unhuman Spofforth Mark Nine who dominates the book and my memory of it - one more example of the significant fact that most of the memorable characters in sf are non-human. He is not the pretty-pretty, yearning figure from the 'Woman's Weekly' that so many others (notably Lester del Rey) have made of the robot/android denied humanity, but a brooding, powerful and menacing entity torn between his need for full humanity and his desire for death.

For the rest, the picture of degenerate, crumbling New York, inhabited by drugged morons and broken-down robots is effective, the hero and heroine are believable in their human desperation without the silly glosses of heroism, and a religious community existing in an ancient fallout shelter is looked at with more than the usual facile surface attention.

'Mockingbird' may well be the sf novel of 1980. I doubt if, in purely literary terms, we will see better genre writing this year - unless D. G. Compton has one up his sleeve. This is the kind of novel that would win Hugo and Nebula in an intelligently managed judgement of awards, but rarely does.

George Turner

LET'S GO TO GOLGOTHA: The Gollancz/
Sunday Times Best SF Stories
(Panther 1980 220 pp. \$3.25)

Reviewed by John Alderson

This anthology differs from most in that the stories have not been filtered first through an SF magazine editor's net. Being British they are sombre in tone; catastrophes form the background for a number of the stories; they are more concerned with the business of living and more down to earth than the usual run of, say, American stories. Like some Australian stories they are deeper, more penetrating - but they lack the ruthless savagery of our local product. They also seem to have had little editing, so they appear with their warts as well as their beauty.

Cold Storage by Daphne Castell tells of a refrigerator that acts as a door into another dimension. This is a very domestic story with some amateur researching being done by the husband and his wife's boy friend - she seems to have a number of the latter. Eventually the husband is dragged into the other dimension, with the almost certain fate of being eaten. Whilst the wife is 'distracted' about this, she certainly does not seem to be unduly distressed.

The Hippie by James Alexander deals with the reclaiming of an unfaithful wife. A method has been developed for slowing the

body's metabolism down to one-tenth of normal, and criminals are punished by being 'slowed down' for appropriate periods of time. The husband takes the drug voluntarily, to experience the effects of the drug together with his wife, and he eventually smuggles her aboard an interstellar spaceship, where they are set up as colonists on a new planet. A simple but tenderly told story.

Blue Danube by Vic Norris is an interesting variation on the hoary theme of joining a Galactic Federation. Basically the story consists of preparing a man to meet an alien representative - the accepted way being to have sex with her. Human morality has not been considered, by either the Galactic Federation or the author. When the subject becomes impotent from the shock of the confrontation, he has his head shaved, an electrode inserted into his brain, and he is conditioned like one of Pavlov's dogs, and eventually meets the alien. The girl provided as a surrogate seems to suffer most. Ah, ah, ah!

Chris Morgan's So Proudly We Cling is a short piece about an old man collecting food after some unspecified catastrophe. Gary Kilworth's Let's Go To Golgotha is a rather devastating story that alone makes the collection worthwhile. A Time-Travel Agency is running trips back to historic events, and a group attend the crucifixion, where they mingle with the crowd. They discover to their horror that they, the time travellers, were the ones responsible for killing Jesus. The story is theologically sound (a science SF writers don't usually worry about being accurate with), and the terrible words 'The whole guilt of mankind rests on our shoulders' is memorable. Norman L Macht's A Way of Life tells of a future where there is an Office of Negative Attitudes - no boys and girls, it is NOT the Prime Minister's Department. In this story anyone who shows any emotion is 'treated' so that they don't; the hero stands up for himself while in a home for incurables, where he meets another Irishman - a female of the species. A very positive solution indeed. The Pit by D. West is a tantalising quest story, the proof being sought that one absurd cosmological theory is true rather than the other. Yet the further the story progresses the stranger things become, until at length one is left baffled and bewildered as to what sort of a world the people do live in. It is long, slow moving, but I found it very interesting.

Rather a fine collection - even if the book hasn't got a picture on the cover.

John J. Alderson

THE FACE OF THE DEEP

Jim Young

(Pocket Books 1979 224 pp \$US1.95)

Reviewed by K.U.F. Widdershins

Jim Young's first novel is somewhat disappointing. From start to finish this edition suffers from the Pocket Books approach to proof-reading (i.e. don't bother), even though at times this provides light relief (as in the pronunciation note in which we are advised that 'c' is pronounced as in the Scottish 'loch').

The problem with the book, however, lies at a somewhat deeper level. It would be bad enough if one's doubts stopped at the

point of wondering why the characters bothered to pursue the course of action which they did, but the whole thing, one suspects, is unnecessary.

This proves to be correct. The earthmen come to save the aliens from an impending catastrophe - and the resolution of the book is that there never was a threat of a catastrophe. Two of the terrans are 'rescued' during the scuffle between the visitors and the locals, and the vast bulk of the book is devoted to the adventures of one of these terrans, but the 'rescue' was unnecessary - all the other terrans got away quite nicely, thank you.

There's no objective philosophical arguments about whether it is all worthwhile or not, but surely the plot of a novel should hang on something more substantial than the whim of the author.

THE FACE OF THE DEEP floats around in a sea of uncertainty, every now and then bumping into some of the flotsam and jetsam of the ideas of the forties and fifties. There is at least a direction overall - towards the crazy resolutions described in the third paragraph of this review - and for this we can perhaps be grateful. But the trip doesn't seem to have been worthwhile, I'm afraid.

K.U.F. Widdershins

SIDE-EFFECT by Raymond Hawkey

NEL \$3.50 ARRP

Reviewed by Rowena Cory.

This story is set in the '80's and could be called SF, though your average reader wouldn't realise it. The plot centres around a brilliant doctor who is debarred for experimenting with human life. His research led him to grow a cloned foetus from the patient and use it for spare parts, thus eliminating the rejection of organs. Naturally the average person saw this as murder of a foetus and he was forced to give up his practice.

Being an unscrupulous man he decides to continue his work and takes clients only from the very wealthy to pay for his research. He supplies the donors for their transplants, no questions asked. That is until Clair goes missing and her scientific reporter boyfriend doesn't believe the false note they left him. From there it develops into an espionage thriller. The thing ends on a suitably ironic downbeat which I won't divulge.

At one point the reporter is being chased around the Miami Seaquarium by two hoods. He climbs across a tank to escape them; one follows him and falls in. The tourists watch this eagerly, thinking it part of the show. As the hood swims to the side a boy asks his father: "Why is that man in the killer shark tank?" and the father replies, "To show us how shark repellent works." It is only when the sharks attack him that they realise this is not part of the planned attractions.....

FROSTWORLD AND DREAMFIRE by John Morressy

N.E.L. \$3.50 RRP

Reviewed by Rowena Corey

This novel opens with the plight of the last Onhla as he searches in the company of the band of semi-sentient wolflike creatures for more of his race who have been decimated by an outworlder disease.

Gradually you learn about the world as he joins a caravan to sell his furs to raise the fare for a passage across the stars. But he is duped when the fever strikes him and his priceless furs stolen. But Hrull survives the attack and determines to follow the legend of the Onhla tribe which left in a starship centuries before.

The society of the world is built around its unusual rotation period which forces one side to face permanently away from the sun, and brings two periods of harvest to the nearside - one after the long winter and one after the drouthy summer. Despite the mysticism the ending survives to teach a basic fact about survival.

Rowena Corey

SERPENTS REACH by C.J. Cherryh

Nelson/Doubleday - SF Book Club - Daw

Reviewed by Paul J. Stevens

I have said this many times and I will say it again, C J Cherryh is the best new writer to come along in the past 10 years! In the sector of space known as Serpents Reach there is a civilization of alien and human that has been sealed off from the rest of the human race for some hundreds of years except for one designated trade point. Nothing is known of that civilization or of its government but over that period evolution has been occurring and it is the story of the result of that evolution that C. J. has written about. Within Serpents Reach there is a strange civilization of immortals vying with each other for control, there are the Beta's who are the administrators and are normal life-spanned and there are the AZI, the cloned workers who die automatically at the age of forty. Then there are the Hives, the four group minds who make up the Red, Gold, Green and Blue Hives who are living with and have been affected by the humans in their midst and have spread throughout the reach, each hive fighting the others for space in which to expand and trying to understand the human concept of individual death.

Into this explosive situation comes Raen, only survivor of a family of 'hive masters' who were wiped out in a power struggle. Raen has had a promise from the blue hive, a promise of revenge, and on the planet that is the designated trading point she finally gets her chance.

Serpents Reach is the best novel I have read this year with one of the most fascinating alien/human civilisations ever. I will be sure to nominate this novel for the HUGO in 1981. C J FOR PRESIDENT!

THE BLESSING PAPERS by William Barnwell
Pocket pb \$3.35

Reviewed by Paul J. Stevens

Yet another cataclysm novel with the hero having the key to the secret papers that explain why civilization was destroyed. There are lots of nasty people trying to either kill the hero or use him but he wins through in the end and rides off into

AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS

EXTRA

September 1980

EDITORIAL NOTES:

On checking through the reams of paper that have been piling up on us, as we get further and further behind, we have found a few things that should not be overlooked for this issue.

FAN NEWS

KIM PEART of 57 Colville Street, Battery Point, 7000, Tasmania, has formed a local branch of THE L 5 SOCIETY. This society is primarily concerned with the development of living in space, space exploration and in studying the subject, while communicating with other similar groups through out the world. Kim will be pleased to give you more information if you write to him at the above address.

JILL CURTIN at 32 Jetty Street, Grange, 5022 South Australia is the organiser of the Australian branch of the Marion Zimmer Bradley fan club FRIENDS OF DARKOVER. She is currently putting together a magazine devoted to the DARKOVER series and other things such as Anne McCaffrey's 'Dragon' series and Star Trek, and needs contributions of stories, articles and artwork. Write to Jill for more information.

People in Sydney wishing to publicise fan events should write to HAPPENINGS LAA, Science House, 35 Clarence St., Sydney, NSW 2000. Just state event, place, date and contact. Our thanks to Ian Gordon of Sydney for this information.

Regular screenings of STAR TREK episodes are held both in Melbourne and Adelaide we have known for some time, but unfortunately we have always overlooked telling people. The next screenings are Saturday October 8th in Adelaide at The A.M.P.THEATRE, 1 King William St., Adelaide and in Melbourne on October 4th at The National Mutual Theatre, c/r Collins and Williams Sts., Melbourne.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank the artists who contributed illustrations for THE 1981 AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION FAN CALENDAR. It is now on sale direct from us here at the NEWS, SPACE AGE BOOKS or GALAXY BOOK-SHOP. The profit on sales of the calendar are going to The News and The A'83 Bid. We are also looking for artists to do small filler illustrations and headings for us for the NEWS, and f and sf illustrations for book marks and cards to sell and help publicise A'83. Please write to us for more details if you wish to help.

THE DOWN UNDER FAN FUND is, I am sure all those who know all about it will agree, a most worthy fan charity. It is an excellent way of cementing friendly relations between Australian and American Fandom. The system is that on alternate years fans are nominated in Australia and the USA, and everybody votes for the person they like or know and contributes no less than a dollar with their vote. Keith Curtis from Sydney was the winner

this year and he attended the World Con in Boston. The candidates for 1981 for an American fan to come to Australia are: JOYCE SCRIVNER and JON SINGER. For more details or if you wish to vote at any rate, write to the administrators: KEITH CURTIS, Box J175, Brickfield Hill, N.S.W. 2000 Australia or in the USA KEN FLETCHER and LINDA LOUNSBURY, 341 East 19th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404, USA.

PEOPLE AND PUBLISHING

CHERRY WEINER of The KATHRYNE WALTERS, LITERARY AGENCY, recently moved to 1734 Church Street, Rahway, N.J. 0765 USA. Phone (201) 574-0358. Australian authors looking for representation overseas would do well to write to her.

PAUL COLLINS and ROWENA CORY, the principles of VOID publications, have now formed a new organisation CORY AND COLLINS, Publishers and Literary Agents. Future publications from them will bear the new logo. They have already had some success in representing local authors. Paul has just advised us that he has placed a story by JACK WODHAMS with 'Analog'.

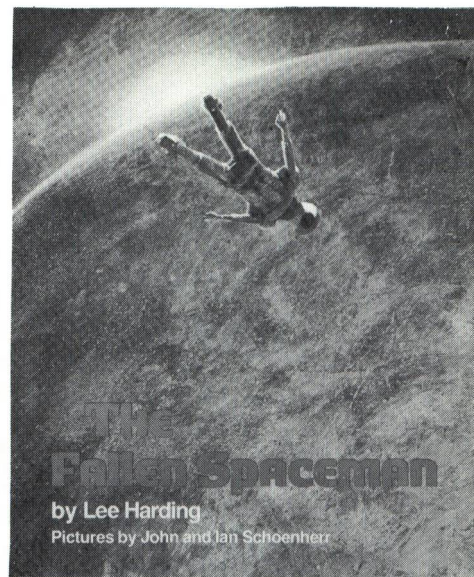
LEE HARDING'S juvenile novel published by Cassell in Australia, 'The Falling Spaceman', has just been published by Harper and Row in the USA with illustrations by John and Ian Schoenherr.

PAUL COLLINS has a guest editorial in the November issue of 'Amazing Stories'. He also has an article coming up we believe in the English magazine 'Ad Astra' on Australian sf writing and publishing.

The latest report from A.BERTRAM CHANDLER is that his latest sale to DAW books is STAR LOOT and a follow up, TO RULE THE REFUGEES will also be published in the UK and of course Japan. He also reports that efforts were made to get backing for film scripts based on two of his stories, STAR COURIER and ALL LACED UP. He had little if anything to do with the writing of them and both were rejected by the local film making authorities. Clarification of the titles to be published by Allison and Busby in the UK; THE RIM OF SPACE, WHEN THE DREAM DIES, (Published by Ace as 'Rendezvous on a Lost World'), BRING BACK YESTERDAY and BEYOND THE GALACTIC RIM. Grimes by the way does not pay a major part in any of these.

The Executive secretary of the SFWA advises us that the following stories will be included in the NEBULA AWARDS FIFTEEN Volume to be Edited by Frank Herbert and published by Harper and Row. Introduction by Frank Herbert "Camps" by Jack Dann "Sandkings" by George R.R.Martin "The Straining Your Eyes Through View-screen Blues" by Vonda McIntyre (An original article) "Enemy Mine" by Barry Longyear "giANTS" by Edward Bryant "We Have Met The Mainstream..." by Ben Bova (original article) "The Extraordinary Voyages of Amelie Bertrand" by Joanna Russ "Unaccompanied Sonata" by Orson Scott Card

Appendix A: This years runners up



Appendix B: All winners to date including The Grand Masters and Dramatic Presentations listings. Thank you Peter D.Pautz.

BANTAM will publish in September STAR TREK MAPS (Four maps plus an illustrated booklet), FRANK FRAZETTA Book 4, and WANTED - 22 Alien criminals wanted by the Intergalactic Security Bureau! - with a full colour poster. JOY CHANT'S GREY MANE OF MORNING with illustrations by Martin White, will be published in October, in 6" x 9" TPB.

HODDER and STOUGHTON will publish in UK the CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR by Jean M. Auel, set 35,000 years ago when cro-magnon man meets neanderthal. Crown published the original US edition.

FONTANA will be publishing soon an original fantasy trilogy by JANET MORRIS called DREAM DANCER. Described as an epic fantasy and family saga featuring the Kerrion Consortium.

FABER publishers are very impressed with GEORGE TURNER'S new novel called VANE GLORY. Part of their readers comments on it, which I do not think they will mind us quoting are as follows: "It is a stunning book and it is a tribute to the close knit intricacy of the plotting and detail that it is so difficult to write a synopsis." No date as far as we know has been set for publication.

ADDENDUM TO SWANCON REPORT

Just a few more comments on the situation regarding publishing and distribution that we discussed at SWANCON. Perth we were told has it's own local problems, which are even worse than the Eastern states. But basically we have to wait too long for original US books to be published in the UK if ever. When they are published the local distributors do not carry enough stock. Many titles are in print in the UK but not available here. The cost of British books is climbing higher and higher and is now almost double in comparison to US editions. And finally because of the monopolistic arrangement of the whole industry, we are forced to buy particular publishers books from one supplier. The whole system is moralistically and economically wrong and must be changed. **SI**

FANZINES RECEIVED

THE MENTOR edited by Ron L. Clarke, 6 Bellevue Rd., Faulconbridge, NSW 2776 Don't let the full front page photo of a certain Sydney bookseller in dark glasses as a disguise put you off. It's a good zine. No 27 to hand.

CHUNDER June-July 1980 is John Foyster's fanish equivalent to 'Truth'. You know! It gives you all the gossip in fandom and is not afraid to tell people where they get off. The address for sending bombs or whatever takes your fancy is 21 Shakespeare Grove, StKilda, 3182 Vic.

SPOCK 20 is the latest issue of the Star Trek club **AUSTREK**. Lots of stories and articles fans will appreciate. They also publish a newszine **CAPTAIN'S LOG** from P.O.Box 5206AA, G.P.O. Melbourne.

DATA is the New South Wales Startrek Club's magazine published for **ASTREX** by Ron and Sue Clarke, 6 Bellevue Rd., Faulconbridge, 2776 NSW.

ENIGMA Volume 11 Number 1 is now edited by David Wraight and typed by Richard Faulder, for the publishers The Sydney University SF Association. Offset; reviews and articles. Box 249 Holme Bldg., The University of Sydney, 2066.

THE (Really Incomplete) WHOLE FANZINE CATALOGUE #14 March 80 (*Yes it is too, ASFNEWS does not get a mention.*) It is really a must for all fanzine fans though, as it gives you dozens of places to send your own zines to in exchange. It is edited by Brian Earl Brown, 16711 Burt Rd, #207, Detroit, Michigan 48219, USA.

SHANGRI L'AFFAIRE No 76 is the club genzine of the Los Angeles SF Society. It has contributions by Mike Glycer, Len Moffatt, and Ron Ellik among others. Their address is 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601, USA

PROBABILITY FACTOR is mostly illustrated zine by John Packer, who draws trifids. 12 Charles St., Northfield, S.A. 5085

XENOLITH is edited and published by Bill Bowers from 2468 Harrison Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio, 45211, USA. Bill was doing the "fancy and pretentious fanzine" as he calls it **OUTWORLDS**, but will now be producing **XENOLITH** on a less stricter schedule, which is still a great zine.

RECENT RELEASES FROM AUSTRALIAN DISTRIBUTORS

A few changes have been made in local distribution recently, as one large wholesaler has gone out of business, **RICAL**. In future **ARROW** books will be distributed to book shops by **HODDER** along with their own **CORONET** books. **CARNATION** Distributors will sell **ARROW** to the newsagents and also handle **WYNDHAM** and **TANDEM** (All the **DR Who** titles). We will have more details of titles due next issue, and we will also catch up on other publishers not covered here.

GORDON and GOTCH released in August from **CORGI** **THREE TO THE HIGHEST POWER** edited by W.F.Nolan. From **PANTHER** they had **EYE OF THE HERON** with a story by U.LeGuin, **BAREFOOT IN THE HEAD** by Brian Aldiss, **MORE TALES OF THE BLACK WIDOWS** by Isaac Asimov, and **SPACE TIME**

AND **NATHANIEL**, **STARSWARM** and **HOTHOUSE** all by Brian Aldiss. Due for release in September from **Panther** are more Brian Aldiss: **EARTHWORKS** and **CRYPTOZOIC**, plus **STEPPE** by Piers Anthony. A rare Fawcett release in sf is a Groff Conklin edited anthology **13 GREAT STORIES OF SF**. Also in **Panther** is Fred Pohl's **JEM** while from Mayflower we will see **XENO**.

From **THOMAS NELSON** two **SPHERE** titles **SWORD OF THE DEMON** by Richard Lupoff and **SPORE 7** by Clancy Carlisle.

HODDER releases in **CORONET** for September are **WILD TALENT** by Wilson Tucker and his **THE LONG LOUD SILENCE** and **THE LINCOLN HUNTERS**. **STAR KA'AT** by Andre Norton and D.Madlee is also due in **Knight Book** series.

That's all we can squeeze in this issue but we will catch up in the next one.

We have no details on current releases by **WILLIAM COLLINS** in **N.E.L.**, **Pan** or **Fontana**. **METHUEN** Australia are now handling some **DAW** titles and we will be happy to send a list of the titles they have on request. New titles will be listed as announced.

CONVENTIONS

SYNCON '80

October 3rd to 5th at the New Crest Hotel in Kings Cross. For more details see the advert in this issue of the **NEWS**.

MEDVENTION

NOVEMBER 28TH TO 30TH

THE **HYDRO-MAJESTIC HOTEL**, Medlow Bath

A relaxacon held up in Sydney's mountain district. Games, mountain climbing and parties will be a part of what programme there is. Membership is \$10.00 up to November 1st, to Ken Ozanne, 42 Meek's Crescent, Faulconbridge, 2776 or Eric Lindsay, 6 Hillcrest Ave., Faulconbridge 2776, NSW. Hotel rates are \$55 each for double and \$65 each for single.

NUCON 1

NEW CREST HOTEL, KINGS CROSS

MAY 10 TO 13TH 1981

G.O.H. LARRY NIVEN

The University of N.S.W. SF Club are the organisers of this convention. Memberships were \$10.00 up to **SWANCON**. Current rate not known. For more details write to Geoff Langridge at 1 Raper Street, Newtown, NSW

ADVENTION '81

THE NATION - AUSTRALIAN CONVENTION

GUEST OF HONOR: FRANK HERBERT

Queens Birthday Weekend June 13th-15th

At THE HOTEL OBEROI ADELAIDE

Brougham Place, North Adelaide

Membership till October 31st \$17.50 and then \$20.00 up to Easter '81. It will probably be increased to \$22.50 till May 31st and \$25.00 at the door but those rates are not certain. The supporting membership is \$7.50 and can be converted at the rate at the time of conversion.

Room rates: Single \$40.00. Double \$45

Triples (limited) \$54.00. For all

other details write to:

ADVENTION '81 P.O.Box 98,

Rundle St., Adelaide SA 5000

TOLKON '81 (UNICON '81)

AUGUST 21ST TO 24TH 1980

At THE NEW CREST HOTEL

Kings Cross, Sydney

The G.O.H will be JOHN NOBLE

John was a founding member of the Sydney University Tolkien Society who are co-sponsors of this con with The Sydney SF Foundation.

Membership up till Easter '81 \$8.00

From then up to August 1st \$10.00

There after at the door - to be announced.

For further details write:

TOLKON '81 Box 272, Wentworth Building, N.S.W 2006



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the sunset, without the girl, to start civilization up the long road once again. As the reader still doesn't know why death and destruction was visited on the human race or what the secret of the Blessing Papers is we can only assume there is another volume on the way.

CRYSTAL PHOENIX by Michael Berlyn Bantam pb, US\$1.95

Here is an interesting idea that should really have been presented in a much shorter form, as a novel it just doesn't make it. I would like to have known more about the society in which this story is set in order to get some perspective on a story which is about the ultimate in prostitution, killing for sexual pleasure. The main character is a procurer for a club in which anything is possible, for a price, the victim suffering torture and death, only to be reborn in a new body. When his wife is used by several of the nastier clients, the main character decides on revenge and kills off those responsible in some nasty ways. It is a pity that the author fails to realise the potential this story holds. A Niven or an Ellison would have blown the reader away.

Paul J. Stevens

MISSION TO MOULOKIN by Alan Dean Foster 280 pgs, New English Library \$17.75

This story is set on the frozen planet of Tran-ky-ky and is a sequel to ICERIGGER which tells the story of a crashed lifeboat, their befriending by the local aliens, the Tran, and the building of a giant ice-raft modelled on the old clipper designs of Earth, and their sailing around the planet to Arsudum and the shuttleport of Brass Monkey where they hope to leave the planet of Tran-ky-ky. MISSION TO MOULOKIN now begins.

The humans discover that the Tran are being robbed by the trading posts and decide that they need Commonwealth representation. (This has never helped on Earth but here we are dealing with heavenly matters!) They see the local Commissioner who is quite helpful and tells them that the Tran must be united first and all power to their elbow if they can do it. So they forget about leaving and go to save the natives. On the way home they are involved in a tavern brawl and escape via an unguarded back entrance. They leave in their icecraft and are attacked by a local bigwig who is in league with the Landgrave of Arsudum, and a female captured. The humans rescue her (being seemingly better equipped in some ways for this frozen planet than its natives). They proceed to Poyolavonaar to carry on their crusade and are arrested and escape through a disused underground tunnel (!) cut their way through the ice and sail off. They get stuck in Pika-pina fields and cut their way through, are attacked by strange beasties and escape. They cut their way through an ice-pressure ridge on the equator and being suddenly hurried ram their way through! and so on to the fabulous Moulokin...

If you haven't recognised this plot by now you obviously don't watch American films. The book is written to exactly the same formula to which they are made. The marvel is, that despite this handicap, the book is thoroughly well written, very interesting with interesting characters. Which just

goes to show what can be done with uncompromising material if you're a good enough writer.

But it is a pity that a writer of the calibre of Foster can't be a little more original.

John Alderson

REVIEWS BY CHRIS BENNIE

Barrington Bayley is a fascinating writer. The first work of his I read was THE GARMENTS OF CAEAN (Fontana 1978) which I found reminiscent of the writing of Jack Vance, in that it portrays a star-spanning human civilization with some wide variations in culture. Its central idea, that the clothing makes the man, is brilliantly handled. This is real entertainment and I can heartily recommend it if you have missed it.

THE FALL OF CHRONOPOLIS by Barrington Bayley Fontana 1980 pb 190 pgs (UK 90p) The present book concerns the time-spanning Chronotic Empire which, from the discovery of time travel sometime in our own actual future, has established its rule over one thousand years of history, pushing its frontiers backwards and forwards in time. The empire centres on a number of temporal nodes, points of natural resonance of the structure of time, which exist like continents on the substratum of potential time, forming real or 'Orthogonal' time and move forwards in normal time.

The very existence of this empire is threatened by the Hegemony, a nation of dissidents from the empire's own past, who are bent on preventing its further extension into the future. The story concerns the attempt of one, Captain Mond Aton of the Third Time Fleet, to prevent the Hegemony from so drastically altering history that the Empire ceases to be.

His task is complicated by the enemies' possession of a terrible weapon, the 'time distorter', which if it emerges threatens the destruction of the whole of human history as well and the victory of an evil power which would forever prevent the emergence of mankind.

The story has some nice touches and is somewhat reminiscent of Fritz Leiber's 'Change War' stories.

THE KNIGHTS OF THE LIMITS by Barrington Bayley Fontana 1980 pb 220 pgs. UK 95p

This volume contains nine short stories each displaying a different aspect of Bayley's talent. In them he covers a wide variety of subjects from visitors of a universe with different physical laws from ours (The Exploration of Space) to the political realities of a future city tower with its roots deep beneath the earth's surface and its top in the stratosphere (An Overload).

I will single out one story which fascinated me. 'Me and My Antronoscope' is a story within a story. The central story concerns a human culture which at some time in the past has retreated deep beneath the surface of an earth (our Earth?) without an atmosphere. They have settled within a vast cavern which they think of as the world. In the intervening period they have forgotten their origins

so that they believe that they evolved here already in possession of the necessary technology for survival in their rock bounded environment.

In their present cavern the space is almost exhausted. A young researcher wants to take a new kind of vehicle, capable of travelling through rock as through a liquid and seek out a new 'world', but the arch conservative leaders of the community forbid the journey as being contrary to their dogma, that their cavern is the only world.

The story is told by an alien who observes them with the aid of his antronoscope, an instrument capable of seeing and hearing through solid rock.

Chris Bennie

INVOLUTION OCEAN by Bruce Sterling

NEL 85p \$3.25(?) ARR

Reviewed by Rowena Corey

This book is presented by Harlan Ellison as part of his discovery series. And in the introduction we are invited to relive Harlan's first meeting with Bruce at an impromptu workshop. This is written as though every sentence is a weapon, you finish it feeling exhausted.

Despite the clichéd praise heaped upon the novel, it is refreshing and unusual. The world itself is out of the ordinary - the one inhabitable area is the basin of a huge crater seventy miles deep. The economy of the genetically altered humans is based on the whales that inhabit the sea of dust.

In one section the writing is particularly vivid. The whaler enters a small bay, here the walls seventy miles above block out direct sunlight, and the cold is intense. Between the pillars of the entrance a sheet of sunlight fifty miles high, lights the well bottom like an immense cathedral.

But the world is only the setting of the story, the characters are the instruments. John Newhouse finds that his drug supply is cut off when the chemical is made illegal. And determined to get more, and incidentally make a tidy sum, he signs onto a whaler so he has access to the undistilled form from the whale's innards. Captain Nil Desperandum, (an alias) is an offworlder from a high G planet, he owns the ship outright and is eager to gather scientific data about the dust ocean, despite the marked lack of interest from the established humans.

Desperandum warns John that he must watch one of the crew who has a strong religious bias towards 'Those Who Live Below'. He thinks the captain's desire for knowledge sacreligious. Meanwhile John's supply of the drug is mysteriously stolen, and the friend who signed on with him is overdosing himself badly. Captain Desperandum advises him that the lookout Dalusa is possibly insane, he cites her morbid fascination for red blood. And argues that someone who has surgically altered their body to look more human and abandoned their race must be insane by any standard.

Dalusa's frail batlike beauty attracts him, and this grows into an obsession

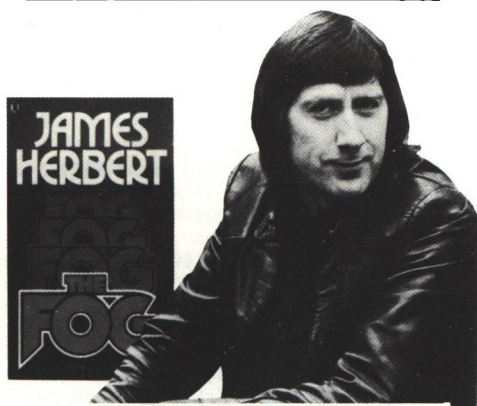
when she tells him that her body chemistry reacts badly on contact with humans. A simple handshake brings up a bad rash, sex is impossible. Despite this they discover a mutual attraction.

She confides that she suspects that captain's desperate search for hard scientific facts to be a fanatic bid to overcome his unconscious deathwish. And all the while the strange alien creatures which live in the dust elude the scientific equipment with preternatural intelligence.

Rowena Corey

EDITORIAL NOTE:

This title was published by PYRAMID in the USA about two years back, and we think overlooked by most readers. The author has just had published by Harper and Row a new title, THE ARTIFICIAL KID.



FOUR BOOKS BY JAMES HERBERT

Reviewed by Paul J.Stevens

THE FOG, THE SURVIVORS and THE SPEAR
New English Library

ARPs \$2.95, \$1.95 and NPA

The last few years in the British paperback world has seen the emergence of a number of new writers who specialise in writing about occult terrors or of nature gone berserk. In these novels you can always expect a number of minor characters to be killed off in a variety of bloody ways, and some graphic sex scenes thrown in before the hero has to confront the menace and the blood-filled climax. It is formula writing at worst, and good, scary reading at best. James Herbert has been one of the more successful practitioners working in this genre, and he has produced six novels, three of which I would give full marks for being damn scary, and one of which has been picked up as a film property: THE SURVIVORS. At the same time, THE FOG should not be confused with the film by John Carpenter of the same name: they are completely different works. Herbert's THE FOG is about a mysterious gas that escapes from a British defence establishment and which causes all those who come into contact with it to become raving homicidal maniacs. The story is graphic in its violence, and gripping in the final chapters. And a damned good read if your taste runs to terror. THE SPEAR is a slightly different story that deals with the occult power of the spear that pierced Christ's body during the crucifixion. Over the centuries this occult power has become a great source of evil, and

when a group of neo-Nazis get their hands on it Terrible Things Happen. Once again the story depicts graphic sex and violence and races towards a conclusion that I guarantee will have your hair standing on end. I feel that THE SURVIVOR is perhaps his best work so far; it is certainly the most original. James Herbert is a writer to watch.

THE DARK by James Herbert New English Library HC \$17.75
Distributed by Australasian Publishing.

This latest offering of James Herbert's has a slight echo of THE FOG in its pages except this time instead of military experimenting gone wrong the supernatural is responsible and an explanation that seems similar to Richard Matheson's, HELL HOUSE (filmed as THE LEGEND OF THE HELL HOUSE). Certainly the horror contained within the book is enough to upset the reader on a very basic level and this seems to me to be a little unfair and sloppy on the part of the author though the book is a good, frightening read for the early hours of the morning. What ultimately destroyed the book for me was the comparisons with other material from which this book seemed to have borrowed heavily. As this is Mr. Herbert's seventh book perhaps I should be charitable and say one can't win every time.

NECROPOLIS by Basil Copper

Arkham House HC \$15.55 ARRP

(Australian Distributor-Space Age Books)

On the dust jacket of this book the reader is warned that this is a gothic mystery and indeed the settings of a cemetery outside London and the dark streets of that city make this a most intriguing story. Fans of Sherlock Holmes will relish Basil Copper's private detective, Mr. Clyde Beatty and his investigation of a murder, mysterious doings in the Brookwood Cemetery and several daring bullion robberies, not to mention romance in the shape of the murdered man's daughter. NECROPOLIS would have to be one the most enjoyable reads I have had in a long time and all the time I kept thinking what a great movie this would make.

Paul J.Stevens

THE SPELL STONE OF SHALTUS by Linda E. Bushyanger

DELL (\$1.95 US) PB

Reviewed by Rowena Corey

This is a tale of sorcery, set in a world which worships N'Omb. Long ago when civilisation was great and corrupt it was destroyed by a terrible weapon, and the race of men split about. Ordinary men worshipped N'Omb and destroyed all artifacts from the past. And the Sylvan who were once men, retreated to the great forests to live in the Skytrees. Both races developed strange powers. The men chose to call theirs sorcery, and discovered the spell stones which channelled their power. The church feared them.

Written from the point of view of a female who is part Sylvan and human, and so an outcast of both races, the tale starts with an attack by the wraith of

Shaltus upon her family. This is a magical attack, as are all the battles in the book; the final confrontation takes place at the wraith's spellstone which they must destroy to annihilate him.

BORN TO EXILE

by Phyllis Eisenstein

DELL (US \$1.95)

Reviewed by Rowena Corey

Alaric the wandering minstrel dare not linger long in the few places he finds refuge, for fear that someone might recognise him for what he is. He has heard that some can tell at a glance, that there is some sign which will give him away, and he'll suffer the fate of all witches.

He was found as a baby abandoned on a hillside, a severed hand clutching his ankle. Unwanted by his foster father he runs away to escape the brutal beatings. The book tells of his adventures, and the sequence of events which lead him to discover his origin.

Rowena Corey

PLANET STORY by Harry Harrison

Pierrot Publishing \$16.50 SAB Price

Distributed Australian Publishing Co.

Reviewed by Paul J.Stevens

For those of you who can remember that far back, 1960 saw the publication of one of science fiction's classic satires, BILL THE GALACTIC HERO. In this story of an innocent caught up in a galactic war, Harrison managed to satirise a goodly number of classic sf stories and themes and tell a good story into the bargain. Sadly enough, BILL THE GALACTIC HERO does not seem to be readily available at the moment but there is a publication that should satisfy nearly as well. I am, of course, referring to PLANET STORY, a large format publication that is a collaboration between the writing talent - of Harrison and the artistic talent of Jim Burns.

The plot of the book concerns itself with the adventures of Private Parrrts, an innocent who has the unfortunate gift of having an irresistible sexual attraction for just about any living creature. Exiled to the planet Strabismus, Parrrts finds himself mixed up with as kooky a collection of military misfits as was ever assembled and is forced to take a long train journey across the planet, right through the midst of hordes of aliens, all of whom object to railroad tracks being laid through their living rooms. Parrrts only consolation is the love of Styreen Foam, as sexy a girl as is possible to meet.

PLANET STORY is an hilarious combination of satiric writing and colourful art work which go to make up one of the better science fiction coffee table publications of the past decade.

Paul J.Stevens

We wish to thank all our reviewers, and if your contribution is not in this issue it will be in the next, or in the case of those on TV or Film associated titles, in the first issue of the CINECON PR Magazine due out in October.
The Editor.



A REPORT

By Merv Binns

THE 19th National Australian Science Fiction Convention, SWANCON 5, was held in Perth from August 15th to the 18th. I was very glad to have the excuse to visit Perth on the river Swan in Western Australia, as it was the only capital city in Australia that I had not been to. It is a very nice city set on a quite picturesque river. Not only did I enjoy visiting Perth itself, but the convention was great fun, being one of the most fannish conventions I have ever attended. My first impression was that perhaps the programme did concentrate a little more on the lighter side of fandom, in preference to the serious panels and discussions. But that is not true. Perhaps the lighter side of the programme made more impression though, and I enjoyed the convention so much that what little criticism I might level is far outweighed by acclaim.

After the usual welcome and introduction of the Guest of Honour ANNE McCAFFREY, and other pros and BNFs, the programme got under way with an interview with LEE HARDING. A typical Harding in a flippant mood helped set the scene for the rest of the programme to come. GIVE ME ORGAN BANKS OR GIVE ME DEATH, the next panel however was far from funny in title, and the discussion on the problems to be faced in respect to the replacement of body parts from donors, and the morality of same, became quite heated.

The SWANCON chairperson JULIA CURTIS and BOB OGDEN were the next on the stage, with a future TV cooking demonstration in FANNY GALACTICA. One of the recipes was how to cook triffids, but the trouble was the triffids did not want to be cooked and this resulted in disastrous consequences.

TEACHING SCIENCE FICTION was a very good panel in which IAN NICHOLS, GRANT STONE, GEORGE TURNER, RUSSELL BLACKFORD and JACK HERMAN took part. Most of these people are, or have been directly associated with teaching, and they had some very interesting comments to make. One of the worst mistakes, Ian Nichols said, was for educationists to try and teach sf in the same way that they teach English literature. It generally does not stand up to this type of analytical approach.

George Turner said that he does not like the way English literature is taught at all, so that the same approach to sf is just not on. He said that sf should be used to teach a form of social study. That is, philosophy and the meaning of being a human being. A school in the USA for example is using sf to teach politics, ethics, and economics, by setting up sf situations and asking the children to give their answers to the problems presented. It is working quite well.

Grant Stone said that Murdoch University tried using sf to change the accepted system of teaching literature, but sf has its place and he said it is about time the university started treating and teaching sf as sf.

Russell Blackford said that we should not go to the extreme of using sf to teach something like German existentialism. SF is not a high literary art, is not a literature in the sense of classical literature, but sf should be studied as sf or as a series of integrated studies in various fields.

Jack Herman told us that at his High School a new course on literature was set up, and sf was used to analyse and criticise any forms of literature. A bridge from the visual attitudes of the children to literature was developed, using some of the best known novels of sf. This course was quite popular with the students. Jack also used sf when teaching English to non-English speaking children, and because they liked sf the system worked quite well.

Other teachers in the audience commented on their efforts to use sf to teach other subjects. One said young children about the age of seven, were very susceptible to the use of sf in teaching them to read. Others said their efforts to use sf did not work at all, and even though they read and liked it themselves, they hesitated to use it in teaching. Part of their reasons for this attitude was a fear that the concept of teaching sf like any other literature, might turn the students off it.

Finally it was suggested that we should study sf to try and discover why we like it. This is what critical appreciation is all about of course. But be careful as that may destroy some of the best things that sf has to offer. If education people want to use it, they should find other ways of fitting it into the curriculum. If it is going to be studied, the best books should be brought to the attention of education people. Only a small percentage of sf will stand up to any form of literary criticism, but it has a lot more to offer besides that.

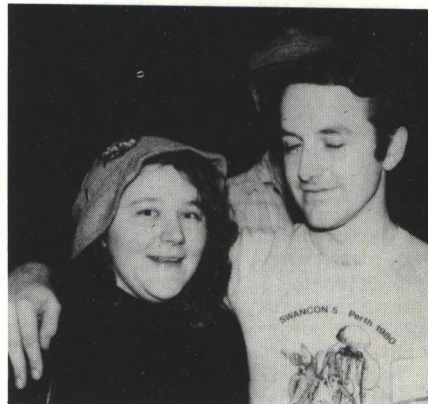
This was a very good panel in what I did say was a generally very light and fannish programme. I have hardly done justice to what the speakers had to say.

On Friday evening an explanation was given of some science fiction terminology for the benefit of the many neofans attending their first convention. Such things as A'83, Duff, zines, cons, gafia, fijagh, fiawo, smof, bnf and so on. Some of the explanations were a little garbled, but everybody got the drift and had a good laugh.

One of the highlights of the convention was ANNE McCAFFREY'S reading of her story 'The Ship Who Sang'. Not one soul in the audience failed to be moved by this rendition, of a story which has a



GUEST OF HONOUR - ANNE McCAFFREY



FAN GOH SHAYNE McCORMACK & VICE CHAIRMAN
JOHN McDOUALL



ROY FERGUSON and JULIA CURTIS

very special personal meaning for her. At no time in my experience has an author come closer to her or his readers, than Anne McCaffrey at this time reading her story. There was hardly a dry eye in the place.

A bit more hilarity was needed after that rather traumatic session : rather dubious discussion labelled 'The Great Debate'. Anne McCaffrey who said she writes love stories, added that there is definitely a place for sex in sf. Jack Herman said there should not be any of that funny business in sf, and what may have been quite a serious panel soon developed in an hilarious romp, as one innuendo was piled on top of another

Saturday morning started off with a panel on AUSTRALIA IN '83. Despite some out right hostility to the people involved and the things they have or have not been doing, this was a worthwhile hour. A report was given on what has been done including the new Anti-Fan film. The need for more publicity. The need for more cash and ways in which fund raising is being organised, such as The 1981 AUSTRALIAN SF FAN CALENDAR. The major point to be made was that although we do have a lot of supporters and members of DENVENTION, all these people must be encouraged to vote for us for the site, and the right to hold the World SF Convention in Australia in 1983. The hotel was pointed out as being a very important aspect of the advance publicity. Overseas people who are considering voting for us and coming to Australia, want to know all about the hotel. The point we need to make here is that apart from it being a top ranking hotel, the facilities for a World convention in Australia are more than adequate. The problem it seems of having World Conventions in the USA now, is that so many people are attending, no hotels are big enough. This is a major point in our favour, that we can expect to have perhaps one thousand or more attendees at a World con in Australia only. With a resulting much more relaxed and enjoyable time for everyone.

Fanzines have always been considered an important way of gaining publicity for World cons and this has been proved before now. Besides encouraging fans all over to produce zines and send them overseas, people involved with the bid directly are working on projects. JACK HERMAN is producing an issue of KANGAROO FEATHERS, in which he will reprint the best articles from fanzines of the past. He is very anxious to have people write to him and suggest articles and so on that he should use. Jack's address is: Flat 1 'Stirling Manor', 67 Fletcher Street, Bondi, N.S.W 2026. JEAN WEBER, who incidently won the SWANCON Short Story Competition, has produced a very nice zine; AUSSIECON, FIFTH ANNIVERSARY MEMORIAL FANZINE. All proceeds will go to A'83. It is available to trade or for \$2.00 from Jean at 13 Myall St., O'Connor, ACT 2601, Australia.

Finally it was emphasised that everybody should do all they can to tell all the sf fans they know about the A'83 bid, remind them how good the Aussiecon was, and tell them how they can help to get the World con in this country again in '83.

In the afternoon ANNE McCAFFREY gave her Guest of Honour Speech. She explained the evolution of the Dragon series, and how after her success with 'The Ship Who Sang' she was looking for something new to write about. She thought about benign dragons, and 'Weyrsearch' was the result. J.W.Campbell read it but said that his 'Analog' readers felt better with stories in which the relationship to Earth could be seen. So she wrote a foreward, which actually helped with the development of the later stories. And as she was happy to point out, meant she did not have to alter the story itself in any way despite Mr Campbell. The two books that followed, 'Dragonflight' and 'Dragonquest' were very successful, but she had a lot of problems with 'Dragonquest' which she finally got together with Judy Lynn Del Rey's help at Ballantine. It was seven years before the final part of the story fell into place, and that was only after she had written three so called teenage novels also set on Pern with the Dragons. These came about because Athenaeum publishers asked her to write some sf stories that girls could relate to, as most of the sf then featured boys. The three novels "Dragonsinger", "Dragonsong" and "Dragondrums" resulted, and although they can be read independently of the 'adult' trilogy, they are an integral part of the whole. "Whitedragon" which had been developing all this time was now clear in her mind, and we all know how that became a spectacular best-seller.

THE SF MASTER MINDS OF AUSTRALIA sf quiz was next, and I hope this will be a feature of all future national cons. Let's hope all the contestants are properly chosen though next time, after local elimination contests, so that they can prepare better for the main contest. Bill Moon from Melbourne, did not do too bad but Jeff Harris representing South Australian fandom won, with Peter Toluzzi from New South Wales coming second.

THE DITMAR AWARDS were presented at one of the most successful banquets at an Australian con so far. The food was quite reasonable and mostly hot, and we were entertained by a group of Morris Dancers. A very entertaining and colourful display. The award winners were:

- Best Australian SF or Fantasy AUSTRALIAN GNOMES by Robert Ingpen
- Best International SF or F HITCH-HIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY by Douglas Adams
- Best Australian Fanzine SF COMMENTARY edited Bruce Gillespie
- Best Australian Fan Writer Leanne Frahm
- Best Australian SF or Fantasy Artist Marilyn Pride
- The William Atheling Award for Criticism in SF or Fantasy went to JACK HERMAN for "Paradox as a Paradigm: A Review of Thomas Covenant the Unbeliever" by Stephen Donaldson, in Forerunner, May 1979

Douglas Adams also received the Sydney Science Fiction Foundation's "Pat Terry Award", which we believe Keith Curtis presented at the World Con in Boston.

(As someone who has been involved with the DITMARS since their inception, I have some very strong if personal opinions about them. This is not the time or the place to voice them, but I must say that I think the SWANCON organisers did the best they could under the circumstances, certainly no better and perhaps a little worse than some other cons. Mainly because they did not get the co-operation of fans throughout the apathetic throngs of Australian fandom. The design of the awards themselves I am sorry to say, were not very successful either. When are we going to agree to a standardised design? The Ed.)

Sunday morning saw the presentation of THE FAN OLYMPICS. Bad weather necessitated them being held in the main room of the convention. Quite successfully however, with a lot of fun for all; both spectators and contestants. Frisbee throwing, tribble tossing and space jumping were among the events, and the grand champion medal winner was Peter Toluzzi.

Not giving their Guest of Honour much rest, Swanconers were pleased to see her interviewed by her long time friend and convention vice-chairman John McDouall. Briefly, some of the information we were pleased to hear was that her next sf novel will probably be called "Crystal Singer". She is very much into ESP as her book "To Ride Pegasus" did indicate. She is currently working on a contemporary novel about young people and horses. An option for a 'Dragon' movie has been taken up, and it could cost \$25m.

Talking about "Dinosaur Planet", she said she was commissioned by Anthony Cheetham of Futura publishers to write it but it did not come out very well. She does have to do a sequel however, but she is still working on it. When she finishes "Crystal Singer" she will probably get the "Dinosaur Planet" sequel out of the way. After all it is not easy to make dinosaurs into loveable dragons. DAVE ROE she said has done the covers for the Corgi editions of most of her books including "White Dragon", but the only illustration that comes very close to her own interpretation of how her dragons should look, is the illustration on the Ballantine editions and the Sidgwick and Jackson hc edition by MICHAEL WHELAN.

"White Dragon" or the series as a whole for that matter, she does not regard as fantasy, but if people want to give her fantasy awards for them she is not going to complain. However she is most adamant that they are sf and we entirely agree.

The next panel was on SCIENCE VERSUS MYSTICISM. The panelists were JASON COOPER, ROY FERGUSON, DAMIEN (?) BRENNAN, GREGOR WILEY and IAN NICHOLLS. This panel I thought was a little vague, and I thought had difficulty making any real points. What was mysticism and magic of the past is in many cases now science. In other words, as one speaker said, science is concerned with events and magic with theory. A not entirely relevant but certainly valid point was made that although technology has created as many problems as benefits, we

are stuck with it and must learn to control it. An interesting analogy was mentioned by DOUG NICHOLSON between magic and technology, and fantasy and science fiction. We still have difficulty in deciding exactly which is which in both cases.

A poetry reading by IAN NICHOLLS followed, which was an innovation for a local convention, but I do not consider such as a major programme item.

The next item was a panel on WRITING AND PUBLISHING SF IN AUSTRALIA, with SHAYNE McCORMACK as Chairperson, GEORGE TURNER, LEE HARDING and TONY PEACEY. A resume of sf publishing in Australia was given by George Turner. He mentioned the writing of ERLE COX, the small press publishing of early Sydney fandom, THRILLS INCORPORATED, Malian Press, and such items as the SCIENCE THRILLER series. Authors such as FRANK BRYNING, WYNNE WHITEFORD and LEE HARDING started selling stories to overseas magazines such as 'New Worlds' in the '50s. JOHN BAXTER then produced his PACIFIC BOOKS OF SF. Very little was going on at all until the SF Writers Workshop at Aussiecon in 1975. Other workshops followed. Then NORSTRILIA PRESS and VOID Publications started, followed by other general publishers such as HYLAND HOUSE doing a little sf. The output of the first two is fairly well known, but the latter have published Lee Harding's Anthology ROOMS OF PARADISE and will be publishing soon a book on the work of H.G. WELLS by David Lake called "The Man Who Liked Morlocks". The Literature Board of Australia has done a lot to help get sf off the ground in Australia, and without their help on workshops and grants, it is doubtful Australian sf would be as advanced as it is.

NORSTRILIA PRESS, said LEE HARDING, are doing a great job, and they have pulled off a real coup with the publication of DAMIEN BRODERICK'S 'Dreaming Dragons'. PENGUIN BOOKS in Australia despite the parents companies disenchantment with sf again, will be publishing a number of original sf paperback editions of sf including "Rooms of Paradise".

TONY PEACEY however, who won the short story competition at Syncon last year,

said it is very hard to get published in Australia and he has been sending all his stories overseas.

We are now seeing the publication of a few small magazines that are giving Australian writers a chance to get started, but criticism is what the authors need said George Turner, to get them on the right track. The fate of Australian sf is in the hands of the small specialist publishers. There is a recession growing in publishing in general overseas, and sf has been affected. The market in Australia however is quite large and is rapidly reaching the stage where Australian editions are a practical proposition. Particularly with the tremendous escalating costs of publishing in Britain. The Australasian Literature Board said George Turner, is trying to get as much input as possible so that the overseas barriers can be broken.

THE NAKED ASTRONAUT SHOW was another humorous segment of the programme, dealing with life in a fan household. A quite hilarious half hour or more with SALLY UNDERWOOD, JULIA CURTIS and ROY FERGUSON.

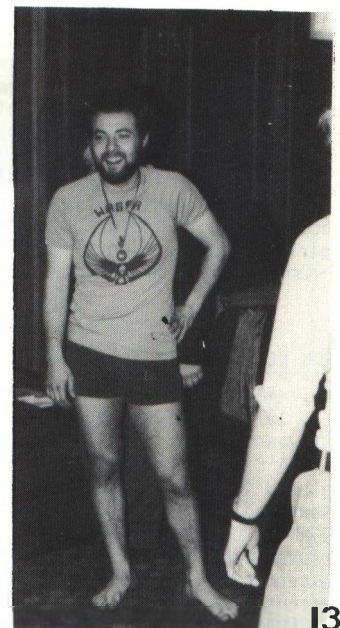
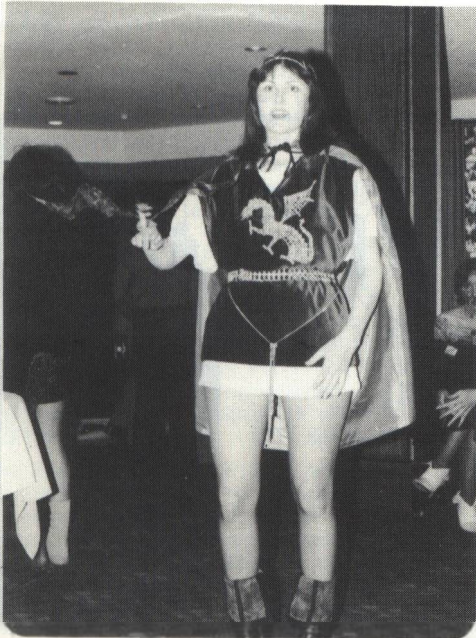
A quite important item unfortunately was late and I think should have been on at a much more appropriate time, and that was CHILDREN'S SF. Some librarians and teachers were quite put out when this panel was fouled up and finished up in one of the bedrooms, which was absolutely packed. Whoever decided to move it from the main room should have been shot. Some interesting things came up with Anne McCaffrey, Lee Harding and George Turner in attendance, but a lot of it was not relevant to the topic. Lee said that he would not talk at seminars and such on children's literature unless children were present. Other things that came up were the most significant new sf books and "Mocking Bird" by William Tevis, "Lord Valentine's Castle" by Robert Silverberg and "Snow Queen" by Joan Vinge were mentioned. Talking about how sf stories can influence people, Heinlein's "Stranger in a Strange Land" would be one of the most notable in that respect. Anne mentioned

what she thinks is a very important novel recently revived, "Herland" by Charlotte Gilman, which deals with a female utopia restricted to women.

Sunday evening saw the staging of the fancy dress masquerade and DUNE SHOW. ERIC HARDING, GRANT STONE, JULIA CURTIS and others gave an absolutely brilliant rendition of a "Goon Show", that could not have been bettered if Spike Milligan had written it himself. When Eccles and Bluebottle finished up inside the sandworm where they meet Minnie and Henry, with all the actors using the most effective voices, the audience just about brought the roof down. The fancy dress costumes were of quite a high standard. An attractive young lady in a white fur costume carrying a sword, won the best costume prize as a "Snow Warrior". JANE TAUBMANN won the best Anne McCaffrey costume as a "Dragon Rider" carrying a small fire dragon on her arm. TONY PEACEY I think won the best humorous costume as believe it or not "K9". Having their little dig at vegemite fandom, JACK HERMAN and a couple of other fans gave their interpretation of vegemite junkies begging for a fix, which also won a prize for them. A lot of other people put a lot of work into their costumes and it was great to see.

On Monday morning JEFF HARRIS gave a talk and slide show entitled TAPDANCING TO THE END OF TIME. That is, what the human race may do before the universe ends in 10,000 million years.

A panel on the DISTRIBUTION OF SF BOOKS IN AUSTRALIA included SHAYNE McCORMACK, MERV BINNS and two others who I apologise I have forgotten. Nothing very significant came out of this discussion as representatives of local book distributors did not front. However I think the two bookshop managers, managed to convey some of their problems to the audience. Such as lack of stock in the country of essential titles, and a general lack of understanding and assistance from the distributors, who in the main insist on marketing books as if they are selling potatoes.



GRANT STONE, SHAYNE McCORMACK, ANNE McCAFFREY,
JULIA CLEMENTS and IAN NICHOLS

JANE TAUBMANN

PETER TOLUZZI

All photos by Merv Binns

The Business Session was fitted in here somewhere and a couple of important motions were passed. The distribution of surplus funds was defined as being distributed "for the benefit of the Society memberships as a whole". Funds can be passed to the next national con. The Australian SF Foundation or one of the fan funds, but not to a person or club in control of the convention or closely associated with the convention. Basically that is it, but this is not the exact wording of the amendment. Another amendment made to the constitution of the ASFS was that site selection be made two years in advance. What small opposition there was to this point which has been argued in great detail previously, was soon squashed. It is quite possible that this matter is not yet finished, but we may well have to wait to see how things work out over the next few years.

One other motion was passed in that a group of people were asked to negotiate with New Zealand fandom in that some amendments be made to the constitution to allow New Zealand to be included in the ASFS. Thus enabling them to bid for future National Conventions if they wish. Gary Mason, Merv Binns, Roy Ferguson, Jack Herman and Elizabeth Gardner from New Zealand, were nominated as a committee to take the matter up with NZ fandom and report back at the ADVENTION Business Meeting next year.

Some time on Monday the winner of the SWANCON Short Story competition was announced. The winner was JEAN WEBER for her story "A Matter Of Life And Death", with Michael Shaper receiving a strong commendation from the judge Anne McCaffrey for his story "Crown of Thorns". Both, she said, were of a high standard and should receive professional publication.

Finally on Monday afternoon two items were presented which I cannot report in detail; THE TOLKIEN SOCIETY PRESENTS: renditions of the stories and words of J.R.R. Tolkien and a PANEL: THE BEASTS IN SF or what authors have done to animals in sf. I did see a great slide presentation organised by Mark Denbow and associates, which was a fitting and colourful end to a very colourful and enjoyable convention.

ANNE McCAFFREY and her daughter GIGI later visited Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. A good turn out of fans welcomed her at Space Age Books on Sunday afternoon of the 31st of August in Melbourne. We believe she enjoyed also meeting fans at other book signings, trips and dinners. We certainly enjoyed meeting her and we wish her very success in the future.

FAN NEWS

ANTI-FAN STRIKES BACK, the sequel to the 1975 AUSSIECON Film with Paul J. Stevens as 'Anti-Fan', made to publicise the A'83 World Convention Bid, was completed just in time to be taken and screened at the World Con in Boston. JOHN LITCHEN, the co-director, photographer and editor of both films, is an expert of underwater photography. He recently had a book published called CINEMATOGRAPHY UNDER WATER by Australian

Sports Publications, and in a recent issue of AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHY magazine he has the first of a series of articles on the same subject.

Being a very versatile person, John is a noted latin percussionist and has been performing as a stand in percussionist with the DON LANE SHOW Orchestra. He will also be appearing at the Free Entertainment In The Parks Concert on the 7th of December this year.



MARIO FENECH
36 VINCENT RD
MORWELL 3840

Dear Mr. Binns,

I am writing to firstly let you know that I enjoyed the last issue of SF NEWS and found much information in it that was of particular interest. Though most of the news was good news it seemed that the letter section was full of negative attitudes, as if the letter writer's had read too much pessimistic SF and they were venting that pessimism on everything.

Rather than have a go at someone I have done some speculating on written language and how it might evolve over the years to come. What is most likely to cause the changes? There are many factors such as the information 'explosion', the need for people to assimilate at a faster rate and of course you have to take into consideration the ubiquitous computer. More specifically a new breed of computer with voice recognition (I think that's what it is called) that are going to require us humans to adhere to stricter speech patterns. To some people it would be preferable for the machines to do the adapting but when you think about it language is a bit chaotic at present and some restructuring and regulating will be needed. In restructuring the written language the computers will have a 'selfish' reason, because they will need to understand spoken words with little or no need for verification, a precise, phonetically oriented language would

be required. The benefits of this new form of communication would be reciprocal to man and machine and would eliminate to some extent certain types of ambiguous speech.

There are other ways language might evolve and if we take into account the factor I mentioned above about people needing to assimilate a lot faster, then what we might expect in the future are texts resembling shorthand. A lot of abbreviated words will come into use and depending on how they are accepted, others will be abbreviated to the minimum number of letters while still retaining a cognizant value. These abbreviated words might be joined with others to form a new word or padded out for phonetic purposes. These changes may be gradual or they may happen all of a sudden but I thought I might bring up the subject because I think it is very interesting. Maybe some of your readers have thought about the matter as well. Keep up the good work.

Dear Mario,
Thank you for your letter. Our letter column can be a forum for people to say practically anything as long as it has some bearing on f and sf or fandom. It looks like I will be under fire in the next issue.

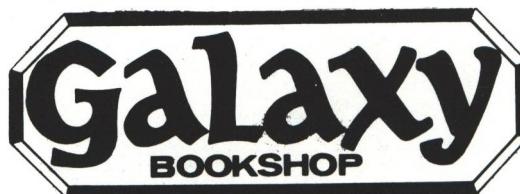
M.B.

Dear MRB,
Just tonite a quick reread of Damien Broderick's effort on Sam Delaney, - sure enough there was no mention of 'Nova' which is an essential prerequisite for 'Dhalgren'. Without 'Nova' and its explanations of why spacers eat with their feet you might even believe Delaney's glib explanation that the kid lost his sandal running away from the last watch dog on earth. A likely story.

Rod Jamieson,
9 High st
Gawler SA 5118

Dear Rod,
Thank you for your comments. Damien has come in for a bit of criticism over that article and I am very pleased to see that people are taking the time to make these comments.

M.B.



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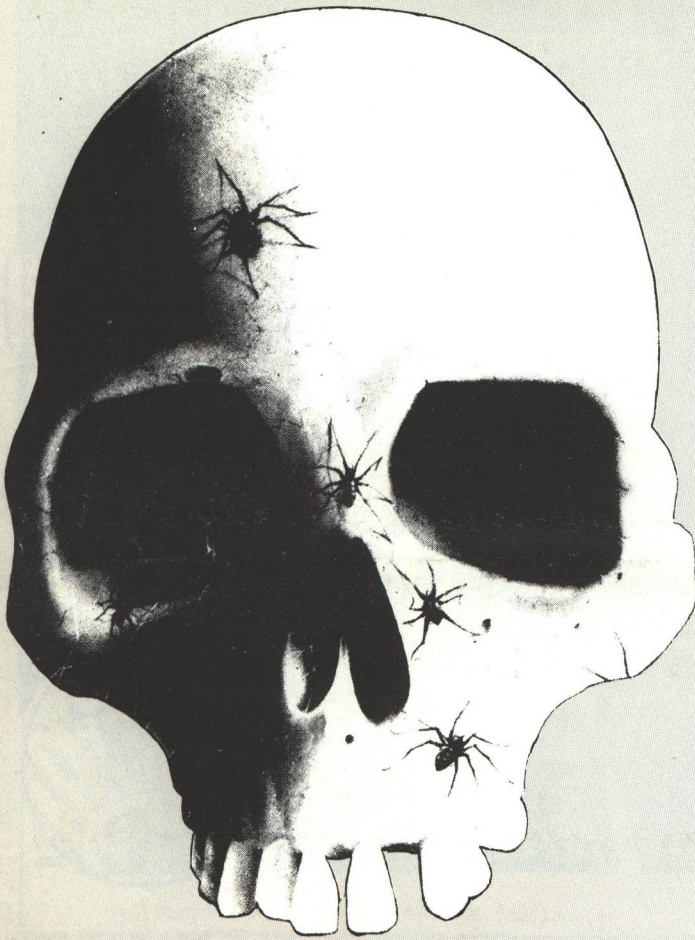
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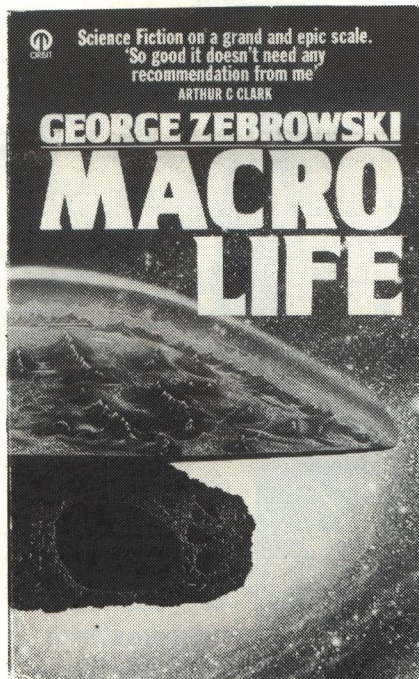
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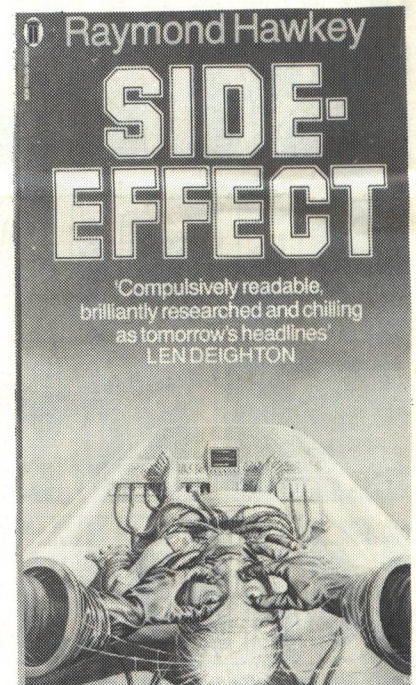


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