

## HUGO HAT-TRICKS FOR BRIN, CARD

David Brin's sf novel *THE UPLIFT WAR* and Orson Scott Card's novella "Eye for Eye" scooped the top Hugo Awards at the 1988 Worldcon in New Orleans, both authors' third success at the annual ceremony.

Ursula K LeGuin's novelette "Buffalo Gals, Won't You Come Out Tonight" earned her a fifth Hugo, her first in 13 years, whilst Lawrence Watt-Evans made his debut with the short story "Why I Left Harry's All-Night Hamburgers". Judith Moffett received the John W Campbell Award as the previous year's best new writer.

Comic fans were successful in their bid to vote Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons a Hugo Award for the graphic novel *WATCHMEN*, although the "other forms" category may not be continued by Boston's Noreascon III committee next year. *STAR TREK* fans, on the other hand, faced disappointment as the film *THE PRINCESS BRIDE* won out over "Encounter at FarPoint", the feature-length debut of the new *TREK* series.

The other professional awards were received by Gardner Dozois (best editor) and Michael Whelan (two Hugos: one as pro artist, the other for his non-fiction showcase *WORKS OF WONDER*), with Charlie Brown's semi-prozine *LOCUS* successful for a record thirteenth time.

Mike Glycer, editor of the US newszine *FILE:770*, was named best fan writer, Brad Foster best fan artist and *THE TEXAS SF INQUIRER* best fanzine - an ironic tribute to editor Pat Mueller, who recently quit following an internal row with the clubzine's publishers.

[Many thanks to Malcolm Edwards for supplying the results.]

## GAMES CHAIN TO LAUNCH SF IMPRINT

Brian Ansell, the multi-millionaire whose interests include the Games Workshop chain and Citadel miniatures, has hired *INTERZONE* co-editor David Pringle to edit a new sf line, GW Books. Ian Miller has also been hired as art editor, responsible for the new outfit's illustrated non-fiction.

The chain of 17 stores is based in Nottingham, but with both Pringle and Miller living in Brighton it appears likely that the publishing subsidiary will have its offices in the seaside town. The first book is anticipated in mid-1989.

Meanwhile, Birmingham's own Andromeda Bookshop has launched its own imprint, Drunken Dragon Press [see page three].

## 1989 TAFF RACE IN JEOPARDY ?

The future of next year's TransAtlantic Fan Fund race has been thrown into question after both of the current leading candidates have revealed they are either unable or unwilling to attend the 1989 Eastercon on Jersey, Contrivance.

Last issue, *TRAPDOOR* editor Robert Lichtman stated he would not stand if the TAFF administrators specifically named the Eastercon as the trip's target, rather than Nottingham's Mexican III, a decision subsequently confirmed in *WAVE* by co-administrator Lilian Edwards.

Now his chief rival Charlotte Proctor, editor of *ANVIL*, has revealed to us that she cannot leave the US till early April - after the Easter weekend but before the Mexican III dates.

No TAFF official was available for comment as we went to press, although adoption of Mexican III instead does now seem unavoidable.

US EDITION



**STOP PRESS:** A benefit evening in aid of Conspiracy '87 will be held at London's Cafe Munchen on 17 December. More details next issue.





Editing a news / review magazine is somewhat similar to losing one's virginity: once undertaken, you can never return to the original state of innocence. No sooner had *WAVE* made its existence known to the British publishing industry than Martin and I began to find ourselves knee-deep in formula fantasy, soap-opera trilogies and the kind of literary network we'd used to devise ourselves over a few pints down the Lamp Tavern, without ever believing some clown would try unloading the crap upon the general public for real.

Like I say, that kind of innocence is soon sacrificed - and in a world where 'authors' prefer to franchise out their successful ideas as 'format universes' to other writers instead of both parties getting off their creative butts and using their imaginations, where 'novels' are gimmicked out as role-playing games which themselves rip off the genre, I can't say I'm too optimistic at our regaining it.

The whole sf industry doesn't deserve to be tarred with the same brush, of course, but the fact that we are now able to visualise sf as precisely that - an industry - instead of one of the most exciting avenues of literary endeavour is in itself a sad indictment of the facade of success that speculative fiction has fostered over the past decade. It goes without saying that those who buy this crap are as guilty -- if not more so -- than the idiots who publish it.

Steve Green

Meanwhile, top marks to *VIZ* for its recent 'fly on the wall' expose of the treatment afforded *WAVE*'s more delicate post -- the accuracy is unnerving...



## CONVENTIONS UPDATE

16-18 SEPT 1988: NICON 88. The third Irish national sf con, held at the University of Belfast. Attending membership: £6 to The Queens University SF & Fantasy Society at the Student Union Building, University Road, Belfast.

24-25 SEPT 1988: ARMADACON. Regional con, held in Plymouth. SASE for information to Marion Connell, 4 Gleneagle Avenue, Mannamead, Plymouth, PL3 5HL.

24-25 SEPT 1988: CONSCRIPTION. Cobden Hotel, Birmingham. A conference on conrunning. Supporting membership £5, attending £10. £2 to just receive pre-con publications. Write to Henry Balen at Flat 4, 8 West Avenue, Walthamstow, London.

29-30 OCT 1988: WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION. The Ramada West Hotel, London. Guest of honour James Herbert. Details from 130 Park View, Wembley, Middlesex.

28-30 OCT 1988: CONCERT. Media event. The Grosvenor Hotel, Edinburgh. Guest Ed Bishop (UFO). Attending membership £15 to Jette Goldie, 97 Harrison Road, Edinburgh, Scotland.

29-30 OCT 1988: THE SECRET SERVICE CONVENTION. Fanderson's tribute to the short-lived puppet show, with producer Gerry Anderson among the guests (talking about his latest series). £10 membership to Neil Swain, 82 Upper Lane, Netherton, near Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF2 4NF.

4-7 NOV 1988: NOVACON 18. Royal Angus Hotel, B'ham. Guest Garry Kilworth. £10 membership to Bernie Evans, 7 Grove Avenue, Birmingham, B27 7UY.

24-27 MARCH 1989: CONTRIVANCE. Britain's national sf event, to be held in Jersey. Attending membership £18 (supporting, £9) to 63 Drake Road, Chessington, Surrey.

28 - 30 APR 1989: CORFLU 6. Annual fannish relaxcon, moving to Minneapolis this year. Contact Geri Sullivan, Toad Hall, 3444 Blaisdell Avenue South, MN 55408-4315, USA.

26-29 MAY 1989: MEXICON III. The event for fans of written sf, at Nottingham's Albany Hotel. Membership's £15; write 7A Lawrence Road, South Ealing, London, W5 4XJ, for details.

9 - 15 AUG 1989: TYNESIDE INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FICTION FESTIVAL. Details from 30 Wilkinson Court, Jarrow, NE32 3NQ.

26 - 27 AUG 1989: HONEY COMB. Dr Who convention, being held at Swindon's Wiltshire Hotel. £18 membership (one-day, £9), rising to £20 on 1 March; enclose five stamped envelopes with cheque. Contact Daniel Cohen, 48 Gurney Drive, London, N2 0DE, for information.

22 - 24 SEPT 1989: PREFAB TROUT. Bellahouston, Glasgow. £5 supp., £10 att, to 55 Cedarwood Avenue, Glasgow, G77 5LP.

Entries for inclusion in our regular convention lists should include the dates, site, membership costs, guest(s), contact address and give some indication of the theme. Please mention *CRITICAL WAVE* when writing. Special convention advertising rates available.

## BRITISH COMIC MARTS

BIRMINGHAM: 15 October, 10 December, the New Imperial Hotel, Temple Street.

LEEDS: 24 September, 19 October, 26 November at the Griffin Hotel, Boar Lane.

LONDON: Westminster comic marts will be held 5 October and 3 December.

SHEFFIELD: 12 November, the Blind Institute, Mappin Street.



# IN BRIEF

## IN PRINT

The recent resurgence of the British sf / fantasy magazine receives another boost in January, with the launch of a new digest-size quarterly by Peterborough's W Publishing.

Provisionally entitled *THE GATE*, this is the company's first such venture after a decade in printing. The initial print run will be around 5,000, with leading UK distribution chain W H Smith already expressing an interest.

Company director Richard Newcombe said the new magazine would reflect his own preference for 'hard' science fiction, rooted in his early encounters with such US titles as *GALAXY* during the 1960s. Rates will be £30/1000 words, and submissions should be forwarded to 29 Saville Road, Westwood, PE3 7PR; artwork is also required.

Rog Peyton and Rod Milner hit a curious obstacle whilst setting up their new printing outfit Drunken Dragon Press -- Companies House prohibits the use of 'derogatory' adjectives in firms' titles. "So we pointed out that in this context 'drunken' was only derogatory to dragons," said Rog later, "and we were sure that the Registrar of Companies didn't really believe in dragons, did he? They backed down."

As revealed last issue, Drunken Dragon's first project is a selection of science fiction parodies by Dave Langford, *DRAGONHIKER'S GUIDE TO BATTLEFIELD COVENANT AT DUNE'S EDGE: ODYSSEY TWO*. A signing session will be held at Birmingham's Andromeda Bookshop later this month.

Shaun Hutson will be signing copies of *VICTIMS* at that same location on 22 October; Raymond Feist will be signing British editions of *FAERIE TALE* two days later.

Speaking of whom, Mr Hutson jets off to Barbados to tie the nuptial knot this month, two days before his 30th birthday. With only immediate family attending, he should save a small fortune on the wedding reception.

Coincidentally, the current work-in-progress concerns a voodoo cult; no doubt there's no need for us to point out the potential tax advantages of a little local research...

"Writers of the Future", the sf bursary founded by L Ron Hubbard, has awarded its \$4,000 grand prize to Nancy Farmer, who lives in Zimbabwe. Her entry was chosen from the competition's four quarterly finalists.

Forrest Ackerman is auctioning an unread copy of Robert Heinlein's *THE DISCOVERY OF MAN*, a 1941 pamphlet including the author's worldcon guest of honour speech. "Several years ago a copy sold for \$1300," says his ad in *SF CHRONICLE*.

Faith Brooker won £5000 in a short story contest run by *WOMAN'S OWN*. She's currently working at Gollancz.

William Gibson appeared to have his priorities right on the British *MONA LISA OVERDRIVE* publicity tour. As soon as he spotted Andromeda's Dave Holmes, Gibson revealed he'd had a tip that a nearby pub served Theakston's Old Peculiar from the tap; *did Dave know where...?* Of course he did, and a stack of around 300 hardbacks and 100 paperbacks were signed with superhuman swiftness by the eager American before being allowed to recover from a crushing schedule which included 23 separate radio interviews in one day earlier on the tour.

*THE BEANO* celebrated its fiftieth birthday on July 30. Lord Snooty the only survivor from the first issue. Current editor Ewan Kerr guested on *VOGAN* with Dennis the Menace to mark the occasion, explaining how his staff now avoid scenes such as children being 'whacked' by their parents or accepting rides home from strangers.

*FEAR* finally made its debut in mid-July, with fiction from Nicholas Royle, Ramsey Campbell and Shaun Hutson.

Frank Herbert's final novel and Rob Holdstock's follow-up to his award-winning *MYTHAGO WOOD* are amongst Gollancz's autumn collection.

Holdstock's *LAVONDYSS* is joined in October by Octavia Butler's second 'Xenogenesis' volume, *ADULTHOOD RITES*, *THE ASCENSION FACTOR* by Frank Herbert & Bill Ransom, completing the sequence opened with *THE JESUS INCIDENT* and *THE LAZARUS EFFECT*, and *TERRY'S UNIVERSE*, an anthology of original sf produced as a memorial to the late Terry Carr.

Terry Pratchett's new 'Discworld' novel, *WYRD SISTERS*, appears in November, as does the first volume of Phil Dick's collected short fiction, *BEYOND LIES THE WUR*, the anthology *WORLDS OF WONDER* (edited with commentary by Robert Silverberg) and *DOUBLE PLANET* by John Gribbin & Marcus Chown.

New year titles will include Greg Bear's *ETERNITY*, his sequel to the acclaimed *EON*.

John Crowley's sequel to *AEGYPT*, *LOVE AND DEATH*, has sold to Bantam; Robert Silverberg is producing a sequel to C L Moore's "Vintage Season" for Tor; Arthur C Clarke will collaborate with Gentry Lee on *RAMA II* for Bantam, who have already contracted for a third volume.

Gollancz has bought Bob Shaw's first juvenile sf novel, *KILLER PLANET*. Meanwhile, he's working on the third book in the *RAGGED ASTRONAUTS* trilogy.

Tabitha King has switched from the Kirby McCauley Literary Agency to Richard Curtis, though there's no word on the future plans of McCauley's biggest client, Stephen King. *SF CHRONICLE*'s July edition reports rumours that the agency is in severe financial difficulties, with an alleged IRS shortfall of \$250,000 and a mooted affiliation with Curtis Brown still unresolved despite *LOCUS*'s announcement that the deal was clinched in June.

Pat Murphy's novel *THE FALLING WOMAN* was the only 1997 Nebula-winner not to turn up on the Hugo ballot: her novelette "Rachel in Love", Kim Stanley Robinson's novella "The Blind Geometer" & Kate Wilhelm's short story "Forever Yours, Anna" all received sufficient votes from Nolacon II members. See our cover for the full results breakdown.

Brian Aldiss, whose *TRILLION YEAR SPREE* (co-written by David Wingrove) has just won the 1988 Eaton Award, is taking his stageshow "Science Fiction Blues" back on the road. The new venues will be in Beverley (8 October), London (performing at the World Fantasy Convention, 29 October), Gateshead (10 November) and Welwyn Garden City (16 November). A David Hardy cover has been commissioned for the book of the stage-show, scheduled to appear at the convention.

Tor's August releases include Chet Williamson's *LOWLAND RIDER*, Les Daniel's *YELLOW FOG* (first volume in a new vampire trilogy), Graham Masterton's *CHARNEL HOUSE* and Chelsea Quinn Yarbro's *THE PALACE*, sequel to *HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA*.

Nancy Springer, who's just sold her fantasy *RED WIZARD* to Atheneum, will discuss "Priorities in Fiction Writing" on October 15 before the Central Pennsylvania Writer's Organisation's autumn conference. She's recently recovered from a riding accident which injured her right hand.

London's Book Inn has renovated its fantasy and science fiction department, reports *SMALL MAMMAL*. The bookstore is located at 17 Charing Cross Road and is currently setting up a series of signing sessions.

Legend has commissioned Chris 'Fangorn' Baker to design the cover for Robert Asprin's *MYTH DIRECTIONS*; the Legend edition of *ANOTHER FINE MYTH* appears in January, also bearing a Baker cover.

September titles from Legend include Jonathan Carroll's *SLEEPING IN FLAME*, Orson Scott Card's *SEVENTH SON* (opening book in his 'Tales of Alvin Maker') and Christopher Fowler's *ROOFWORLD*. David Gemmell's *LAST SWORD OF POWER* joins Bruce Sterling's *ISLANDS IN THE NET* in October, with Nancy Kress's *AN ALIEN LIGHT* and Andrew Greeley's *THE FINAL PLANET* following in November.

Stephen King's *MISERY* tied with Robert McCammon's *SWAN SONG* in the 'best novel' category of the first Bran Stoker Awards, whilst Alan Rodgers' "The Boy Who Came Back From The Dead" tied with George R R Martin's "The Pear-Shaped Man" in the novelette category.

Lisa Cantrell's *THE MANSE* was named 'Best First Novel' by the Horror Writers of America, who gave life achievement awards to Fritz Leiber, Frank Belknap Long and to Clifford D Simak, who died in April.

The other winners were Muriel Spark's *MARY SHELLEY* (as best non-fiction), McCammon's short story "The Deep End" and Harlan Ellison's collection *THE ESSENTIAL ELLISON*. Designed by Stephen Kirk, the awards take the form of miniature gothic mansions, whose doors open to reveal the winner's name.

*LOCUS* is continuing to have problems with unauthorised fans passing themselves off as reporters or representatives. American newszine *FILE 770* accuses former staff member Dawn Atkins of conning a free membership from the 1988 Baycon and trying (unsuccessfully) the same with the 1988 Westercon, in addition to requesting a spot on the programme. Atkins left the *LOCUS* roster in 1984, but claimed one of the magazine's memberships from the registration desk at the 1985 NASFiC in Austin, Texas, according to editor Charlie Brown.

Australian fan Justin Ackroyd has launched his own book import business, Slow Glass. His previous employment includes Melbourne sf bookshops Space Age and Minotaur.

He's also on the board of the reactivated Australian SF Foundation. Created in 1976 after the country's first world convention, it adopted a low profile following the second in 1995. The new incarnation will remain Melbourne-based.

Meanwhile, Minotaur could be in for a comics price war with the opening of rival store Alternate Worlds, incorporating the mail order service Images-Images.

Scott Bradfield has just completed his first novel, *THE HISTORY OF LUMINOUS MOTION*, and is now producing a study of 19th century American literature, *DREAMING REVOLUTION*. His first sf collection, *THE SECRET LIFE OF HOUSES*, will appear from Unwin Hyman on 22 September.

The Australian wing of "Writers of the Future" made its presence known at the national event Conviction with a video presentation and buffet, a somewhat lower-key approach than that adopted at the British worldcon last year.

Michael McCollum's *ANTARES DAWN* and its sequel *ANTARES PASSAGE* (US: Del Rey) will be Grafton titles next summer.

His next novel, *THUNDERSTRIKE!*, is optioned to Del Rey and Grafton with a September deadline.

## FANDOM

Lisa Tuttle, Bob Shaw and Brian Aldiss will be featured during the Beverley SF Festival, being held at the Beverley Arms Hotel on 7 - 9 October. Aldiss' play "Science Fiction Blues" will be staged on the Saturday evening.

For full details, contact Jenny Barnett at the Beverley Library, Champney Road, Beverley, North Humberside, HU17.

Correction to issue six's article on the Conspiracy '87 bankruptcy battle: Katie Hoare would only have been disqualified from directorship of Pangolin Limited had she been on the boards of two bankrupt companies within a period of five years. Apologies for any confusion caused.

Glossy British fanzine *CONCATENATION* had a disappointing response to its vaunted Easter competition, according to 'winner' Dave Wood - his was the only entry received, and it arrived too late to qualify.

The Australian amateur press association ANZAPA will be celebrating its 20th birthday next month. Britain's longest running apa, BAPA, marked its 10th anniversary in January.

*STAR TREK*'s creator Gene Roddenberry will be joined by cast-members from both the original series and its successor for Seatrek 89, to be held 12-15 May aboard the cruise liner S S Emerald Seas. Promised highlights include a beach party and "games with the stars on a private island".

The Perth in '94 worldcon bid is in financial difficulties, reports the newszine *THYME*. The problems apparently began with the non-delivery of goods for sale at Conspiracy.



Programme items at Novacon 18 will include a discussion of absurd fanciful myths, a debate on the growth of the short story market in Britain and a panel appealing for more sf in a market dominated by fantasy. As well as his guest of honour speech, author Garry Kilworth will address "Alienation: the Outsider in Science Fiction". Novacon 18 films include *IT'S ALIVE* and the sequel *IT LIVES AGAIN*.

Pam Wells will succeed Martin Tudor as administrator of the annual Nova Awards.

Analysis of Contrivance '89's travel questionnaire indicates 150-200 fans arrive in Jersey the week previous, with 200-250 still around the following week. "Each of which is a reasonable-sized convention," adds Tim Illingworth. Meanwhile, Katie Hoare - who now wishes to be known as Catherine McAuley - has quit the committee "for personal reasons".

Fund-raising activities at Conspiracy '87 have funded a tape edition of the late Alfred Bester's *DEMOLISHED MAN* for visually handicapped sf fans. Bester was unable to guest at the convention due to ill health.

The Terry Carr Fanzine Collection, the memorial archive housed at the University of California, is appealing for new items. Curator George Slusser is currently soliciting Bruce Pelz to merge his own collection into Carr's.

Donations should be sent to George at the University of California, P O Box 5900, Riverside, CA 92507, USA.

Correction to page 19's gossip: it was Oxford's Conine rather than Winchester's Wincon which our mole found too awful to contemplate, describing the convention's programme as "unadventurous and dull and mostly underattended", with the two-hour "cross-examination" of GoM Terry Pratchett its only saving grace. Apologies for any resulting confusion.

Mark Meenan & Ian Sorensen are busy soliciting comments on their mooted bid for the 1991 Eastercon, which may become Albacon 4 "as a marketing ploy" but could choose the Adelphi Hotel as its venue if the existing Liverpool bid falls thru.

*WATCHMEN* duo Alan Moore & Dave Gibbons were named best writer and artist at the Society of Strip Illustrators' annual banquet in B'ham. *WATCHMEN* itself was presented with a Mekon Award -- a statuette of Dan Dare's arch-enemy designed by the new *MIRACLENAN* artist Mark Buckingham [correction to item on page six] -- as best foreign-produced work.

Artist Dave McKean was dubbed best newcomer, whilst the graphic novel *VIOLENT CASES*, scripted by SSI chairman Neil Gaiman and drawn by McKean, took the Mekon for the best UK-produced work. The late Ron Embleton, a SSI founder member, received the Frank Bellamy Award for outstanding achievement in the comics field.

Tv personality Jonathan Ross originally agreed to host the ceremony, but pulled out at the last minute, claiming he was "too tired" to attend. *BATMAN* star Adam West was considered, but the society couldn't afford his £2000 fee.

*MYTHOS*, a new fantasy magazine from Dragonlore Publications, is offering exchange advertising with UK fanzines; details from publisher Derek Challanoc at 28A Beechwood Ave, Boscombe, Bournemouth, BH5 1LZ.

## SOUND & VISION

Alan Napier, who played Batman's loyal butler Alfred in the 1960s series, died last month.

Meanwhile, Tim Burton is apparently eager to cast Jack Nicholson as the Joker for his forthcoming Batman movie. In an interview in this month's *Q*, Burton says the public has split into three camps over the project: the fans of the old Adam West series, *DARK KNIGHT* fans and those who want another *SUPERMAN: THE MOVIE*. [See films, page 19]

Elstree Studios may still have a future in British film production. Bought by property speculators in July for £20M after yet another promise from the Golan-Globus organisation turned out to be vacuous, the site was snapped up for a mere £31M a month later by a consortium which still looks favourably upon maintaining the studio's cinematic heritage.

*SFC* columnist Ed Naha reports a new "more upbeat" film version of William Golding's classic *LORD OF THE FLIES* will feature more humour & fisticuffs than the 1961 movie. Yuk.

Grant Stone's weekly sf show on the Perth radio station 6UYS-FM has been rescued after fans urged the University of Western Australia to reconsider cutting its funding.

The final Indiana Jones movie will be set in 1938, two years after the whip-wielding archaeologist's original yarn.

Michael Ironside will star in the movie version of Dean R Koontz's *WATCHERS*. [See books, page 11]

Bob Hoskins obviously had great fun working with Robert Zemeckis on *WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT?* In an interview for *STARLOG*, he enthuses over his scenes with many of the cartoon world's greatest stars; "Everybody has worked with Laurence Olivier, but years from now I'll be in the back of the bar and I'll be saying to my pals, 'There was that time I was doing a little scene with Daffy and Donald.'"

E.T. will guest star in Pepsi-Cola advertisements timed to coincide with the movie's release on video on 27 October.

John Varley's short story "Air Raid" will finally reach the screen as *MILLENNIUM*, directed by Michael Anderson. The project was originally under Douglas Trumbull's control, but the death of Natalie Wood and the subsequent production problems on Trumbull's *BRAINSTORM* forced him to shelve the new movie. Kris Kristofferson and Cheryl Ladd head the cast.

Three *STAR TREK* episodes banned by the BBC are now out on tape from Paramount Home Video: "The Empath", "Whom Gods Destroy" and "Plato's Stepchildren". All the original shows are now available, including "Miri", shown once and subsequently banned after pressure from self-appointed guardians of public morality. The BBC has resisted a series of campaigns over the past 20 years to review that original decision.

One of *TREK*'s forgotten regulars is spotlighted in the July *STARLOG*; Eddie Paskey, who combined his job as William Shatner's stand-in with the role of Lt Leslie. He even died once, only to inexplicably return in the following episode.

## COMICS

Neil Gaiman & Dave McKean are set to take on *MIRACLEMAN* following Alan Moore's departure from the Eclipse title.

*KILLING JOKE* artist Brian Bolland provided a re-match for Batman and the Joker on the cover of the Leeds Permanent Building Society's magazine *SPEAKOUT*. The summer issue also interviewed Bolland inside, wherein he described his collaborator Alan Moore as "a film director really" and admits the Caped Crusader was never one of his own personal favourites.

A copyright suit has been filed against Wendy & Richard Pini, their company Father Tree Press and Warp Graphics over alleged trademark infringement. According to *SFC*, the suit was brought by the Donning Company over the Pinis' publication of *ELFQUEST* material to which Donning claims rights.

Bill Sienkiewicz and Frank Miller are among the contributors to *MAD LOVE*, a benefit comic in aid of gay rights groups threatened by Section 28 of the Local Government Act.

DC has launched a four-issue mini-series by Dean Motter based upon the cult tv series *THE PRISONER*. It's set twenty years after Number 6's residence, with a female protagonist.

The group is also considering dumping *STAR TREK*, claiming sales do not justify Paramount's licensing fees. Prior to DC, both Gold Key and Marvel published *TREK* comics.

Acme and Eclipse have combined to hire Mike Grell for a new *JAMES BOND* comic, due to debut in January.

Comics veteran Steve Ditko has returned to Marvel for a new superhero series, *SPEEDBALL*. The character will feature in this year's *SPIDER-MAN* annual, reuniting Ditko with the strip he co-created with Stan Lee 25 years ago.

Lee, meantime, has teamed up with Jean (Moebius) Giraud for the latest *SILVER SURFER* adventure.

*CERBERUS* creator Dave Sim and comic distributor Diamond have apparently settled their differences, and the company's to continue handling all Aardvark-Vanaheim's titles, reports the UK comics newszine *SPEAKEASY*.

Despite the belief in certain quarters (*MATRIX*, please note) that Marvel UK's new comic *DRAGON'S CLAW* is its first non-reprint title (an honour taken by *CAPTAIN BRITAIN*), the series does at least have a British creative team.

Marvel UK is also launching *DEATH'S HEAD*, linking both the *TRANSFORMERS* and *DRAGON'S CLAW* continuities, with the honourous strip *THE SLEAZE BROTHERS* on the drawing board.

John Byrne, Gilbert & Jaime Hernandez, Jerry Ordway and Trina Robbins will be among the American guests at the 1988 UK Comic Art Convention, being held on 24-25 September. The British guests will include Pat Mills, Glenn Fabry, Ian Gibson, Jamie Delano, David Lloyd, Hunt Emerson, Kevin O'Neill, Bryan Talbot and representatives from Marvel UK.

London's Institute of Education is once again the venue and membership's £10, payable to PO Box 360, London, WC2H.

[See page 18 for our regular comics review column]

## SOCIETY COLUMN

### ROUND THE CLUBS

Sheri S Tepper fans please note: her fan club, the True Game Society, can be reached via 11 Hawk Close, Stubbington, Hampshire, PO14 3SW (enclose a stamped envelope for reply).

With the new *STAR TREK* series only available in the UK on video till the early 1990s, its new British fan group may have to rely upon the original's success for initial growth. Write Linda Hedden at 85 Eastwick Row, Adeyfield, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP2 4JW, enclosing a stamped 9"x4" envelope.

Gay and bisexual sf fans are invited to join GAP, a gay amateur press association run by Martin Stewart. Write him for info at 51 Cambridge Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 5LE.

The Leicester Science Fiction Group has officially affiliated with the Birmingham SF Group. A small, friendly sf society, the LSFG meets on the first Friday of each month at the Rainbow & Dove, 155 Charles Street; write George Clark, 71 Wolverton Road, Leicester, LE3 2AJ (0533 823405).

Joy Hibbert is organising a network of 'round robins', informal letter chains on specific topics. Further details from Joy at 11 Rutland Street, Hanley, ST1 5JG (encl. SASE).

### ON THE MOVE

Ros Calverley and Chris Walton, 100, Cambridge St, Wolverton, Milton Keynes, Bucks, MK12 5AH, England. Marty and Robbie Cantor, 11825, Gilmore # 105, N. Hollywood, CA 91605, USA. Yvonne Rousseau, Post Office Box 483, Norwood, SA 5057, Australia. Dave Hicks & Cat Coast, Flat 5B (for Dave) or 5A (Cat), 8, Dyfrig Street, Pontcanna, Cardiff, CF1 9LR. John Bangsund, Post Office Box 80, W. Brunswick, Victoria, Australia (return to his former address). Martin Easterbrook and Margaret Austin, 43, Saddleback Rd, Shaw, Swindon, SN5 9ST.

Rosemary Hickey, 1318½, Uffert, Bakersfield, CA 93306, USA. Tony Morton and Carol Morton, 14, Park St, Lye, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY9 8SS. Kathleen Gallagher, 409, Poe Avenue, Worthington, OH 43085, USA. Victor Gonzalez, 6540, 2nd Avenue NW, Seattle, WA 98117, USA. Allyn Cadogan, 7572, Blair Avenue, Rohnert Park, CA 94928, USA. Helena Bowles, Musson House, General Hospital, Whittall Lane, Birmingham, UK. Jon Singer, 1030, Heatherstone, Sunnyvale, CA 94087, USA.

Filmvay Distributors have moved to 135, Wardour Street, London, W1V 4AP, (tel. 01 734 9400).

Plus a few reminders: Don West, 17, Carlisle Street, Keighley, West Yorkshire, RD21 4PX; Laura Wheatley, 257, Barclay Road, Warley Woods, Smethwick, Warley, B67 5LA.



# EYE WITNESS

ALBACON '88

Glasgow, 29 July - 1 August

Report by Bernie Evans

We made a discovery as soon as we arrived in Glasgow: SCOTLAND WAS WET !! No matter, Albacon wasn't; it was warm and welcoming.

There were three programme streams, with films on the main stream, plus video equipment and rooms for STAR TREK fans and others, such as filkers. The intention was to give space to "fringe fans", but not clutter up the programme streams with material that would only entertain a small percentage of the total attendance. As far as I could see, it worked, although I did hear a few complaints from people who had had to share these rooms on a "time-share" basis; this turned out to be the hotel's fault (now where have we heard that before?).

The programme contained the usual mix of talks, panels, auctions, fancy dress, whilst on the Saturday evening there was a Ceilidh instead of the usual disco -- after all, we were in Scotland. I only went to a few of the programme items, missing Heinz Wolff's GoH speech because of a cock-up on my part, but managing to catch C J Cherryh's. She was, she told us, in love with Scotland, interested in archeology and Roman & European history, and delighted to be a Guest of Honour at Albacon.

Linda-Claire Toal's "Demolished Man" panel on the Saturday night was the funniest thing I've seen at a convention for years. Linda wanted to talk about people's sexual mores, she said, but actually she wanted to talk about her fetish for BEAROS. In the process she did the neatest demolition job on Lilian Edwards, and managed to embarrass half the men in the room.

I also saw a one-man play about Filofax living, panels on book covers, creating sf aliens, and one reviewing about ten new(ish) books. All reasonably interesting at the time, but nothing very memorable. The worst item was "The Very Last Curtain Call"; based upon a local religious tv programme and consisting of readings from 'turkeys', it had much promise, but the phoney accents rendered the readings unintelligible, so I escaped to the bar.

Only a couple of grumbles: the hotel ran out of bitter three times, and refused to serve overflow residents late at night (it seems they didn't honour their contract in this and other areas), while the food wasn't what I'd expected at an Albacon -- no pies or sandwiches and the like, only plate meals which were, I thought, overpriced (£1.50 for a single baked potato?), although a couple of Londoners I know thought it reasonable, so perhaps it was just me.

Overall, Albacon was very enjoyable. A few programme items that sounded interesting enough to grab my attention, (that there weren't more wasn't the committee's fault, pure-

ly a result of my attending so many cons over the years), videos if I wanted them. (I did pop in a couple of times but found the venue a little crowded), plenty of books in the dealers' room, an art show, and lots of friends in the bar. I'd definitely go again.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

[Meanwhile, former WAVE gossip columnist JAMMY VEASEL took time off from packing for her flight to the New Orleans worldcon in order to attend the launch of FORBIDDEN PLANET's new store in New Oxford Street, London...]

I remember way back, when I got all toked up and stood in line for what seemed like hours in hazy anticipation for the first night showing of STAR WARS. It was exciting in a nice way. Approaching Forbidden Planet's opening night was something like that, only without the dope, anticipation or excitement. Not even a film when you got through the doors. You just got the wait.

The front of the new shop looks like just another bank or building society along New Oxford Street until you see a giant-sized model of the Thing from THE FANTASTIC FOUR staring wild-eyed at you from the entrance way. I tried to take in the layout of the place after shoving through the crush at the front door, but when a building is jam-packed with people, producing enough body heat to bring the room-temperature wine to boiling point, there's not much you can see. I was able to look up, though, and catch what appears to be the neat lighting system -- little wire 'tracks' with the lights on 'cars' riding back and forth. Okay; this must be the future, science fiction and all that.

The word spread quickly upon arrival to "get your drink and get downstairs" as there were fewer people down there. I took the advice. Downstairs is where the books live at FP as opposed to the spread of comics upstairs. Again, I tried to look through the mass of bodies and get an idea of what this new shop layout would mean to an sf reader like myself. It was too hard to tell. There seemed to be a load of space available, and this -- combined with the style of material on sale and lighting -- appeared very "Virgin Mega Store". But whether FP makes any logical use of the space only time will tell. At this point I gave up trying to suss out the new FP and began to concentrate on the people crammed into the place.

The first thing I noticed was that my glass was almost empty. Rather than struggle through the hot sticky crowd, after a mere refill I worked the crowd around me into a frenzied mob who demanded that JOHN JARROLD use his charm & ability to go up and liberate a bottle of wine for us minions in the bookish hell of the basement. During the long wait, I had a chance to chat with the familiar faces gathering in the heat. MIKE and DEBBY MOIR were outlining their forthcoming trip to the New Orleans worldcon, whilst DAVE HOODSON kept scanning the shelves to show us copies of books with spanking scenes. I guess working for Titan must have some advantages. JARROLD returned in time to refill our dry glasses with Vampire Wine (straight from Bulgaria in coffin-shaped boxes). The crowd twisted and turned, familiar faces flowed by: TERRY PRATCHETT, MALCOLM EDWARDS, ROB HOLDSTOCK, JOHN BROSNAN, STEVE JONES... We nodded, waved a few fingers and mouthed "hello's across the crowds.



The heat level was still rising. Hors d'oeuvres were being passed around. With little else in my system, I tried to hold back the drunken hot nausea with salmon sandwiches. "Shame all this is ruined by the sexist women," someone like PAUL OLDROYD mentioned. "What?" "The sexist women, the ones running around in *ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW* gear serving the hors d'oeuvres." "Oh, you mean the politically unsound people running around in suspenders & stockings, or in short skirted dresses, those sexist women, I see." I felt that I should somehow feel offended or oppressed at having you-au-vents served to me by people in costumes which reveal a body in ways deemed "no-no" by a set mind of the population. Funny: all I felt was hungry. Still, it could have been worse. It could have been MICHAEL MOORCOCK stood next to me, who I understand somehow juxtaposed the *ROCKY HORROR* women with the FP displays of special effects from *NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET* and *HELLRAISER*, and saw it as a condemnation of how violence against women is an accepted fact in society. And I thought it was all *just* a publicity stunt for the opening of a new shop.

Somebody suggested it might be all different if FP used the horror effects to actually do the serving: sausage rolls stuck on the ends of the Cenobite's pins, or sandwiches speared on the ends of Freddy's razor-blade fingers. I'm sure that would have been more acceptable.

The bottle had run dry. JARROLD was nowhere in sight and someone had to run the mercy errand of retrieving drink from the even-more-crowded upstairs bar. I found myself volunteering but in the midst of my battle to get to the bar I heard an indecipherable loud-speaker announcement. People surged towards the centre of the building and as I pushed forward, I found myself *face to face with Batman*. Yes, it fitted: ADAM WEST was in the UK - I'd seen him on *GOOD MORNING BRITAIN* a few days earlier - and now here he was, speaking to a media-oid crowd. "Hello," he Tannoyed to us all. "I'm here and I'm happy and you're happy so we're all here, happy, having a good time". People cheered. I turned to the closest stranger. "What did he say? What does he mean?" "He says he's happy". Oh. The wine had run out.

I returned downstairs, to be stopped by STEVE JONES. "We're all meeting at The Cafe Munchen in a few minutes". I nodded and moved on. Somebody vaguely familiar stopped me. "We're all meeting at the Lion in a few minutes," he said. I nodded, wondering which "Lion" this was. "We're all meeting at the Plough in a few minutes," a third person told me. I got the hint -- people were leaving. They'd all arrived, done the 'see and be seen' routine, checked each other out and were now heading for less crowded spaces. I tagged onto the Plough crowd where a pleasant evening's conversation was to follow.

I passed the shop again on the way back to the tube. A few bodies littered the pavement out front and a brief journey inside showed a similar scene of debauched chaos. NEIL GAIMAN grabbed me in an unlecherous way and muttered a string of words that I gathered were complimentary: I said thanks and re-wrapped him on the nearest stationary body before slogging off to the station.

It was an interesting evening -- crowded, hot, offbeat. Someday, I hope to see how this space actually operates as a sf / comics shop. Certainly the room is there, the decor is sufficiently Eighties and trendy, with the logo firmly stamped into place. Whether this will actually do anything to

improve the stock, layout, accessibility and knowledge of the shop's staff over the previous incarnation remains to be seen. They can't do any worse and if they're sharp enough FP will make use of the new premises instead of using it as a mere trendy showcase of how 'hip' FP has become.

Jammy will return to see.

[See page nineteen for our regular gossip column, which managed to evade the national postal strike and arrived mere hours before deadline...]

## ON THE RACKS

The late Patrick Troughton's debut as Doctor Who is recaptured in a surprisingly professional fan publication. *THE POWER OF THE DALEKS*.

Using rare stills provided by the adventure's director, Christopher Barry, and dialogue from David Whitaker's teleplay, *DOCTOR WHO* fan Gary Levy has produced a glossy photo-novel which acts as both a tribute to the creative personnel and a souvenir of a show completely missing from the BBC's own archives (as are so many of the Troughton episodes...).

It's by nature a compromise, of course, part novel and part comic-strip, and as such has neither the literary depth of a full-blown book nor the visual pacing of the original. But even with those constraints, it's a remarkable achievement and all credit to Gary for pulling it off.

[Copies are available from Gary Levy for £2.50 inclusive of p&p; his address is 5 Whitegate Gardens, Harrow, Weald, Middlesex, HA3 6BW, England.]

The first news-stand edition of *INTERZONE* features the same cover art as its second anthology, neatly timed to coincide with the New English Library paperback edition.

Despite the first-rate line-up - David Langford & Peter Garrett amongst the authors present - *INTERZONE 25's* text is just as intriguing, with Charles Platt ripping into censors, government & otherwise, in his regular column (although his references to *Clause 28* could have done with updating), yet another excellent film critique by Nick Lowe, an interview with Terry Pratchett (courtesy of *CW's* own Paul Kincaid) and - their ace in the hole - Tom Disch's searing *NATION* review of Whitney Strieber's bestseller *COMMUNION*.

[Subscriptions to *INTERZONE* cost £11 pa from 124 Osborne Road, Brighton, BN1 6LU. Copies should also be available at larger newsagencies; any proprietor letting the side down should be referred to Diamond-Europress Sales on 0424 430422 whilst bookshops should call Central Books on 01 407 5447.]

[Steve Green]



# THE FANZINE FILE

by Maureen Porter

Paul Kincaid is a hard act to follow, certainly when he has his teeth into the art and practice of fanzine reviewing. One is left to stand by, nodding weakly in agreement, for all the world the adoring, stereotypical female companion so beloved of the sf genre. In essence, if not in the actual phrasing, I agree with Paul's assessment of the need for fanzine reviews. I wouldn't write criticism if I thought all that was needed was a list of titles, content and addresses. Of course, to follow Vint Clarke's contention in *PULP* that one needs to direct people on how best to expend a few honest pennies, one would then run into the problem of distinguishing which fanzines are worth sending for, which would require a critical judgement, which... I have a nasty feeling we are about to get lost in a logical circularity here. Thus, any reviews I produce for *CRITICAL WAVE* are, to some degree, informed by the criteria which my colleague put forward last issue.

Fanzine reviewing is a peculiarly personal sort of pastime, and everyone approaches it with different criteria to be satisfied. In approaching this column, I've considered what it is that pleases me about any particular fanzine. I have naturally devised a few personal rules of thumb -- and fingers -- which are dead useful for me, but I wonder how valuable they can ever be to anyone else, or does that bring us back round to the need for criticism at all? Backtracking even further, I came down to that knotty little question 'what is a zine?'. The conclusion reached was that a zine is a zine is a zine, with apologies to the late Ms Stein.

A zine can be whatever you want it to be. The ancestry is common, even if the diversification is now considerable,

from critiques through news to fiction, taking in, en route, the considerable body of prose not directly about sf itself. In which case, on what terms can one judge such a diversity of fanzines? The oracle opined that a fanzine should be 'good', and when pressed, came up with a series of interesting definitions which, sharp as a razor, I have pruned down to this: having read a zine, one shouldn't feel that reading it was a waste of time; it should have enhanced the life of the reader in some way, either through supplying news, an interesting opinion, or giving her/him a bloody good laugh. And the experience is, of course, different for each person, so any review, any comment, is a broad indication to the would-be consumer, ripe for challenge.

So, welcome to a summary of my opinions on a few zines which fell through my letterbox recently...

Readers of this column may wonder if the Porter-Kincaid menage has declared open season on poor Harry Bond: not to the best of my knowledge, and he hasn't stopped sending us zines. He has even stopped double-spacing the zine, so we must be making some sort of progress. But one wonders precisely what *BOGUS* is all about, subtitled as it is, 'a fake fanzine for all you fakefans'. To paraphrase the immortal Derek Jameson, "Does he mean us? Surely he does". There's something rather sad in this, heralding as it does the loss of Harry's fannish virginity, with the realisation that fandom is the big, bad world in microcosm, and that skipping 'the surly bonds of reality' also brings its own peculiar responsibilities. Fandom may still be a family, but I've yet to meet a family that is entirely happy, all the time. Even so, one ponders whether Harry is railing against establishment fandom (whatever that is), suggesting that we, as its constituents, aren't real fans, or simply pleading for allowances to be made on the grounds of his age, wearing his inadequacies on his sleeve. Like others, he seems to be slipping into the trap of longing for the return of the Golden Age of Fandom, unaware that he is part of modern fandom and should be doing his best to make something out of here & now. His assessment of the fannish scene is clearly based on half-digested history and a lack of knowledge of current events. So many names he doesn't appear to have encountered, so many curious beliefs, like the idea that looting is some-

## A FRESH LOOK AT SCIENCE FICTION

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how frowned upon. I hate to sound like an agony auntie, but my diagnosis is that a dose of reality wouldn't come amiss, even in fandom. And Harry, for g(h)od's sake throw away the fan history and the Teach Yourself Fandom book. Relax, try walking before running, have fun! And by the way, the tone and style are a big improvement.

Contrary to Harry's belief, there are a lot of younger and newer fans operating in fanzine fandom: it's just that none of them are actually under 18, so far as I'm aware. Though if it comforts him, I've been a fan since I was 19.

Jenny Glover and Jan Dawes are relatively new recruits to the fanzine-producing fraternity, though I wouldn't be so crass as to reveal their ages. Suffice it to say that age and commencement of fannish activity really have very little direct correlation. Jenny has now reached issue seven of *MAVERICK*, an A5 production which is always solidly packed with material. Some might not consider it to be a true *fannish* zine, because Jenny publishes *fiction*, but I am less sniffy than my colleague, and I don't mind that so long as the fiction is well written. I can't honestly say that Key McVeigh's story is the most exciting I've read, but it is competent, and the sting is amusing. To be honest, most of the articles are too short to really get one's teeth into, but the cumulative whole is entertaining and enjoyable, and there is very much a sense of community in this zine, which made me feel quite jealous. I really must do some loccing when I've finished this review column.

Jan Dawes, on the other hand, has been a stalwart member of The Women's Periodical for some time. The first issue of *VSOP* appeared at Follycon, and was swiftly followed up with a second, always a good sign. *VSOP* #2 is an astonishing piece of production, with a cleanlooking serif typeface, right justification, the lot. And the contents aren't half bad, either. The preoccupation with drinking which is apparent throughout the zine should please those who are convinced that fans do nothing but get drunk, while the quality of the writing should cheer the rest of us, who are primarily interested in communication. Harry will be delighted as it mentions all his idols. See what I mean about zines being all things to all people? And to complete the cocktail, Pete Dawes offers the 2nd part of his complete gaming system for beginners, whilst Dave Mooring produces a small but perfectly formed dissertation on the beauty inherent in evil; should have been longer.

I liked this zine because it had much of the feeling of a group of friends sitting round in the pub, swapping stories. Again, *VSOP* is not going to set the world on fire, but pyrotechnics can be so tedious sometimes.

Harry, in his *BOGUS* survey of the dire state of modern British fandom, neglected to mention the Six Year Old Twins, aka 1988 TAFF winners Christina Lake & Lilian Edwards. Perhaps they are already too Establishment, or too old, having like me just hit 30-ish, or perhaps it spoils the theory to see them still 'pubbing their ish', or whatever the term is these days. *THE CAPRICIAN* #3 would, if one was into pigeon-holing, fall neatly into that category in which 'fannish' events are lovingly described for those unable to be there. I quite enjoy this, because I know the names, but it can be hell unless the writing is sufficiently broad, for those who

are not 'in'. Fortunately, incoming fans shouldn't have too much trouble with this fanzine. It has an easy style, without being too alienating. My favourite pieces, however, are Zy Nicholson's wicked assessment of young fandom, and Christina's analysis of the newer fanaine editors and their work. Clearly, a great deal of print is being expended on the subject, though I suspect that the lack of serious conclusions won't meet with favour in some quarters.

And there is *still* life in other parts of the world. Recent antipodean arrivals include *LARRIKIN*'s #15 & 17 from Irwin Hirsh and Perry Middlemiss. It probably helps to know a little about Australian fandom in order to recognise the names and make sense of some of the gossip, but plenty of anecdotes, and a few outside contributions from the likes of Dave Langford, not to mention fanzine reviews, should help the unwary reader along.

From the U.S.A., *PIRATE JENNY*'s #1 & 2 have sailed in, courtesy of Pat Mueller, one-time editor of the Hugo-winning *TEXAS SF INQUIRER*; this is a very impressive production, with a different style of content, a mixture of the fannish and the literary, with reviews mixed in. I doubt whether I would personally survive on an exclusive diet of this sort of fanzine, but mixed in with other, perhaps more anecdotal zines, it provides a satisfying read, with a format which could be usefully employed by one or two other editors without crowding the field unduly.

I believe that the current dire prognostications about the state of British fnz publishing are, as ever, unfounded. What does concern me is the constant harking back to times past. The British seem to be afflicted with many national diseases, depending on which foreigner you consult, but the most pernicious is surely that of terminal nostalgia. Is here and now really so bloody awful that all we can do is bleat about times past? There is a constant referral back to the 50s at the moment in fandom, accompanied by a dingle-like moaning that things can never be the same again. This seems a reasonable theory, but why, instead of making the best we can out of our own times, do we feel obliged to keep writing our own obituaries?

There is no such thing as one Golden Age. Another rule of thumb is that the last but one phase of clear development in any given genre or activity is its Golden Age, followed closely by the fact that the current period of development will eventually be someone else's Golden Age. Wouldn't it be better to stop bleating and start ensuring our own immortality? And isn't that where criticism and reviewing come into their own?

[The Addresses: Harry Bond, 6 Elizabeth Avenue, Bagshot, Surrey, GU19 5NX; Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Arpley, Leeds, LS12 2NP; Jan Dawes, 18 Burchett Place, Leeds, LS6 2LN; Christina Lake, 47 Wessex Avenue, Horfield, Bristol, BS7 0DE, and Lilian Edwards, 1 Braehead Road, Thorntonhall, Glasgow G74 5AQ; Irwin Hirsh, 2/416 Dandenong Road, Caulfield North, Vic 3161, Australia, and Perry Middlemiss, GPO Box # 2708X, Melbourne, Vic 3001, Australia; Pat Mueller, 518 Westridge, Duncanville, TX 75116, U.S.A.]

[Fanzines for Maureen and Paul should be sent to them at 114 Guildhall Street, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 1ES.]



# UNDER COVER

*THE MAMMOTH BOOK OF FANTASY ALL-TIME GREATS*  
Ed. Robert Silverberg & Martin H Greenberg  
Robinson ; £4.95

"Best of..." anthologies will always be highly subjective affairs, but this selection at least has the merit of a wide poll -- the memberships of two World Fantasy Conventions, to be a little more precise.

True, this cannot diminish a tendency towards the more well-known works, and the inclusion of such as Poe, Bradbury and Lovecraft was inevitable, but the appearance of stories like Ellison's "Pretty Maggie Moneyeyes" and Boucher's comic "Snulbug" (a long-time personal favourite) is proof positive of this volume's range and quality. It's also a timely reminder of what the genre can offer when an author is prepared to invest imagination into his/her work rather than manufacture 'product' for a ready-made audience. [Steve Green]

*RATHA'S CREATURE by Clare Bell*  
Grafton ; £2.95

The Ratha of this fantasy's title belongs to a pride of intelligent cats, 'the Named', which is at war with a killer tribe lacking the powers of speech & reason, 'the Un-Named'. The "creature" Ratha tames is fire, the discovery of which changes the destiny of her kind just as they face extinction at the hands of their enemies.

The novel's characters are well-described & believable, and the plotline sufficiently realistic, but still this book just plodded along, erratic pacing reducing it to the kind of superficial distraction useful when you have ten minutes to spare. [Anne-Marie Deacon]

*THE DARKEST ROAD by Guy Gavriel Kay*  
Unwin ; £3.50

This is the last of the 'Fionavar Tapestry' trilogy, in which the usual battle between light & dark is fought out in a mediaeval fantasy world, inhabited by wizards, dwarves and deities. The human interest comes from five Canadians drawn into this parallel world, one of whom was so out of sorts in Book Two that he committed ritual suicide, and now exists in memory only ("Ahh, Kevin...").

Also making a guest appearance is King Arthur (no copy-right), who this time sails off into the sunset, hand-in-hand with Lancelot and Guinevere (no kidding), which is part of the problem with this book -- I could not suspend my disbelief, as I could for, say, Tolkien, because the plot & the prose are so laboured and sticky, even if the ending is okay for readers of the first two volumes. [Cat Coast]

*THE DELUGE DRIVERS by Alan Dean Foster*  
New English Library ; £2.95

My impression of Alan Dean Foster is of a one-man industry who seems to have novelised just about every sf film ever made. Consequently, it's not difficult to forget that he writes his own material as well, a situation not helped by his apparently greater sureness with other people's creations than his own.

Unlike the sf I enjoy, which exploits the genre to tell you something about people or the future, *THE DELUGE DRIVERS* exploits people with token backgrounds and motives, and a stock, generic future universe to advance a predetermined, formulaic plot. Billed as "the dramatic conclusion to the *Icerigger* trilogy" despite its being simply a third, self-contained novel in the series, *THE DELUGE DRIVERS* is competently written and harmless, and will doubtless sell well to those seeking escape in a familiar place.

Unfortunately, 'competent', 'harmless' & 'familiar' are not words with which to commend any book, let alone one from such a supposedly imaginative and creative field as science fiction. [Dave Hicks]

*WATCHERS by Dean R Koontz*  
Headline ; £3.50

At first, this novel seemed like a cross between *ISLAND OF DR MOREAU* and *LASSIE*, but as the story unfolds you realize that if Koontz left out the violence - ie, the Outsider and the hitman - you'd be left with a gorgeous Disneyesque fantasy about a super-intelligent retriever called Einstein.

Now, if you have a dog and if - like me - you believe that dogs are far more noble & worthy than most humans, then this is the story for you. This book gave me more pleasure than any I've read so far this year - a 'shaggy dog story' with a difference.

*WATCHERS* is over-sentimental, sugary pap - but I still loved it! [Ann Green]

*THE LEGACY OF HEDROT by Larry Niven, Jerry Pournelle and Steven Barnes*  
Sphere ; £3.50

Too many cooks have spoiled this, but it was flawed in the mixing anyway.

The plot would not work without every character acting like a child, so the Trite Trio of authors have cooked up an explanation - Hibernation Instability - to cover this contingency. To be honest, that's cheating.

The settlement of Avalon on the isle of Camelot (yech!) is plagued by a simple, and none-too-terrible animal foe; everyone falls to pieces. Our Hero with the strange name and annoying habit of being always right, not to mention singing in Welsh with translations to fill out the pages, is constantly blamed and execrated by his unbelievably stupid comrades - and there's a fair amount of unnecessary blood and gore, too.

Our own beloved Dr Jack Cohen is even incorporated into the plot as the half-witted Dr *Ernst* Cohen, and is speedily killed off to our general relief; if I were Jack, I'd sue.



But the real trouble with the book is twofold: so much of it is aimless and boring ; and everyone says everything eight times over. As a 50-page novelet this would have been moderately annoying ; as a book it's a pain. [Ken Lake]

#### INTERGALACTIC EMPIRES

Ed. Isaac Asimov, Charles Waugh & Martin Greenberg  
Robinson ; £2.95

"Isaac Asimov Presents !" proclaims the cover. "Isaac Asimov's World of Science Fiction !" blazes the spine. His name's on the back cover too, in letters so large that they push Everett B Cole out the list of contributors (not that his story is anything special).

Nine sf stories comprise this anthology, three each in three sections labelled 'Cycles', 'Governance' & 'Concerns'. They are divided about equally between (justly) well-known tales and the obscure (again, justly so). Warning: the Pan-shin story is an extract from *RITE OF PASSAGE*, though they seem reluctant to admit this. The only story to really merit inclusion but which you aren't likely to have already is one by H Beam Piper, querying whether a 'figurehead' monarch could be precisely that.

And yes, of course, there *is* an Asimov story...

[Harry Bond]

*THE RAPTURE EFFECT* by Jeffrey Carver  
Orbit ; £3.95

Now that the bookshops are crammed with a never-ending supply of fantasy trilogies, I have been searching for good hard SF novels. Unfortunately, *THE RAPTURE EFFECT* is not one of them. The blurb calls it 'an epic of dance, music - and interstellar war'. More accurately, it's about first contact and computers ; unfortunately the computers are out of *NEUROMANCER* and *TRON*, and the aliens are not really alien at all, merely men in aliens' clothing, there to be misunderstood and blasted to atoms. Surprisingly, though, there is present in the book some form of mystery ingredient which kept me turning the pages. Buy this book if you are going on a long train journey or into hospital ; it's probably the sort of undemanding candy floss you're looking for, but I prefer a rather more substantial diet. [Mike Cheater]

*DERVISH DAUGHTER* by Sheri Tepper  
Corgi ; £2.75

This novel is, unfortunately, part of a series of books about Jinian, the 'daughter' of the title. I say 'unfortunately' only because this was the first Sheri Tepper novel I have read and I feel there were a number of places where I was missing quite a lot by not understanding fully a number of allusions.

Despite this, it was a novel I enjoyed reading, complex & inventive, with characters I rapidly became involved with. The touches of humour throughout were the icing on the cake.

I'm going to buy more from this author and I recommend her writing to you - but I'd suggest that you start at the beginning of the series. [Chris Donaldson]

#### INTERZONE: THE SECOND ANTHOLOGY

Ed. John Clute, David Pringle & Simon Dunsley  
New English Library ; £2.95

A superb selection from arguably the most innovative sf magazine current, with Ballard's emotive "The Man Who Walked on the Moon" and Disch's witty "Canned Goods" among the best of an above-average array. Not every story will appeal, of course -- I find McAuley's "King of the Hill" somewhat lacklustre, for instance -- but as a showcase of sf's cutting edge, it's indispensable. [James Penfield]

*MEN WENT TO CATTRAETH* by John James  
Santam ; £2.99

This is an excellent novel, which I highly recommend to anyone with an interest in the Dark Ages. I find it difficult to believe that it was written by the author of *VOTAN* and *NOT FOR ALL THE GOLD IN IRELAND*. At last James seems to be exhibiting the feel for the period which I found so lacking in the previous two 'classics' reprinted by Bantam. And to a large extent, I put this down to the disappearance of Photinus the Greek, bore and 'hero' of James' two previous novels. [Reviewed CWA2, CWA5]

In *MEN WENT TO CATTRAETH*, the main protagonist is the poet Aneirin, and the novel itself is an imaginative dramatisation of the surviving 97 elegies bearing his name. These elegies are all history has to tell us about the Battle of Cattraeth ; we don't know where or when it was fought, nor even whom it was fought against. James, however, builds on the few 'facts' which appear in the poetry attributed to his character and from them produces a magnificent novel of bravery, cowardice and foolishness, set in the period before the 'golden age' of Camelot, shortly after the Romans left Britain. This is how it *must* have been. [Martin Tudor]

*OLYMPIAD* by Nigel Frith  
Unwin ; £3.95

"Of untamable Atalanta this tale tells, and of Meleager, the rash-brained hunter, that together in the rivermeads of Alpheus came to compete at the sacred Games of Olympia, at the running and the leaping in the days when the world was young, the year of the first world-uniting Olympics."

If, after this first sentence, you want to read more, then you may enjoy this book. I did neither. Homer did this sort of thing very much better. [Nick Mills]

*THE FACE* by Jack Vance  
Grafton ; £2.95

At least the cover tells us openly that this is the 4th of the "Demon Princes" novels, and the publishers admit previous UK paperback publication, but this is the continuation of a reprint series which epitomises Vance's approach to skulduggery on an interstellar scale.

Well plotted, convincingly told, this tale hangs heavily on the previous three volumes ; try not to read them out of order. [Ken Lake]



*THE GENESIS QUEST and SECOND GENESIS*  
by Donald Moffitt  
Sphere ; £3.50

*LOCUS* described these as "Science Fiction in the grand tradition", and I can only agree. Between them, these two books cover nearly every major sf idea - aliens, genetics, enormously complex messages being sent through space, immortality, FTL travel, ancient civilizations, and so on.

This may make it sound as if the novels are full of clichés, but this is not so. Technical idea is piled upon technical idea, each plausible and detailed, as we are taken at breakneck speed through thousands of years. And each concept is not just there to interest the reader; each one significantly advances the plot.

So far, so good. But this is classic sf, and therefore suffers from the major failure of same: the characterisation varies between poor and extremely poor. It's not only difficult at times to tell one character from another, but I could see little character development.

However, I did enjoy these two books, although I would not rate Moffitt as a good writer and I would not *rush* to buy anything else by him. Despite that, I did find myself urgently turning the pages, reluctant to put the books down even at 2.15 in the morning. You *could* well feel the same.

[Chris Donaldson]

*SPOCK MUST DIE !* by James Blish  
Corgi ; £1.50

I must admit to a nostalgic smile upon seeing this 1970 novel reissued; I still have my Bantam first edition somewhere, wrenched from a corner-shop bookstand when the initial UK screening of *STAR TREK* was still fresh in the memory.

Today, it seems perfectly reasonable that an sf author of Blish's stature should devote a sizeable portion of his career to novelising a popular television series; 20 years back, however, his decision was less obvious. Thank god he did, though -- his adaptations of the original shows set the plimsoll line for such work and became a vital ingredient in *TREK*'s longevity.

*SPOCK MUST DIE !* was Blish's only departure from existing continuity, albeit firmly grounded in series lore (it's peppered with footnotes referring to first season episodes). The plotline may be unchallenging and the characterisation a mite suspect (Scotty's "Och aye the noo" dialogue is particularly jarring), but the book still retains a certain period charm.

[James Penfield]

*GHOST* by Piers Anthony  
Grafton ; £2.95

At the end of this novel is an 'Author's Note' where, among other things, Anthony details the difficulties he had in getting the novel published. Considering how bad it is, I'm not surprised he had trouble.

If you like his work, you'll find the kernel of this novel in *ANTHONOLOGY*, in the short story of the same name. The book is some 50,000 words longer, so let's consider what has been added.

Firstly he's added a lot more appalling writing. For example, how could any author, whilst writing what he claims is a serious sf (not fantasy) novel, write sentences like: "Observing the quivering motions of their pert mammaries as their pleased embarrassment manifested, he wondered whether he had just discovered the true origin of the term 'titt-er'." And even better (or worse): "Nude girls danced across (the road), their firm young buttocks twinkling."

Secondly, a lot of the additional material contains far too much explanation and labouring of the obvious.

If you like fairly thin stories stretched out well beyond their limit, together with an obsession with sex to rival Heinlein at his worst, together with an over-explanation of everything, then this book's for you.

But if you like well-written inventive novels, avoid it like the plague.

[Chris Donaldson]

*THE FOLK OF THE AIR* by Peter S. Beagle  
Headline ; 2.99

Somewhere in the mess of detail, embroidery and sheer improbability is a workable plot - girl summons demon, demon uses girl to take revenge on another, girl loses control of demon - but it's lost in the book's welter of loose ends and Beaglisms.

Yet there are passages of real power and beauty, even if they lie sandwiched between chunks of coy banality.

[Abridged from review in *CW#1*]

[Maureen Porter]

*AIKI* by John Gilbert  
Grafton ; £2.95

*AIKI* is the story of a martial arts drama in the twenty first century, and Gilbert's first novel. The SF content is little more than a backdrop; a dystopian world with Bread and Circus entertainment provided by the government to keep the masses in line (yawn). The good guys, represented by Capitan, must stop the evil Mantis who, through perversion of martial arts technique, controls the Arena. The drama is centralised around the battle for the mind and heart of an impressionable young Hispanic, Bimbi. *AIKI* is beach reader material, competently written but otherwise unchallenging.

[Tony Chester]

*DAGGERSPELL* by Katherine Kerr  
Grafton ; £3.95

A detailed historical fantasy adding convincingly portrayed mysticism with Celtic society. Yes, it's the first of a series but there is only one loose end dangling at the end of this novel. The main theme concerns reincarnation: Nevyn is cursed to live eternally, or until he sets right the mistake he made 400 years earlier which caused the death of Brangwen, his betrothed.

Stories within the main story - that of Gillyan, daughter of a mercenary soldier, riding the roads with him - tell of Nevyn's attempts to set right the wrongs done to people close to Brangwen and himself, in their later incarnations.

Highly recommended.

[Helena Bowles]



*THIS IS THE WAY THE WORLD ENDS* by James Morrow  
Legend ; £4.99  
*DOC CHAOS: THE CHERNOBYL EFFECT* by Dave Thorpe  
Hooligan Press ; £2.50

Harlan Ellison recently pilloried science fiction as an infantile genre barely able to grasp the rudiments of literary burlesque, let alone the finer points of satire. Martin Amis, meantime, was accusing the mainstream establishment of failing to confront the real-life dilemmas facing mankind in the nuclear age.

As if in answer to these twin pleas, Morrow and Thorpe provide timely evidence that - in the right hands - sf still has the scope to engage the intellect as well as entertain, tackling head-on topics which its more constrained cousins are unable to fully focus on. Each approach is unique, each stunningly effective.

For George Paxton, the central protagonist of Morrow's novel, nuclear war can be considered only in microcosm, as a specific threat against his wife and daughter. As the world teeters on the precipice, Paxton is offered a chance to save his child from the holocaust -- but first he must affirm his personal culpability for the inevitable annihilation of his species, in a document which will later form the prosecution evidence at a nuclear Nuremberg.

The setting for this final trial is necessarily fantastical, as Paxton stands accused of war crimes by members of 'the Unadmitted', the manifested souls of those whose potential existence has been eradicated by the atomic rain. In a court case part Lewis Carroll, part *DR STRANGELOVE*, Paxton is forced to realise that failure to stand against the arms race makes him as guilty as those who target the missiles.

Thorpe's book is more overtly satirical, a manic first-person travelogue dragging the reader into the mind of Doc Chaos, conscience-free science made flesh. It's at once a darkly humorous farce of intellectual amorality and a deeply disturbing portrait of mankind's capacity for inhumanity.  
[Steve Green]

*AEGYPT* by John Crowley  
Gollancz ; £3.95

This first volume of four is not a book to be skipped through quickly, a casual read for a long train trip. Take the time and it will absorb you into its vivid reality; when you reluctantly emerge from this multiform novel, you will find it has been a thoroughly rewarding and enjoyable experience. Certainly one that leaves you impatient for the sequel. [Abridged from review in CWN] [Paul Kincaid]

*AT WINTER'S END* by Robert Silverberg  
Gollancz ; £11.95

Another epic novel from Robert Silverberg, and I suspect the first of a series. After the Earth has apparently been bombarded by meteors, winter settles in and most of the intelligent races die out. The book starts as Winter's about to end and the exotically named 'humans' are about to emerge from their underground retreat to find the legendary city of Vengiboneeza. They seem to complete this with some ease,

although we are assured that the journey is a harsh one and spend the rest of the book wandering about the ruins before setting out in search of their greater destiny.

Although the story apparently takes place over a number of years, I had no real sense of passing time, years flowing together. The tragedy is that there are some genuinely interesting characters -- Hresh, who becomes tribe magus whilst a child, and Hannuel, with delusions of becoming a king and supplanting the matriarchy -- but Silverberg eschews exploring them fully to indulge in that old standby, the sense of wonder.

Unfortunately, there is little new in the book and much that is predictable. The evolution of the new society is treated blandly and only occasionally do we get any real emotion in scenes which would have been poignant in earlier Silverberg. Whereas *LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE* at least had the benefit of being a colourful romp, this novel seems too drawn out for its own good.  
[Mike Gould]

*WHORES OF BABYLON* by Ian Watson  
Paladin ; £3.95

Upon the brink of nuclear catastrophe, western civilisation takes time out to build Babylon in the Arizona desert. Implausible? Well, that's the premise of this book: an exact replica of Babylon at its prime, including slavery and human sacrifice.

The plot is highly contrived, to allow Watson to hint darkly at computer simulations, human experiments, apocalypse, time travel. Unfortunately, 'hint' is all he does do, letting the ineffectual hero Alex bumble around Babylon, allowing his object of desire (Deborah) to fade out and be revealed as the plot device she is, to be replaced by Alex's lover, the irritating precocious teenager Thessany.

My advice: avoid this novel at all possible.

[Helena Bowles]

*FIVE-TWELTHS OF HEAVEN* by Melissa Scott  
VGSF ; £3.50

In my opinion, the mark of a good skiffy author is to come up with a new way of getting from star A to star B, and this book has one of the best I've seen.

In Melissa Scott's universe, Alchemy has been perfected and instead of scientists there are Magi who conjure with the elements. Spaceships ride on keels containing celestial matter (Philosophers' Tincture), made to resonate by a timing device; when in harmony with the music of the spheres, the ships can enter hyperspace (Purgatory). Not as simple as this, of course, the concept's well thought-out and nicely described.

Silence Leigh is the pilot of such a ship, and the book concerns her struggle for survival after finding herself stranded on a planet when her grandfather (who owns the ship) dies owing money. She is bailed out by the captain of another vessel, who takes her on as pilot. But there is apiece to pay...

On the whole, I enjoyed this book -- it is well written and contains much to hold the reader's interest. Its author won the Campbell Award for best new writer.  
[Tony Berry]

*PIONEERS* by Philip Mann  
Gollancz ; £11.95

A favourite motif of science fiction novels is that of the ambitious, enthusiastic colonists sent out to make a new life somewhere in the universe, always excusing the fact that in reality, it doesn't appear to be littered with suitably habitable planets. One is usually given a stirring saga of difficulties overcome, a good life eventually established. It's all tremendously uplifting -- and extremely formulaic.

But suppose you send out your Pioneers to a variety of alien environments, and allow them to adapt, genetically, to those environments. And then suppose that Earth suffers a catastrophe which affects humans, rendering them unable to adapt to new conditions, unable to breed. Then what? The answer is to send genetically-engineered artificial humans out to retrieve these Pioneers, and see if their discoveries can assist in any way.

This novel centres around Ariadne and Angelo, one such team, and their experiences as they carry out these missions, and as they monitor the slow decline of their home planet over thousands of years. It's a moving story, told with quiet understatement by Angelo, recording the appalling hardships experienced by both Pioneers and the Rescue Teams, raising questions not generally confronted in novels of this type. The difficulties caused by faster-than-light travel are handled with consideration of much wider issues than the simple lack of ageing, and much of what Mann has to say about genetic engineering is highly relevant to a generation which has witnessed goat/sheep crosses, test-tube babies and the transplant of brain cells.

And on top of all that, the writing is superb. Mann resists the temptation to indulge in lush descriptions of exotic planets, remarkable alien mutations. Instead, he resorts to a more introspective, reflective tone, distancing the action slightly, but in a fashion which brings it more clearly into focus.

I cannot recommend this novel too highly. In an era of formulaic fiction, riddled with hackneyed clichés, it is refreshing to read a story so well-plotted, so well written.

[Maureen Porter]

Books reviewed next issue will include Harry Harrison's *THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT GETS DRAFTED* (Bantam), Lynn Abbey's *UNICORN AND DRAGON* (Headline), Arthur Clarke & Gentry Lee's *CRADLE* (Gollancz), James Hogan's *ENDGAME ENIGMA* (Century), Keith Roberts' *KITELAND* (Penguin), James Herbert's *HAUNTED* (Hodder & Stoughton), Michael Weaver's *MERCEDES NIGHTS* (New English Library) and *BEST NEW SF 2* (Robinson).

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## COVER NOTES

*METROPHAGE* by Richard Kadrey

Gollancz ; £11.95

Criminals cripple future Los Angeles with bio-weapon

*THE MASK OF CTHULHU* and *THE TRAIL OF CTHULHU*

by August Derleth

Grafton ; £2.50, £2.95

Lovecraft's mythos continues in this collection and novel.

*EYE* by Frank Herbert

New English Library ; £3.95

Short fiction and essays, decorated by Jim Burns.

*SWORD AND SORCESS 2*

Headline ; £2.99

Second selection of feminist fantasy tales ; contributors to this volume include Rachel Pollack and C J Cherryh

*GREAT SKY RIVER* by Gregory Benford

Gollancz ; £3.50

Bizarre alien archivist features in new Far Future trilogy.

*INFERNAL DEVICES* by K W Jeter

Grafton ; £2.95

*DR ADDER* author sets surreal mystery in Victorian London.

*WHERE TIME WINDS BLOW* by Robert Holdstock

Gollancz ; £2.95

Time-shards drift across alien world in reissued 1991 novel.

*THE MAN WHO PULLED DOWN THE SKY* by John Barnes

New English Library ; £2.99

Space colonies oppress Earth ; rebels are aided by breakaway colonies orbiting Jupiter and Saturn.

*FOUR HUNDRED BILLION STARS* by Paul J McAuley

Gollancz ; £11.95

Primitive beasts offer clues to the identity of a mysterious alien race at war with Earth in McAuley's debut as novelist.

*THE FACE* by Jack Vance

Grafton ; £2.95

Penultimate instalment in the "Demon Princes" sequence.

*FLOATING WORLDS* by Cecelia Holland

Gollancz ; £3.95

Interplanetary summit forms backdrop for political drama.

*THE SHADOW HUNTER* by Pat Murphy

Headline ; £2.99

Magical time-traveller stars in new book from Nebula winner.

*WIZARDRY AND WILD ROMANCE* by Michael Moorcock

Gollancz ; £2.95

Critical study of the fantasy genre, displaying little love for Howard, Tolkien or the current deluge of trilogies.



*THE WITCHES OF KARRES* by James Schmitz

Gollancz ; £3.50

Reissue of tongue-in-cheek 1966 novel partly 'fixed-up' from 1949 short ; Josh Kirby cover comes as standard these days.

*HIGHWAY HOLOCAUST* by Joe Dever

Seaver ; £3.50

First gamebook in juvenile "Freeway Warrior" series

*THE CALL OF THE SWORD* by Roger Taylor

Headline ; £2.99

First volume in author's "Chronicles of Hawkland".

*THE LOTTERY* by Shirley Jackson

Robinson ; £3.50

Short fiction from acclaimed dark fantasy author.

*THE RETURN OF THE SHADOW* by J R R Tolkien

Unwin ; £17.95

Sixth volume in the history of Middle-Earth edited by Christopher Tolkien ; strictly for the very devoted fans.

*HOMUNCULUS* by James P Blaylock

Grafton ; £3.50

Alternate Victorian London provides the setting for the 1987 Philip K Dick Award winner.

*PIONEERS* by Phillip Mann

Gollancz ; £11.95

Rescue teams from decaying Earth seek long-lost explorers.

*TROUBADOR* by Richard Burns

Unwin ; £3.95

Sequel to *KHALINDAINE*, reviewed in issue four.

*LINCOLN'S DREAMS* by Connie Willis

Grafton ; £2.99

Woman dreams civil war flashbacks, mystifies historian.

*TO THE HAUNTED MOUNTAINS* by Ru Emerson

Headline ; £2.99

Magical quest opens "First Tale of Nedao".

*RUMOURS OF SPRING* by Richard Grant

Bantam ; £3.50

Earth's last forest suddenly explodes into life.

*THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND* by William Hope Hodgson

Robinson ; £3.50

Welcome reprint for 19th century horror classic.

*BEING A GREEN MOTHER* by Piers Anthony

Grafton ; £3.50

Fifth volume in "Incarnations of Immortality" sequence.

*IN ALIEN FLESH* by Gregory Benford

Gollancz ; £11.95

Benford's 1st collection, includes excellent "Doing Lennon".

*NEMESIS* by Louise Cooper

Unwin ; £3.50

Opening volume in "Indigo" sequence continued in *INFERNO*.

*TOOL OF THE TRADE* by Joe Haldeman

Orbit ; £3.50

Superpowers track psychic secret agent

*THE CRYSTAL SHARD* by R A Salvatore

Penguin ; £3.99

Second volume in latest TSR spin-off trilogy.

*RADIO PLAYS* by D G Compton

Kerosina ; £4.50

Two works selected from author's 1960s output for the BBC.

*THE SMOKE RING* by Larry Niven

Orbit ; £3.99

*INTEGRAL TREES* sequel sees starship computer back on line.

*SPELLS* ed. Asimov / Greenberg / Waugh

Robinson ; £3.50

Magical tales from King, Leiber, Bradbury, Vance, etc.

*AT ANY PRICE* by David Drake

Arrow ; £2.99

Latest instalment in "Hannan's Slammers" adventures

*THE ROAD AND THE HILLS* by (Alison) Spedding

Unwin ; £3.95

Wordy opener to "Walk in the Dark" fantasy sequence.

*BLOODSEED* by Lyndan Darby

Unwin ; £3.50

Second volume in "Eye of Time" fantasy trilogy.

*TREE AND LEAF* by J R R Tolkien

Unwin ; £7.95

Essay on fairy stories, illustrated with one of his own.

*THE DRAGON IN THE SWORD* by Michael Moorcock

Grafton ; £2.95

Concluding chapter in the "Eternal Champion" sequence.

*THE SKY LORDS* by John Brosnan

Gollancz ; £11.95

Balloon-borne post-holocaust tyranny faces challenge.

*WARWORLD* by William C Dietz

New English Library ; £2.99

Over-the-top adventures of interstellar bounty hunter.

*SPELL OF THE WITCH WORLD* by Andre Norton

Gollancz ; £2.95

Seventh instalment of the acclaimed fantasy sequence.

*WISE-WOMAN* by R A Forde

New English Library ; £12.95

Refugee Britons encounter political intrigue in ancient Ys

*THE WARRIOR'S APPRENTICE* by Lois McMaster Bujold

Headline ; £2.99

Political intrigues await crippled starman on homeworld

Inclusion in this regular round-up does not, of course, preclude a full review in a future edition of *CRITICAL WAVE*.

# FILM FOCUS

by Steve Green

That *THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE* is ultimately a mind-numbingly banal experience comes as no surprise, considering the paucity of imagination evident in its small screen predecessor. What does come as something of a shock is just how nostalgic you get for the cartoon incarnation after the realisation of the movie's terminal flaws begin to seep through your initial optimism.

It doesn't take long. Soon as the titles swoop down in the familiar *SUPERMAN* formation (replete with a score which must have lost the studio's lawyers a few hours' sleep, considering how much it rips off Williams' original) and we're thrown into the midst of the ongoing conflict between He-Man (Dolph Lundgren remaining remarkably faithful to his character's bi-dimensionality) and Skeletor (Frank Langella in the least convincing facial make-up since *SWAMP THING*), there's no escaping the knowledge that director Gary Goddard and his crew have hammered yet another nail into Golan-Globus's financial coffin. Conatose acting, laughably unconvincing sfx, a mindbogglingly trite script and a nerve-jarring conclusion so sweet it could prove fatal for any diabetics in the audience; yep, a turkey of the first rank.

Lundgren's chief rival in the muscle-bound hero stakes, Arnold Schwarzenegger, takes centre stage in the latest attempt to transfer Stephen King's phenomenal success in print into cinema megabucks. Some have been successful (*CREEPSHOW* was fun, *CARRIE* mixed horror and religious metaphor to some effect whilst *THE DEAD ZONE* remains David Cronenberg's most controlled movie), others less so (*FIRESTARTER*, *CREEPSHOW 2* and the odious *CHILDREN OF THE CORN*). Ironically, arguably the best of them is *STAND BY ME*, which contained virtually no sfx but showcases all the small-town minutiae which King's fans find so engaging.

His publishers' concern that this blockbusting production line could outstrip its demand, however, conspired with the author's own nagging doubts over his juggernaut commerciality to spawn, in 1977, a separate career under the nom de plume 'Richard Bachman'. [The life - and death - of Bachman is charted by Stephen Brown in his essay for *KINGDOM OF FEAR* (ed. Underwood & Miller) and by Stephen King himself in his introduction to *THE BACHMAN BOOKS*...]

But his byline stills pulls in the punters, which makes a namecheck for Bachman in the opening titles of *THE RUNNING MAN* both odd (by Hollywood super-hype standards) and almost certainly the result of a clause in the contract governing the filming of a yarn Brown termed 'the least of the Bachman books'. And surprise, surprise, it's another failed bid to xerox written King onto celluloid; rather, it *improves* on the original, subverting King's 'gross out' methodology with OTT humour and providing its central protagonist with a far

more convincing motivation for joining the bloodfest than is supplied in the book. Ben Richards, poverty-stricken family man, becomes a framed ex-cop on the run from a totalitarian US government (imagine Nixon stayed in office an extra dozen terms and you'll get the picture); the gameshow central to the action mutates also, offering 'criminals' their freedom rather than desperate citizens a crack at the Big Bucks.

Annie plays his role to the hilt, whilst director Paul Michael Glaser (yes, that Paul Michael Glaser) hits just the right note mixing the pyrotechnics and what passes for characterisation on such occasions. Okay, so it's superficial, but in its own sub-genre it's eminently successful.

Brian Gilbert's remake of the 1940s fantasy *VICE VERSA* has a curiously British feel to it despite an American cast, due in the main part to a script by Dick Clements and Ian La Frenais which channels the humour and sidesteps most of the slapstick excesses apparent in current American comedies.



Judge Reinhold & Fred Savage are neatly matched as yuppie Marshall Seymour and son Charlie, forced by misplaced magic to try life in each other's bodies. It's an old idea, but the two key performances give Gilbert the edge he needs to carry it off. Some may wax nostalgically about the original, but having caught it on tv a few months back, I have to confess that this is one example of a remake movie actually improving on its inspiration.

I've yet to catch up with *THE MONSTER SQUAD*, although initial reports paint it as an uncomfortable attempt to appeal to both adults and children at the same time, a juggling act which rarely comes off. Fred Dekker's earlier movie *THE NIGHT OF THE CREEPS* is currently out on video, however, and it's definitely worth checking out, especially if you prefer your horror laced with humour. The plot is straight out of *SHIVERS*, by way of *RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD*, but no one ever said fantastic cinema ever had to be original to work; this isn't, and it does.

Too much has been written already about the second live action film from former animator Tim Burton, currently transferring Batman to celluloid, but *BEETLEJUICE* is too bizarre a movie to ignore, and too enjoyable a comedy not to comment on in passing, even if most readers will have seen it by the time said comments see print.

## BEETLEJUICE

Burton himself describes the affair as *THE EXORCIST* as seen from the dead people's point of view, which is fair but fails completely to convey the sheer off-the-wall lunacy of the film, which is far closer to a Chuck Jones cartoon than the standard tongue-in-cheek gorefest paraded as comedy. In centre-stage, of course, is Michael Keaton's manic interpretation of the title role, but his is just one of the excellent performances on show here. Whether Keaton will prove as suited to the role of Bruce Wayne remains to be seen.



# THE COMICS COLUMN

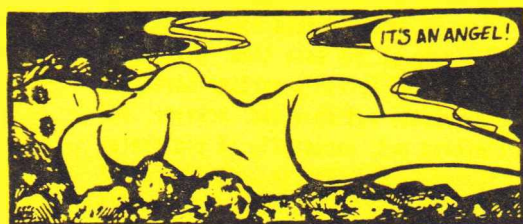
by Steve Green

One of the advantages the annual Birmingham comics show has over its London rival is its more relaxed atmosphere, an element enhanced this year by the cosy confines of the Midlands Arts Centre's bar. True, there was a light programme (equally, there were a few dealers' tables). But the focus of the weekend's activities was that lounge, where artists and writers could mingle informally rather than be herded about as is usually the case at the Institute of Education bashes.

The event also presented an opportunity for comic publishers to parade their latest projects, both pro & semi-pro. Pleasingly, much of the material hailed from the Midlands -- something we'll be considering at greater length in a future issue -- and foremost amongst these was *EAT IN OR TAKE AWAY*, from Phil Winslade and Steve Pugh.

This highly professional collaboration by two extremely promising artists features two strips, "High Jinx" and "Wall Flower". The former, by Winslade, is a well-observed comedy of demonic mischief, whilst Pugh's contribution is a bizarre chiller enacted with disturbingly photographic clarity.

Unfortunately, it bears no price, but the pair can be reached at 3 Henshaw Place, Small Heath, Birmingham.



WALL FLOWER

Another Birmingham title is John Mulcreevy's glossy *SON OF BOIL*, the second collection of his comic strips (a third is due later this year), ranging from gung-ho politico *CLINT ESSENTIAL* through the self-serving private eye *BUSTER MOYNIHAN* to the lengthy soap opera *ESTATE*.

There's no doubting Mulcreevy's enthusiasm, but all the strips here share the same flaws: a deficiency in the basics of anatomy, a disregard for perspective and - arguably worst of all - a tendency to equate offensiveness with humour.

Still, this is only his second comic so far as I'm personally aware, and most artists improve with practice. Interested parties can obtain copies from 739 Kingstanding Rd Birmingham, B44 9RJ, for 85 pence plus postage.

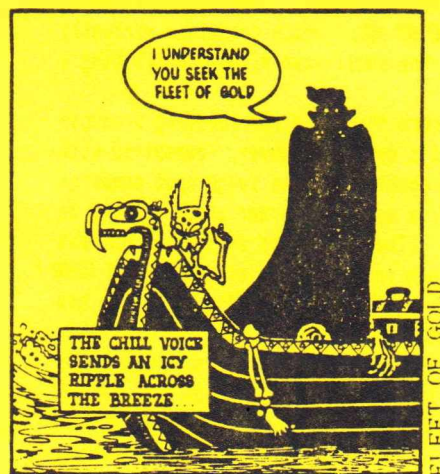


CLINT ESSENTIAL

One of the more interesting 'showcase' titles I've come across in several years, *SHOWCASE COMICS* marks the debut of Pan Graphics, a new combo from Sheffield led by Adrian Dungworth, who's pencilled a couple of the strips himself: *FLEET OF GOLD*, a wonderfully offbeat seafaring fantasy written by Si Spencer, and inked by Mary Green (whose calligraphy is a surprisingly vital ingredient), and *ACID TEST*, a collaboration with Green which adopts the 'superhero team' format but (unlike the recent *ALI*) unfortunately has nothing original to say on the subject.

Also included is Nick Abadzis's excellent social satire *CULTURE CRITTERS*, set in a media-manipulated near-future UK in the aftermath of both political and geographical upheaval ("London improved a lot when Birmingham fell on it," quips the manic megastar Adam Evening) and featuring some snappy artwork from Abadzis, and *FOR A FEW GALLONS MORE*, a team-up between Brian Talbot and Chris Welch dating back to 1973 and including a rare encounter between the former's time-hopping character Luther Arkwright and the latter's mercenary duo Ogoth & Ugly Boot. It also slips into the Arkwright continuity, for those suitably excited by the Valkyrie monthlies.

The foregoing, I would stress, are based upon a perusal of pre-publication photocopies, but I have no hesitation in recommending you sent £1.25 plus postage to Pan, at 14 Burnside Avenue, Meersbrook Park, Sheffield, S8 9FR.



FLEET OF GOLD

At this point, I would have liked to discuss the new comic *CRISIS* - pity Fleetway's inability to forward a copy means that gets pushed back to next issue...



# HEARSAY

[Not even the first national postal strike in 17 years could thwart CRITICAL WAVE's very own GERMAN MEASLES.

[So here she is, not so much a gossip columnist, more a socialite disease.]

"What's the male equivalent of a fag hag?" asked SHERRY COLDSMITH of PAM WELLS as they were walking up a Welsh hill. "A Dyke Tyke?" suggested WELLS. And thus arose the moniker for the twenty-two people in Ty Llyn on the TWP weekend, a weekend which saw repeated damage to a defenceless hire car at the hands of CAROLINE MULLAN & PAM WELLS; the take-over of the restaurant at the pub in Llangorse village, causing stunned local patrons to be turned away; LAURA WHEATLEY, PAM WELLS, LESLEY WARD, BRIAN DAVIES and the TAFF TWINS, all hatching plots to hold a jumble sale at Novacon 18 and knit condoms for TAFF; BRIDGET WILKINSON meanwhile revealed hidden talents as a rower extraordinaire, even coping with Klingons on her starboard bow...

While CHRISTINA LAKE and LILIAN EDWARDS were preparing to set off to the States for their TAFF trip, MARTIN TUDOR hosted a TAFF losers' party on 6 August for himself and DAVE WOOD to celebrate their failure to win fandom's oldest fan fund. The party was very laid back, due to a combination of DAVE WOOD's traditional jazz tapes and PAM WELLS' infamous hash cake. The consumption of three slices of the latter caused ALUN HARRIES and GREG PICKERSGILL to crash out before midnight, and STEVE GREEN to perform repeated impersonations of traffic lights - from the inside! Meanwhile, WOOD and TUDOR tried not to look too wistful while listening to "Have you been to New Orleans?"

The most popular pastime amongst fans in August seemed to be getting sacked. TONY BERRY was first, showing amazing fortitude and coolness in the face of adversity, [BOSS: "I think it's time we parted company." TONY: "Oh, yeah?"] A week later MARTIN TUDOR found himself in a similar position. Who next? I wonder.

A sizeable chunk of British fandom is now over in New Orleans for the Worldcon. Shortly before his departure from British soil, GREG PICKERSGILL discovered he had a strange fungoid disease which owners of medical dictionaries will probably inform me is not spelled 'aspergillus'. MR PICKERSGILL reportedly felt much better once he discovered that he was not suffering from pneumonia, as he'd previously been led to believe by his doctor.

There were several small conventions over the summer, two of which (Wincon and Rubicon) had teddy bears for chairmen. We think Get Stuffed should be told. My moles inform

me of skinny-dipping and an escaping guest of honour at this year's Unicon, Wincon. Sf author PATRICK TILLEY, apparently bored by the con on Friday night, left without telling anyone. Gophers searching for him the following day found a note pinned to the wall of his hotel room, tied to his boot-laces. Presumably, someone else made his guest of honour speech in his absence? I draw a veil on the skinny-dipping escapades -- there are some things fans were not meant to know! [This may explain the subsequent reluctance of the CRITICAL WAVE mole commissioned to produce a WINCON report to comment any further than that it was too awful to discuss in print... - STEVE & MARTIN].

The Oxford Unicon also saw the return of infamous hirsute, obese ex-BSFA London Meetings organiser JEFF SUTER to the sf convention circuit. His fannish creditors may be interested to know that MR SUTER enjoyed helping out with Wincon so much he plans to attend more cons in the future.

Still on the subject of less-than-enthralling conventions, DAVE HOLMES reports that the recent STAR TREK event Conietti saw him in bed by midnight every night, alone but for a cup of hot chocolate & a Jonathan Carroll novel. STORM CONSTANTINE afterwards demanded to know why no one had forewarned her of the 'fun' in store.

Congregate at Peterborough apparently featured a tea-tasting session (wot, no beer?) which was so successful it was repeated the following day, and a BLUE PETER dragonmaking competition. Ah, but did they really provide sticky backed plastic and washing-up liquid bottles?

This year's Albacon is likely to be the last at Glasgow's Central Hotel, at least until a change of personnel takes place. Formerly one of the most accomadating hotels in Britain, recent changes in management means that this is no longer the case. There are rumours of two Scots regional cons next summer - a literary one in Edinburgh and a media event in Glasgow. CRITICAL WAVE will no doubt keep you posted in future issues.

Staff changes have also affected the Chequers Hotel in Newbury, home of Rubicon. According to food connoisseur AVEDON CAROL, the fare is now merely good instead of 'perfect' as in previous years. MS CAROL was last seen trying to track down last year's chef at the Chequers for unstated purposes. The 1998 Rubicon committee decided it didn't need no steenkin' name badges, issuing all conmembers with 'committee positions' instead. Thus PAM WELLS somewhat predictably became 'Head Chocolate Taster', although she was apparently less than impressed when CHRIS O'SHEA was seen sporting a badge reading 'Head Chocolate'. OWEN WHITEOAK, dubbed the 'Generator Emiritus of Bad Puns', had passed on his badge to O'SHEA by Saturday morning; seems he couldn't in all conscience keep it after an night of listening to O'SHEA's "wit".

Closer to home, rumours of a CRITICAL WAVE editorial split came to a head at the September MISFiTs meeting when MARTIN TUDOR informed co-editor STEVE GREEN that either SG's 'Shaggy Dogmas' logo goes, or he does. "How would you like to peel three hundred pictures of his face off the drum every issue..." he bemoaned to his fellow MISFiTs, whilst ANN GREEN loudly sympathised with his problem...



# THE THIRD WAVE

Letters Edited by Martin Tudor

SIMON INGS,

10 Marlowe Court, Lymer Avenue,  
London, SE19 1LP.

Congrats on the last issue. The Clive Barker article was a bit disappointing, with its talk of sfx and neglect of Barker, and reviews need not use four letter words to convey dislike of a text (if I was Ian Watson, for example, I would probably have deposited a dead fish on your doormat for the invective displayed over *THE FIRE WORM* [CW#6]). Still, the production was excellent, and there was a great deal of interesting, informed writing.

[Although prone to overuse, the occasional expletive is perfectly valid method of underlining a specific statement: as for the Barker overview, *very few* people track down that particular cinematic genre for plotting or depth of characterisation, though said elements are always welcome when they evidence themselves. - STEVE GREEN.]

DAVID LANGFORD,

94 London Road, Reading,  
Berks., RG1 5AU.

One of the fun things about writing far too many SF reviews is that it gives you a basis for duffing up authors with criticism which is totally misguided (ie: doesn't agree with mine).

Paul Kincaid's review of Kellogg's & Rossow's *THE WAVE AND THE FLAME / REIGN OF FIRE* [pg 17, CW #6] is a case in point. Like him, I recognized that reasonably inoffensive prose and excitable descriptions of the weather is as far as the authors go towards literary excellence - no harm in this when a good rattling yarn is being told. Like him, I found the hard-science puzzle of the planetary climate quite fascinating through most of the story. Unlike him, I *did not* reach the end thinking "This is the sort of work which gives 'hard SF' a good name, a real intellectual challenge"; after the lengthy build-up, the final revelations struck me as feeble, and I suspect Paul has allowed himself to be overly impressed by the flaunted credentials of collaborator Rossow, Atmospheric Scientist.

In a hard sf book revolving around a puzzle, one expects the same fairness as one would from a classical detective story. The explanation of the impossible crime in the locked room just does not satisfy: if in Chapter 30 it turns out that all 19 independent witnesses were lying, or that the police search in Chapter 2 happened not to discover the secret passage through which the rogue elephant was introduced. We want ingenuity. Ideally, the hard-sf 'intellect-

ual challenge" should leave one smiting one's brow at the cunning with which known natural laws or forces (remember the tide in *NEUTRON STAR*, before it became a cliché?) have been manipulated to create the devilish planetary enigma.

What Kellogg and Rossow actually do -- after some tantalizing hints, in native creation myths, that a solution in terms of weird celestial mechanics may be forthcoming -- is to resort to magic. Well, you see, science was baffled by the weather because it was being manipulated by forces unknown to science! Forces which apparently are physically undetectable, yet can affect that very physical thing the weather! (Perhaps Rossow's branch of atmosphere science has gone beyond obscure principles like the law of action and reaction, and for that matter the highly relevant but carefully unmentioned inverse square law.) Super-science which can soak up the full energy of a ground-zero nuclear detonation with no more than a muted *phut...*

If *this* is *hard sf*, J.R.R. Tolkien was a professor of theoretical physics.

By the way, Steve's review [pg 15, CW #6] (like my own published one) misses a psychological hole in D.G. Compton's *SCUDDER'S GAME* which Larry Niven was at some pains to patch in his stories of related gadgetry. As shown by the lack of huge worldwide queues for vasectomies, contraception alone isn't attractive enough to cause the book's steep population drop: Compton therefore includes the added inducement that the implanted device makes sex just triffic. But, how many punters are likely, without any possibility of a prior demonstration of how triffic it will be, to say "Gosh, yes, cut me open and stick one of those neat black boxes into my embarrassing parts!" Even Niven paled at that prospect, and hastily extemporized a no-wires induction model of his pleasure-centre stimulator, for use by salesmen.

HARRY WARNER, JR.,

423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown,  
Maryland, 21740, USA.

Ann Green's review of *THE TOMMYKNOCKERS* [CW #4] interested me for its evidence that Stephen King has reverted in his first long science fiction novel to the old H.G. Wells rule, just one fantastic element in each story. Virtually all other science fiction that gets published today is either so overloaded with fantastic elements that the reader gives up trying to keep track of how many of them are used, or there are no fantastic elements at all because the author just wrote a mundane novel and claimed it was happening in the immediate future.

I'm tempted to view with alarm Paul Kincaid's emphasis on fanzine reviews in his fanzine review column. He does the reviews very well but it seems to me that fanzine fandom is sometimes on the verge of imitating the litcrit crowd, forgetting the subject matter in the course of nit-picking about one another's remarks about the subject matter. I confess that fanzine reviews are usually the most interesting thing in most fanzine issues for me because if I'm acquainted at all with the reviewer I can usually guess what his reaction will be to each fanzine reviewed. (I do find the fanzine review columns a melancholy guide to what proportion of fanzines I've stopped receiving because of my transgressions with loc response.)

HELENA BOWLES  
Musson House, General Hospital,  
Whittal Lane, Birmingham.

I must agree with everything Steve said about the Video Copyright Laws [CW #6]. The recent clampdown on copyright has been injurious to many underfunded institutions (eg. the Queen Elizabeth Hospital recently wiped 200 medical/teaching videos unofficially taped, after a nearby hospital was fined several thousand pounds for a similar undeclared collection). I realise he was writing about personal video collections, but as he said: that law is unenforceable. (A new job creation scheme for bored youngsters, perhaps? A squad of Video Wardens touring district: "'ere to watch yer videos, sir" ??)

I would like to correct Krsto Mazuranic's assumptions about "protoplasmic life" [letters, CW #6].

1) Species do *not* become extinct by having few offspring. Species become extinct through having their ecological niches destroyed or usurped by other species. Or (note well) by failing to adapt to current situations. This is known as EVOLUTION.

2) If a species' ecological needs (food, shelter, emotional support [in the higher species]) are not met, frequently the number of offspring are reduced in an attempt to compensate.

3) The human species is in no danger of this.

4) The human species is in danger of destroying our *own* ecological niche by over-breeding -- Man does not have *one* natural predator. *Not* breeding is therefore to be far more loyal to our species if survival of the species is the goal. Under Krsto's argument, therefore, Gays should be blessed!

Incidentally, the majority of higher apes, including gorillas, use anal intercourse between males to reinforce the hierarchical system - to keep peace in the *family* or tribe. Grooming between females may serve a similar sexual purpose. Therefore, it is obvious homosexuality is a very necessary and valuable part of a society. Also biologically natural; ie, it *is* a biological imperative for a certain percentage of society. Normal, natural and desirable.

Finally, what is "*permissive*" about a loving relationship between two members of the same sex?

HELEN WAKE,  
160 Beaumont Road,  
Birmingham, B30 1NY.

Firstly, did Krsto Mazuranic really believe all he wrote in his letter, or was it written purely to stir up controversy? I ask because I can't believe someone who writes so intelligently could believe so many things which are simply factually wrong.

One: Minorities are not "ipso facto" persecuted. The royal family isn't. Athophiles, I know for a fact, aren't. If you use 'minority' in the sense of "a persecuted group", well then you run across the problem that not all persecuted groups are minorities; women constitute slightly more than 50% of the population, no?

Two: Gayness is not contagious. I've talked with gays, danced with them, shared their food, slept with them. *Am I gay?* Ask my husband, or my daughter.

Three: Gorillas and rhinos are in danger *not* because they have few offspring -- they've been doing okay for the last few millenia -- but because we are destroying their habitats and often trapping them into extinction. In fact, they have exactly the right birthrate for the resources they have. We, on the other hand, are using resources at a rate which endangers ourselves and all of the animals we share the planet with. Does Krsto argue that only species prolific and adaptable enough to survive no matter what we throw at them deserve to survive? Then he condemns our grandchildren to a world with gnats but no butterflies, rats but no panthers or giraffes, starlings but no swans or great eagles...

Four: Language changes. We no longer speak as Chaucer spoke, and a bloody good thing, too. Try explaining how to fix a motorbike using only Chaucerian English. Natural languages (the kind we all use, except computers) allow change, ambiguity, uncertainty. It's the responsibility of anyone using the language to allow for that, as I failed to do above. How many of you wondered if 'slept with' meant slightly more than 'snored simultaneously with, and in the same bed as'? So much for words being "cyphers in a rigid system of coding".

Okay, enough semanticising. Krsto, my dear, you're a bigot. Why are you terrified of gays? There's room in the world for everyone - blacks, whites, gays, gorillas, rhinos, bigots... Why not rejoice in the world's infinite variety? And I can think of much better ways of categorising people than by sexual inclination. Whether I'm straight, gay or celibate is really of importance only to my husband, my daughter and myself; to everyone else, it's insignificant. Far more important questions are: Is she kind? Is she competent? Interesting? Intelligent? Wise? Witty? Is she tolerant?

And what of you, Krsto? What are you?

[We also heard from: JOY HIBBERT (who made many of the same points about Krsto's letter as Helena and Helen); SUE THOMASON (who, along with JOY and MARTIN STEWART, passed us details of the Gay Apa (see page 19 this edition); JIM and CAROLINE DARROCH; ANDREW ROSE; CHRIS DONALDSON; JUSTIN ACKROYD; MIKE GOULD; PERRY MIDDLEMISS; PETER COLLEY; ANDY SAWYER; CHUCH HARRIS; ARTHUR THOMSON; ROBERT DAY (who picked up on Steve's comments about the new video legislation and wrote LOTS about it; we'll run the letter next issue, space permitting); TONY CHESTER; ANDY PORTER (who said CW "is developing very nicely as a news source and a news magazine in general; keep up the good work. With the decline of ANSIBLE over the last few years, it's high time the UK had a good newszine, and CRITICAL WAVE is it, as far as I'm concerned."); ALAN SULLIVAN; DAVE WOOD.

[Finally, we also heard from BRUCE GILLESPIE, ART WIDNER and SHERYL BIRKHEAD who all want to know if CW is a 'semi-prozine' and / or why should they pay for it. As I've said before, we have to charge because even with our combined finances Steve and I cannot afford to indulge in other fanatic AND produce CW on a regular basis - so if you want it, you have to pay. But as the subscriptions and advertising combined still don't cover the production and mailing costs, I don't think we can be classed as a 'semi-prozine'. Okay?]

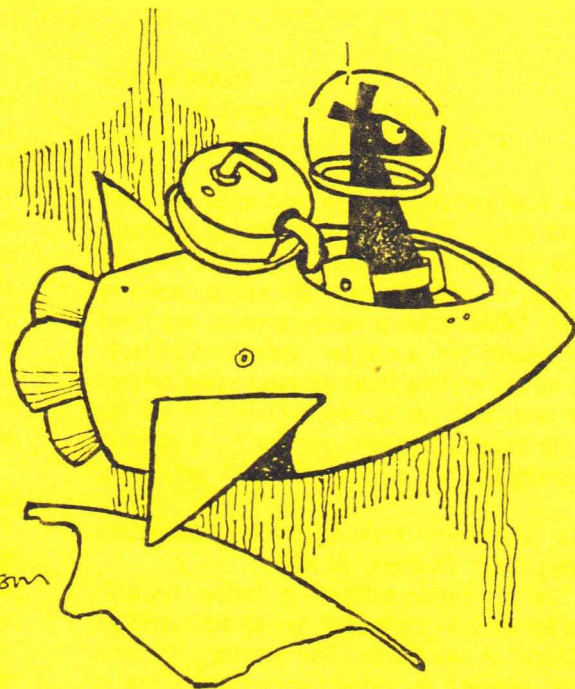


# IN BRIEF

As some of you may already be aware, the British postal authorities spent the opening two weeks of September sealing our post boxes and playing wordgames with the Union of Communication Workers. Meanwhile, several hundred copies of our British edition sat gathering dust, whilst the page proofs I had prepared for our valiant US (re)publisher Tom Hanlon sat next to them, since Mount Pleasant (the post office through which all foreign mail must pass) was the first to shut down come the strike call.

Even as I write this footnote (15 September), the local post boxes remain sealed and only the main city branches are accepting mail. The backlog will take at least two weeks to clear, and I have no idea how severely the airmail system is hit; you'll presumably know by looking at the date on the franking mark. Anyway, thanks for your patience -- and once again, our deepest gratitude to Tom for all his efforts.

*Steve Green, Editor*



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