

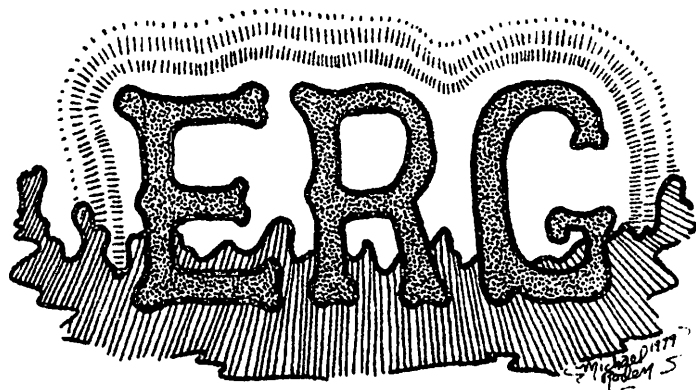


ERG

QUARTERLY

"68 October 1979

J. CAWTHORN '79



ERG QUARTERLY

No. 68 October 1979

Cover.. Jim Cawthorn Bacover..NASA
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MINI-ERGITORIAL

My thanks to Paul Skelton who kindly supplied the music 'The Dwarves Marching Song', which I needed for my latest film. I am now working on a film of the Isle of Man...and need motor bike noises for the racing bikes I filmed....anyone out there can help ???

HARRY ANDRUSCHAK, 6933 N. Rosemead Blvd., No. 31, San Gabriel, California 91775 would like to see more U.K. members in the Fantasy Amateur Press Association (FAPA). If you are interested, drop Harry a line. It's a good apa, and my regret is that I had to drop out because of the time I spend on ERG (and the etc.)

BADGES and T SHIRTS. If you want your own club or individual designs...see the note on Xword page . If interested, pass your requirements (no cash) to me, along with SAE and I'll pass them to the chap who will do them for you.

SUBSCRIPTIONS...a cross beside the rates indicate it is renewal time. Slips are usually enclosed as well...and I am now taking a leaf out of Dave Cobbledick's book....non responders will get a slip which must be returned if they want the next issue..this of course, does NOT apply to subscribers. ...and, if you would like a reply, then a stamp enclosed with your letter would be greatly appreciated.

ARTISTS..if you are interested in joining the FANTASY ARTISTS NETWORK, drop a line to Kathy Hannel, P.O. Box 5157, Sherman Oaks, California 91413, U.S.A. Among the perks is an excellent magazine which features various 'how to do it' articles among its many items.

WANTED by the editor.. issues 1 to 12 of Starlog..trade or buy (at non scalper's rates). Any copies of paperback editions of 'G-8 and His Battle Aces'..which I believe did appear in pb format. Also a copy of THE SCIENCE FICTION HANDBOOK..de Camp, Owlswick Press.

ERGITORIAL



ATTITUDES

In his column, CAPCOM, Dave Griffiths spotlights some of the huge cash outflows which don't get castigated by the anti-space lobby...by the same mail, I also received a letter which took the opposite point of view. It seemed a good idea to devote this Ergitorial to a response to the letter-writer, his name being withheld as I don't want to 'get' at him, but simply defend myself against his views.

QUOTE.1. "You're a bit of a romantic about science generally.. you always seem concerned with technical achievement and expertise and its attendant gimmickry rather than asking if this sort of progress is really necessary. Don't you ever become tempted to ask "why?" when the latest scientific wonders are unfolded ?

REPLY. I am a bit of a romantic about science, (is that bad ?)..and I am interested in technical achievement, expertise and its gimmickry..my interests lie that way.. along with drawing, painting, modelling, gardening, making 8mm animated sound films, reading SF and publishing ERG, to name a few. But, when it comes to the hoary old chestnut (remember Cabal and Passworthy in 'Things To Come'), I hold up my hands in horror at the short-sighted, head-in-the-sand attitude of..."is it necessary ?"

'Progress' is not necessary - nor is any other human activity. We are what we are, and we do what we do. Some of our thoughts, aims and actions will please some and annoy others, but there is no ultimate rule book which says, "This is right and necessary!"....'right' and 'necessity' are views of a particular society, and relevant only to the views of its members. If you live, breathe and are reared among cannibals..then it is right and necessary to eat the occasional missionary.

Eating, breathing, defecating, may be necessary to an individual..or even to a society - but if these actions are terminated the world will not miss a beat and the universe won't even notice. There are no 'necessary' activities except as defined by an individual or group..so let's not set up straw men for target practice. It isn't necessary for thousands of grown men to pay cash money to watch others kick or hit balls around..but a section of the community thinks it is, even to the extent of paying out £1,000,000 or so for slave labour rights to good kickers. Money wasted ?? views differ...but that money could buy a lot of kidney machines.

As to asking "why?" when the latest scientific wonders are unfolded; there is no need. I know why. Progress and discovery along with an enquiring mind are what brought mankind out of its mud huts. We're not designed to sit and vegetate, we want to know what is over the hill, up the mountain or across the river or sea. Mankind has always faced up to challenges great and small..'scientific wonders' are just one facet of that urge to know. Scientists have such goals...to find out, to know and to achieve...and often

those achievements benefit us all. The elimination of many diseases and the easement of others; improved living and working conditions, painless surgery etc. etc. The list is endless. Even seemingly pointless research may lead to something of benefit to humanity.

Quote 2. Don't you feel the need for all this expertise to be channelled into areas that will be of more benefit to humanity as a whole?

As I said, 'pointless research' can benefit. Fleming wondered why mold failed to form on a Petri dish, and Penicillin was born. Watt is said to have played with a steaming kettle and followed that to the steam engine. Twitching frog's legs helped electricity along..as did Ben Franklin's kite flying. Hellfire, if you want non-beneficial expertise to clobber, switch on your TV..between 10 am and 7pm..any Saturday, any channel. If all the time, money, effort..not to mention wasted paper and energy expended on 'sport' were diverted to cancer research the problem would likely be licked in short order. But that is just my attitude...others have other ideas.

The plain fact is that life is a patchwork of activities - medical research, scientific investigation, sport, music, art and so on (and where do the last two fit into a 'necessary' philosophy? All these benefit our lives and broaden our horizons...and in so doing, benefit humanity as a whole. Oh, things aren't all peaches and cream. We have inflation, the energy crisis, pollution, wars and rumours of wars..but these are caused by man's greed, intolerance and self-centred attitude...NOT by any new discovery or gimmick. Nobel set out to improve the lives of miners and quarrymen by inventing dynamite..but his patents and techniques were turned towards war.

No, I wonder if my correspondent seriously thinks he would be better off living a century or two ago? A shorter life span, longer working hours, often in intolerable conditions. Teeth rotting in his head, and virtually zero medicare for his diseased body. One's horizons limited by how far you could walk in a day and with evenings bone weary and lit by candle or oil-lamp. Give no progress any day, even if some of it gets perverted.

QUOTE 3. When I was in India during the war, I was appalled by the poverty and human misery: it was a mind-opening experience and changed many of my ideas on priorities. Most of the West's glorious scientific and technological expansion has been achieved at the expense of the "third World."

Codswallop..emotive codswallop. I, too spent four years in India..and was appalled by the poverty, disease and misery...and by the way the Indians strengthened and perpetuated then themselves. Let's stop emoting and list a few facts :-

1. India was 'civilised' before the British..if you accept such things as the Taj Mahal, palaces of various Maharajahs, and the works of art and literature...but how about the inhuman caste system which condemned the low-born to eternal drudgery and ostracism? The British tried to stop that but the Indians cling to it. Then there was the barbaric 'suttee' whereby a man's widow was burnt alive on his funeral pyre..again the British tried to stop that...but I gather it still survives. Og brutal exploiters!

2. Starvation and famine stem NOT from our exploitation..but from (a) total lack of control over breeding and (b) a refusal to accept and use the scientific discoveries bearing on agriculture which our science oriented society has offered them.

3. When food has been sent to India for famine relief and it seldom got

further than the local dock or railroad because of the Indian's inept and frequently corrupt distribution arrangements. Indeed, the little that did get through, did so thanks to roads, railways and communications networks set up by the British during their rule in India.

4. Britain gave India railways, roads, factories and industries, schools and medicare. We tried to eliminate the caste system and to stamp out suttee. We tried to educate then to uplift the whole country..not just the local big-wigs bailiwick... hardly had we left the country, peaceful and well running, to its own devices; than it sundered into parts and began to fight a bitter war between those parts. You can't blame the big, bad British for that.

5. If India (and Pakistan) can afford to spend vast sums on its own colour

TV network, on designing and building its own supersonic fighters, on developing and exploding its own atomic bomb and on building and launching its own satellite rockets (which Britain decided were too expensive for its own economy)..then in my book, it could have done a lot more to solve its other, more pressing problems. Thousands still sleep homeless on the streets of Bombay, children are still maimed to fit them for a life of begging, and if in some thirty years of home rule, India has done so much better than Britain ever did..why does it have so many citizens wishing to move to Britain ?

Quote.4. I should be happier if your review columns contained even a single item advancing this view for the consideration of your readers. As it is, all I see is entertainment & fantasy, or books on the wonders of technology, all fodder for the romantic supporters of scientific progress. Why not try Gunther Stant's Paradoxes of Progress and get the other point of view?"

Well, my reviews don't advance any views or opinions..other than my opinions of the books submitted for review. In any case, since I don't support the ideas you advocate, I am hardly likely to wish to advance them in ERG, am I? As for all you see being entertainment etc. Well, as I said, I review what comes in..if you care to send me a free copy of 'Paradoxes', then I'll be glad to review it...but remember, since our attitudes differ, you might find I do a review you dislike.

While on this subject of 'money wasted thus and so'...and the anti-progress lobby thumping its tub, I'd like to give a thumbs down to the anti-nuclear brigade, the anti-law and order brigade and a few others. It is not the gimmicks and inventions which mess things up for everyone..but the way we all mis-use them. This would be a darned good world and a darned good life if only people were more tolerant and considerate of each other instead of continually wanting to ban, destroy or abandon anything with which they disagree.

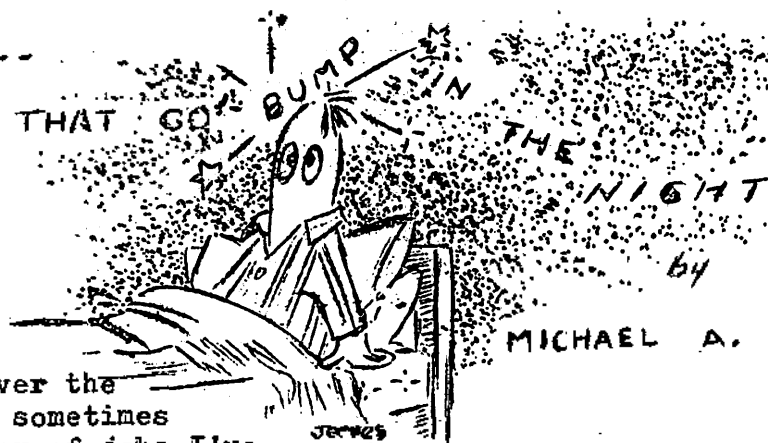
Which endeth the lesson for this issue...now I trust you will all write in and tell me just what YOU have to say on the matter..and on any other matter which takes your fancy. I can't guarantee to answer every one, (unless you are thoughtful enough to enclose SAE)..but I like to hear from you..and a letter shows you are interested..and deserve/merit/or would like to get, the next issue of ERG.

Respond or perish (and like that)

Terry Jeeves

AGAIN-----

---THOUGHTS THAT GO



MICHAEL A. BANKS

Looking back over the past 12 years, I'm sometimes amazed at the number of jobs I've held - no, I won't tell you how many, because you wouldn't believe me. I'm coming up on 5 years with my present employer, so I suppose I should say that I'm amazed at the number of jobs I held over the preceding 7 years. My occupations during that period included building systems maintenance, 'phone equipment installer, electrician, machine set-up man, salesman, dockworker, slave labourer for a construction outfit, et numerous al.

That I changed jobs so frequently says something significant, no doubt; but the only thing I can come up with is that I must have known subconsciously that after graduating from High School, I wanted to be a writer..because all I got out of those years job-hopping was a tremendous amount of largely unrelated occupational experience. That, and a lot of laughs. The time I took on a part-time job for example. I was working for the telephone company, making more money than I could spend at age 18. For reasons unknown, I decided I needed more money...so I answered an ad which went something like this :-

"Make \$150 per week, Part Time !

No Experience necessary, we will train you."

Right. Anyone with sense would have realised that, had the offer been for real, they wouldn't have had to run the ad. The lines would have stretched for miles. But, who has any sense at 18 ? Not me anyway ~~and I still don't~~. I trotted down to the address given, and was greeted by a shapely receptionist who ushered me into a conference room filled with others who, like myself, had a need for an extra \$150 a week.

After a short wait, a basketball-shaped fellow entered the room, climbed onto a small stage and said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, I personally make \$50,000 a year and drive a new Cadillac." He then launched into a long spiel about how we could fare equally well. 30 minutes later he paused long enough for someone to ask how this marvel might be.

Basketball grinned immensely and replied, "Simple. Let me introduce you to my associate." He left his podium, stuck his head out of the door and called someone. A few seconds later he towed in a rather swarthy-looking individual who, he informed us, was J. Huntington Jones. It was never mentioned, but I assumed he was in the same tax bracket as Basketball.

Back on the podium, Basketball informed us that..."Jones is the author of the greatest sales presentation ever written. He penned the text of what you are about to receive, while in prison. He is of course, totally reformed now!" Nervous laughter.

J.Huntington proceeded to pass out mimeographed sheets of his opus. I, along with everyone else, read in awed expectation. It was a magnificent

spiel regarding something (Unnamed) which the sales prospect should not, could not and would not be without in his or her own home. Something of great value, Stupendous, Fabulous . . .

Three people threw down their sheets in disgust and walked out halfway through the adjectives. Unfortunately, I stuck around and missed the cue. Reading finished, we were all given sheets to sign which indicated whether we wanted a straight commission of \$100 per sale, or a salary of \$150 a week. Of course, taking the salary required that we sell three of whatever they were, a week. Quick arithmetic said that, if I had to sell three per week anyway, I should take the commission and double my money.

Hell, I thought, I might even quit the 'phone company. Whatever I had to sell for earning \$300 a week had to be easier than wire-wrapping stacks of terminals. That finished, we looked on in awe as heavy leatherette notebooks were brought in and distributed. We opened them and -- Lo! there was our product. The most incredible, valuable, you-gotta-get-it encyclopedia, complete with yearbooks-free research service-air conditioning power-steering-and-convenient-monthly-payments!

Look, after the buildup and hype we'd been given, we were ready to sell used ice cubes for \$300 a week!

There followed an intense two-hour course on selling the encyclopedia to prospects, who, the Basketball assured us, would be dying to buy it. Then it was time to go home, with instructions to report at 7pm the next evening. We departed in a group, discussing what cars, clothes, trips etc. could be purchased with the \$300 a week. I was beginning to have doubts though -- I mean, encyclopedias? I always went to the library to use 'em. But I was hoping it was for real, all the same, so I returned at the same time the following evening.

J. Huntington was not in evidence. Neither was the shapely receptionist, but the Basketball dismissed their absences with a few pointed comments and a leering grin. He ushered us to the parking lot where another 'associate' was waiting with 2 old, worn out looking cars.

Someone asked where the Cadillac was...

"Oh," said Basketball, "these are, uh... these are company cars from the car lot I own." That sounded logical, so we climbed in the cars and went in search of prospects.

I rode with Basketball. We drove to a middle-class area. As we circled, he gave us a pep talk. "Look at these houses -- great prospects! See, swingsets, bicycles, toys! Know what that means?" We didn't. "Kids", he beamed.. "and kids mean parents who want the best for their children... and that means ENCYCLOPEDIAS! We allowed as how that sounded logical.

Eventually he let us out to canvass the area. Out of 5 of us, 1 caught a bus home, 2 others stopped off at a bowling alley, and that left myself and another fellow to pound on doors and make a fortune. SO what if the others give up, we said. That means more prospects for us!

After the third door slammed in my dejected face, I had a sudden influx of common sense and gave up. The other fellow may still be out there, making \$50,000 a year and driving a Cadillac, for all I know. But, for me, reading colour codes and wiring terminals for a lesser amount somehow seemed more realistic.

-----0000000000000000-----

..and some more

THOUGHTS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

..... On Relative Levels Of Ignorance.

Sometimes the aggressive ignorance (or should I say, belligerent stupidity?) of allegedly informed, intelligent persons amazes me; as I'm sure it does everybody. We learn to live with it, I suppose, but one recent brush I had with a monumental case of nundania stupidia, as I tag such cases, deserves a place in somebody's book of records.

Twice a year, I lecture (in all modesty) at the University of Cincinnati, on SF and the future. For my time, I'm paid more than I'm worth, and treated to a luncheon in the Faculty Club. Now, the gals who conduct the class to which I lecture, are nice, intelligent, reasonable people. We usually spend a leisurely hour over lunch, discussing SF, aliens and whatnot, along with several likewise intelligent and reasonable colleagues of theirs. My last time out, though, was different.

We had a table for six, and, as the other guests arrived, I was pleased to find that among them was a lady who assisted her husband in running the Minor Planet Observatory at the University. Good, I thought, maybe I can pick up some useful information. Here, obviously, is a person who is knowledgeable in things astronomical. I was wrong....

Over drinks, I brought up the topic of Neutron Stars; specifically, the incredible density of their mass.

"Oh," she said, "that's interesting. But such things couldn't really exist."

Hummm . . . "What about black holes?"

"Oh, no. We can't see them; besides, there are only planets in our Solar System."

Huh? I didn't say anything about the Solar System.

Oh, well.. "How about time dilation, curved space, Relativity?"

"Time travel is an impossible concept."

Time travel? But I meant --

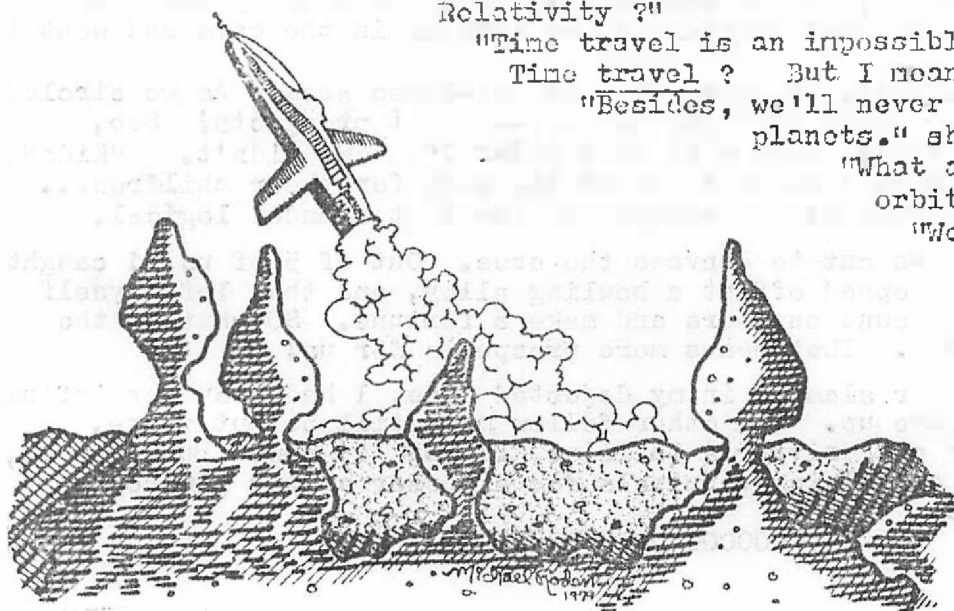
"Besides, we'll never really reach the other planets," she concluded.

"What about life on planets orbiting other stars?"

"Well," she said

authoritatively, "none of the planets in our Solar System could support life!"

"No, no, no," I said.. planets orbiting other stars!



"Oh, well, you see, stars are much too hot for life."

"NO, I said planets --- ARIERGCGGHHH !

I gave up and began discussing the home canning of fruits and vegetables.

So, here is a woman who works with an astronomer, has a degree in something or other, and holds a responsible position in a major university. But, she can't conceive of planets orbiting other stars. I would like to think that she was misunderstanding what I was saying..but I wonder if perhaps she is just as misinformed (by choice?) as most of the public with regard to the Universe. It would certainly go a long way towards explaining our sagging efforts at exploring and exploiting Space . . .

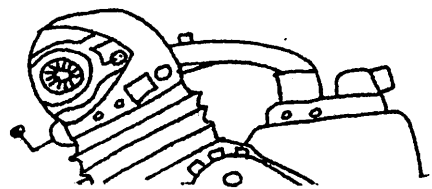
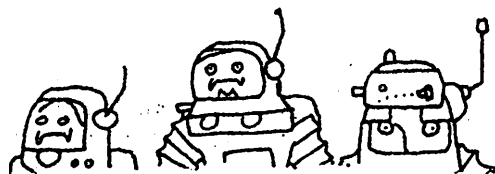
But, what the heck - we can't have everyone on the Space bandwagon. Can you imagine the realisation of the SF ideal in which getting to the Moon is as easy as going out for a spin around the block? The traffic problems generated by millions of space yachts flitting about would be incredible, to say the least. No one would stay in the recommended orbits, because it would be nearly impossible to enforce such a regulation. The result? Collisions, off course drifters, and so forth. That might not be so bad after all, since the idiots would eliminate themselves over a period of time, leaving the spacelanes clear for the sane and safe types.

All of that brings to mind the current traffic problem in this country's urban (and sometimes, rural) areas. The sheer volume of traffic on our freeway system is far more than it was designed to handle.. and that, coupled with the fact that the larger population has brought with it greater numbers of idiots, has made driving a hated necessity for many of us. Of course, my job requires that I drive 400 miles or more every week, so perhaps it is my own subjective viewpoint that has caused me to consider the suggestion of a warrior-type friend, that I mount rockets with explosive warheads on the front of my truck.

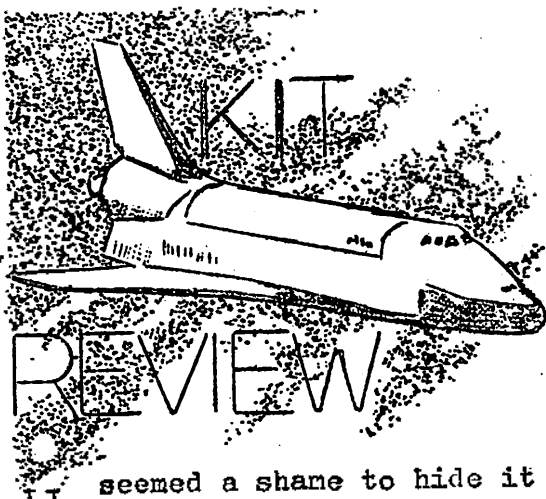
I wouldn't really do that, but I do advocate a stupidity test for potential drivers. I'm not sure of the mechanics of such a test, but it should definitely be designed to weed out those with a tendency to pull out in front of a vehicle ten feet away and approaching at 50mph. Tailgaters, too, would be culled by the test, as well as those who consider the highways to be a racetrack/playground/demolition Derby (and they are legion). A good number of these types are naturally eliminated by their own tactics, but not enough! I try to do my part to help in the effort, as when a car stops dead ahead of me, and begins backing towards me while I'm doing the 55mph speed limit, but, unfortunately, my reflexes get in the way and I somehow dart round the vehicle and its brainless driver. So, I can only hope that the Department of Motor Vehicles gets smart soon and devises a suitable test. Or perhaps easier, The DMV could arrange to paint, "CAUTION: Mindless Idiot At Wheel" on cars driven by anyone ticketed for reckless operation.

Or, maybe I could take the bus...

Michael A Banks.



Ed Dorn



REVELL

Kit H-200 'THE SPACE SHUTTLE ORBITER'

My first Shuttle kit was a small, clip-together model with plenty of detail and two opening cargo doors..but, it was small. I tried a larger kit which had even more detail..but alas, the cargo doors would not operate (until I devised my own system). This may seem a minor point, but after carefully building the cargo load, it

seemed a shame to hide it behind a permanently sealed doorway.

So, it was very pleasing to find that not only does the REVELL Shuttle Kit feature operating doors, but also includes the split set of internal doors to make a total of six moving panels.

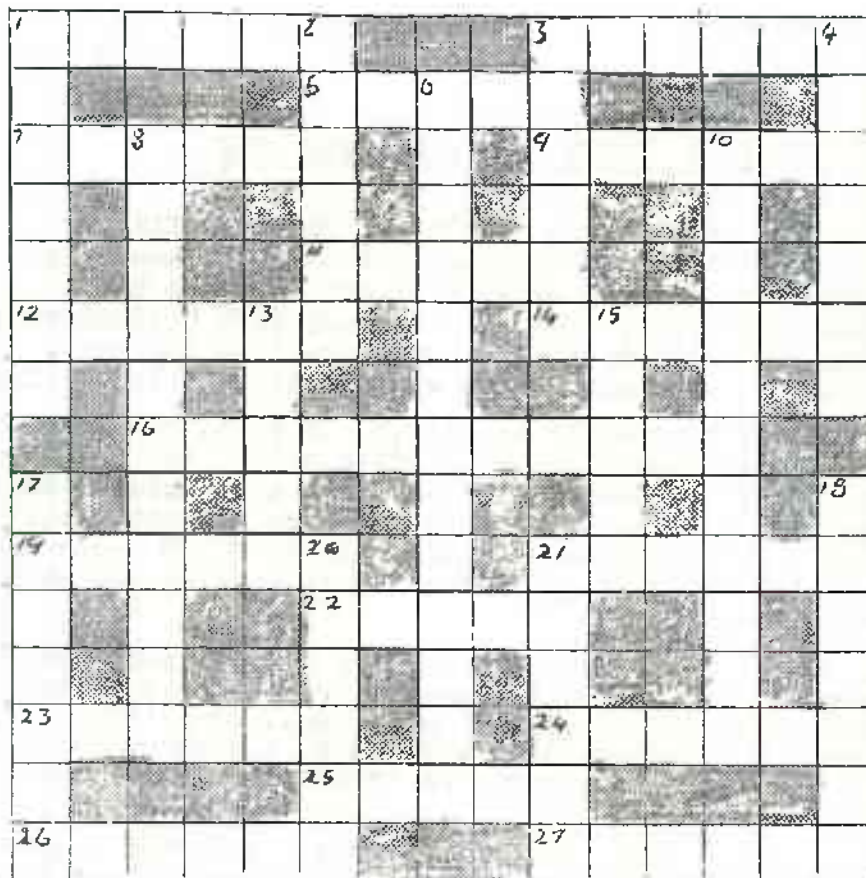
Whenever I start work on a new kit, the first thing I do is to inspect the mouldings for 'flash'..the surplus plastic left on the edges of each part by worn or defective moulds. Here again, the Revell kit gains full marks as virtually no flash needs removing. Next, I made a test fitting of the main body and wing parts..excellent again, but because of the rather thin body shell, when I got to the actual assembly I found it best to use liquid plastic brushed along the seams after first holding them together with elastic bands. Capillary action sucks the cement into the crack to leave an almost seamless joint. This is highly preferable to the blobs and sneers that tube cement can leave on the bodywork.

Painting is best carried out before assembly, and here I'd enter one minor criticism..the painting diagram is rather small and lacking in detail, but since any modeller worth his salt will have researched his subject well in advance and therefore know exactly how and where to apply colours..this isn't a serious drawback. In any case, the excellent box artwork leaves little to be desired on this score.

Being rather 'bull-at-a-gate' when I think a construction sequence is obvious; I have in the past found it easy to cement together fuselage sides and then have to separate them again to insert a part I had missed whilst following complicated building notes. No such frustration with the Revell Instruction leaflet. It must be a model for other manufacturer's to follow. It requires an absolute minimum of reading as the makers obviously believe in the old dictum that 'One picture is worth a thousand words'. Each step is clearly illustrated and you are taken in steady progression through the construction with even alternate choices such as 'wheels up/wheels down' presenting no problems whatsoever. Indeed, I'd rate this as one of the clearest instruction leaflets I have met..and I have met quite a few in some 40+ years of modelling.

From start to finish, a pleasing, easy-to-build kit which makes up into a highly satisfying model some 24 cms long and 17 cm in span. Just the right size for anyone to mount in their den. If you want something bigger, Revell also have a 1/72 scale Shuttle twice the size of this kit (H-4702). Then Kit H-94 to 1/144 scale is complete with booster rockets and fuel tank, and for the really keen modeller, Kit H-177 has both a 1/144 Shuttle and the Boeing 747 test launching vehicle which aided in the first air-tests.

Don't just read about a Shuttle..get cracking and make your own!

CROSSWORD

- Across
1. This moon is about 15,000 miles from its planet
 - 3 Ship or railway man? Writer of SA 1D
 - 5 Enumerate or tally
 - 7 Sky glow
 - 9 Planet with 5 moons
 - 11 Choose from a selection
 - 12 Those in the sky are stars according to one author
 - 14 Way from holy man around woody growth
 - 16 Writer of music for Things To Come (6,5)
 - 19 Joe-Jin was one, so was Bobo
 - 21 Vonnegut's piano
 - 22 A small (or large) step for a man..or woman
 - 23 Took it easy from the desert

- 24 Moon, goddess? 25 Beyond this horizon lies a singularity
 26 Arachnid Crusoe ?? or just an author 27 Non-inflammable aid to burling

Clues Down 1. 5 This was a bloodthirsty type 2. For musical fish ?

3. Tricks may hamper growth 4. It helped solve an archaeological riddle
 6. Original title of 'Dragon In The Sea' (5,8) 8. Saturn's overseers? (5,7)
 10. Immortals motto ? (5,3,3) 13. Moon of Saturn 15. Kafka's ordeal ?
 17. These squared, times resistance = Power 18. Dietary constituent
 20. Van Rijn's occupation 21. Magic word

BADGES & T SHIRTS I have a contact who can make either to custom order..
 either to your design, or he will design for you.

Badges.. 2" dia. two colours. Min. order, 25 for £6.50 inc. postage.

If you only want a one-off, it will cost 30p

T Shirts One off...£3.00 25 or more, £2.00 One colour. If interested,
 drop me a line and I will pass it along (SAE appreciated)

Be the first on your block to have an ERG badge and T Shirt !!

CROSSWORD

ANSWERS.....No cheating.
 Across: 1. Dolnos 3. Stoker 5. Count 7. Aurora 9. Uranus 11. Elect 12. Lights
 14. Street 16. Arthur Bliss 19. Mutant 21. Player 22. Riser 23. Rusted
 24. Solene 25. Event 26. Spider 27. Oxygen.
 Down: 1. Dracula 2. Scales 3. Stunts 4. Rosetta 6. Under Pressure
 8. Ringmaster 10. Never Say Die 13. Titan 15. Trial 17. Ampere 18. Protein
 20. Prester 21. Prester

CAPCOM



GETTING THERE IS HALF THE FUN

I read a story a few months ago about a military representative and a government adviser who were discussing the possibility of developing a heavy lift helicopter. "We need a heavy lift helicopter", says the military rep. "OK", replies the govt. adviser, "How much do you want it to be able to lift?"

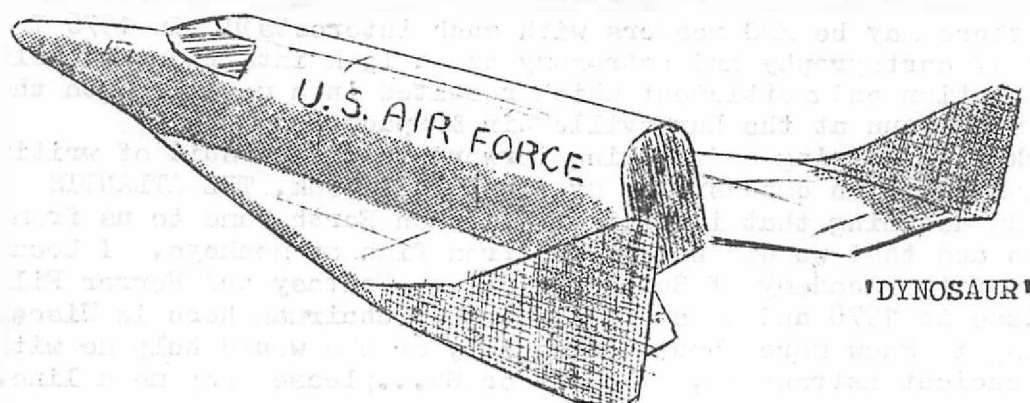
"Well, XX tons would be nice." At this, the adviser perks up.. "Ah, XX tons is quite a lot, but I tell you what; the Soviets already have a helicopter that can lift X tons. Why don't you make do with that. Just think how much we could save in R & D costs if we bought something practically as good as you want from them."

It was then left to the military rep. to point out that since the helicopter was to be used by the armed forces, the Soviets might prove strangely reluctant to sell in the first place.. or if they did, unwilling to supply spare parts and after sales service in the event of a crisis (i.e. war). "Oh yes," said the adviser.. he hadn't thought of that.

It's precisely this kind of tunnel vision that has been hitting the space programme for the past nine or so years. While the threat of Soviet superiority in space existed, most of the latter-day Cassandras were content to give NASA a blank check to get their job done. After Apollo 8 routed the Soviet threat, the honeymoon between NASA and the politicians was over, and after Apollo 11, the marriage was on the rocks.

"Think how many people are starving while those creeps go to the moon" was one of the more catchy phrases conjured up by the tunnel vision fraternity. "It ought to be stopped," they said, and after a fashion it was. The lunar landing programme was originally scheduled to go right up to Apollo 20. Following the misdirected howls of outrage at the expenditure, this was cut back to Apollo 17. Nobody involved in campaigning for curtailment of the Apollo programme seems to be anxious to mention the fact that the money saved as a result of their action did not come rolling into the laps of the starving millions. Nobody seems to be particularly anxious to publicise the fact that while NASA's 1977 budget was roughly 3.7 billion dollars, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare was happily puttering along on a mere 147 billion! Nobody mentions that the HEW has on occasion misdirected (read 'lost') more than NASA's entire budget...or that McDonald's hamburgers in 1978 showed profits at least equal to the NASA budget.. Or that profits from the sale of toys and pizza is about 1 1/2 times bigger... Or that the money from cosmetics sales is three times as big.. Or that U.S. teenagers alone could finance seven space programmes (taking into account their estimated 25-40 billion spent on marijuana, 20 billion on cocaine, and the 17 billion on tobacco each year). Nobody mentions any of it, least of all anti-technology, anti-space programme politicians like William, "Not one penny for this nutty fantasy" Proxmire. As a result, the space programme has suffered..and is still suffering

About a year and a half ago, I went to a B.I.S. meeting to hear Gerard O'Neil (of L-5 fame) speaking on the colonisation of space. Mentioning the Space Shuttle he recalled that, "The birth of the Shuttle damn' near killed its mother" (NASA) and even what we have now is a bare bones version, about 50% smaller than the original concept and only partially reusable. Eventually NASA will develop a fully reusable shuttle, its third generation spacecraft. When this happens, the cost will at the end of the day, include the money spent on the second generation/current Shuttle... which is only a temporary solution to the problem of making space easily accessible. When this happens, I imagine it will leave an extremely sour taste in the mouths of STS supporters, more so in the case of those enlightened souls who advocated the development of the X-20 'DynaSoar' ((See ERG 9. Aug.1961.. Ed.)) back in the early 1960s. Rest assured, one day we will have a fully reusable cost-effective space transportation system...It'll just have cost ten times as much as it would have in the first place.



'DYNOSAUR'

MINIMUM IMPULSES

In case there are any Philistines out there who don't know it, Apollo 11 is ten years old. These days, Neil Armstrong teaches aeronautical engineering at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio and has an involvement with the Gates Learjet Corporation (who in my opinion produce the best business jet in the world). Flying a Learjet Longhorn 28, Armstrong recently set five new world records. These were for altitude and sustained altitude (51000 ft) for business aircraft over and under 13,227 lbs, and time to climb through 15000 metres (12 min 26 secs). Mike Collins, Apollo 11's Command Module Pilot has recently stepped up in the world from his post as director of the National Air and Space Museum, to Undersecretary of the Smithsonian Institution. Buzz Aldrin, the Lunar Module Pilot, is still keeping a low profile and after what he went through following Apollo 11, my hat's off to him.

NASA's Viking Orbiter 2 is not only alive and well after almost three years in Martian orbit, but is still making new discoveries. The most recent revelation is that there are at least two wet areas on the surface of Mars located at Solis Lacus and Noachis Hollespontus. These areas measure approximately 640 Km and 1160Km in diameter respectively

One of NASA's research centres has developed a 40ft long, test version of a planned oblique or slow wing airplane under a NASA contract. The test aircraft is called the AD-1 and its 32 foot wing can be pivoted up to 60° to reduce drag and allow higher airspeeds..with twice the fuel economy of current SSTs..

....Dave Griffiths.



Dr. Wilfred E Beaver,
418 E. Main St.
Sparta,
Wisconsin 54656
U.S.A.

At last found time
to enclose \$2.00 for
an ERG subscription

and would like to introduce myself to you
and the ERG fellowship. You will find my
first efforts in SF writing since the old
days of Amazing and Wonder coming out with
'The Looking Glass' printed by Ben Fulves
of Teaneck, N.J. It will be my first
attempt using the Ancient Astronaut theory
of Earth Settlement. I am a member of
the Biblical Archaeological Society and the

Ancient Astronaut Society, so am seeking help from other writers or buffs
who also believe in Atlantis and Mu. Perhaps you could seek these out for me
since I am a believer and want to research this area further. ((I'm a
sceptic, but there may be ERG readers with such interests))) In 1976 I
began a study of cartography and astronomy and a look into the possibility
of space exploration and settlement which resulted in a meeting with the
late Wernher von Braun at the Huntsville Air & Space Museum.

I am now back at my typing and looking forward to the pursuit of writing
science fiction, with an emphasis on my first full book, THE ATLANTIS
CHRONICLES. Am assuming that intelligent life on Earth came to us from
other galaxies and that we did not evolve from fish or monkeys. I became a
voting member of the Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films
at San Francisco in 1978 and am state membership chairman here in Wisconsin.
Anybody wanting to know more about the society or who would help me with
the story of ancient astronauts, Atlantis or Mu...please drop me a line.

IRWIN HIRSH
279 Donain Rd.,
South Yarra
Victoria 3141
Australia

I enjoyed reading the ERGITORIAL because I find these
type of things interesting, and like working them out.
Since I'm good at maths, I find them relatively easy,
but shy away from explaining why they work to someone
else. I suppose the situation which Phil Harbottle

describes does happen, but it seems that the majority of reprint antholog-
ies are edited by people in the SF world..who don't have to use fans to
help put an anthology together. I can't agree with J.J. Bell when he says,
"Art, important, No!" The thing about art in fanzines is that it takes
away some of the visual congestion which occurs on the page. In that sense,
art is very important - after all, fanzine editors just don't have the same
equipment and expertise as do the big publishing houses and as such, can't
provide a page without art which flows as easy as a page in a book. Based
on your, and a few other reviews of 'The International SF Yearbook' I went
out and bought a copy..very expensive, but probably worth it. Leigh
Edmonds only criticism of it..and I would agree with him, is that it doesn't
mention what year it is for ((You can always pencil '1978-79' on the
flyleaf))).

CERC HILLS
22a Polson St
Wanganui
New Zealand

ERG.66..beautiful cover-- some 'off' lines here and there,
but the colours (all 3) overwhelm such nit-picking. ((So
just wait for the 21st anniversary next April)))

Surprised Brian Aldiss' little verse didn't pun
'effergee'..nice multiple play given a little poetic licence. Rhymes are
made with less exalted purposes ((Brian's poetic licence had expired)))

Oddly, nothing really stands out about this issue--it was all so readable I can't even ~~hide~~ my loss for words with a little scalpel practice. Colin Lester's piece describes the feeling I was getting about a bi-monthly Tanjent perfectly...give me unlimited income and no job, and I could manage it. @((Greg encloses details of his fanzine TANJENT...quarterly, 36pp photoreduced and printed...and you can get it by sending him \$4.80 in Australian currency...check your travel agent for rate of exchange before getting a money order....and believe me, since I have No. 9 to hand, it's a good production)))

ALAN HUNTER
4 Cranleigh Gdns
Southbourne
Bournemouth
Hants

Although I write very seldom, I enjoy every issue. The most interesting feature to me, as always, is the book review section. Also, I have enjoyed in recent issues, the Pro' SF field as seen through the eyes of the editor and writer; The insight into the trials and tribulations as seen from both sides of the fence, makes interesting reading. The Jin Cawthorn cover, although rather unlikely, was quite striking. Oddly although quite different in 'feel' it could well have been one of your own compositions. I applaud your generosity in allowing other artists into the zine, especially on the cover ((Well, I like plenty of variety..this issue again features Jin Cawthorn...69 will have Mike Roden, and the 21st Annish will have a multicolour spread by 'Jeeves'...Keith J, not Terry))). Your own art is perfectly suited and varied, but a little additional variety is always welcome.

Alan Burns
19 The Crescent
King's Rd. Sth.
Wallsend on Tyne

Thankyou for ERG 67. I'm madly trying to puzzle out what is happening in Jm's picture (((Send 25p in plain brown envelope for full details))) Is it a spaceship flying past a giant wearing jackboots or is it some weird bit of architecture? As the condemned man said to the

hangman..."Don't keep me in suspense" (((I thought he said, "I've got the drop on you"))). I note Phil Harbottle's article but I recall the first maxim in a writing course I once took. If a publisher offers to publish at rates involving you in any expense whatsoever...forget the project.

get your copy of

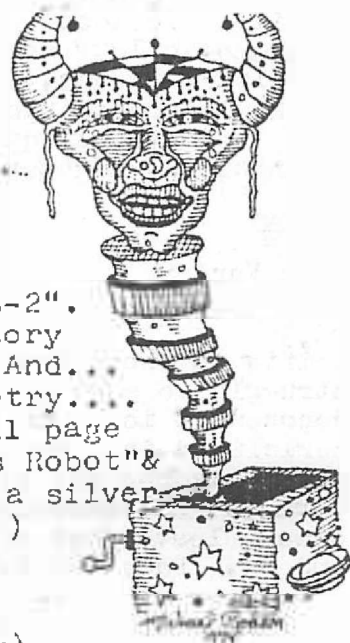
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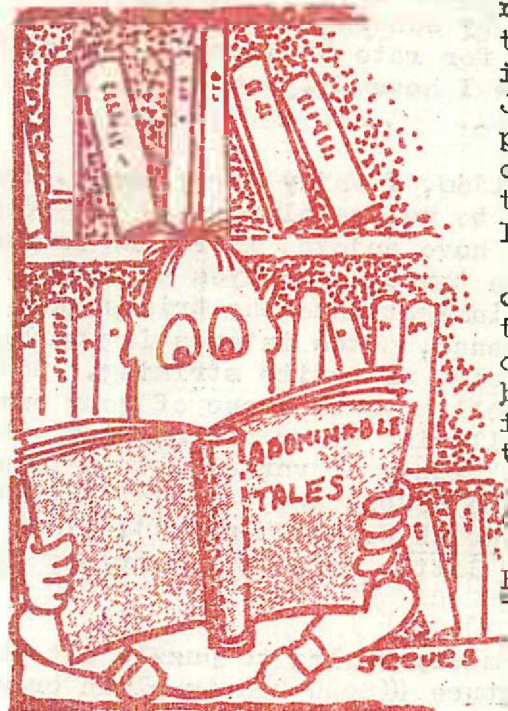
Featuring...art story by Michael Roden, "Metamorphosis-2". Dr. Wilfred Beaver's short story "We Reached for the Stars"! And... a section of illustrated poetry.... as well as the following full page drawings, "Throntog", "Frodo's Robot" & Others...All topped off with a silver front cover(w/porthole!)



THRU BLACK HOLES
982 WHITE OAK RD.
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45245
(\$1.25 per copy)



RECENT READING



XENO by D.F. Jones
Sidgwick & Jackson £5.95

When an F-4 fighter vanishes...only to re-appear four months later, and miles away, the event is hushed up - as is a similar affair in Russia. However, when a charter-flight Jumbo jet does likewise, the superpowers have a problem. Just as things seem under control, each passenger lapses into a coma and the whole thing assumes terrifying proportions as vampire like creatures stalk the populace.

If there isn't a word 'unputdownable', then one should be invented for this novel. As in the author's classic 'Colossus', each escalation of the menace is followed by a deceptive lull before the next shock arrives. Characterisation is light, but the story development so gripping that you really 'see' the action unfold.

A great story, probably an Award winner, and excellent material for a hit film.

FLYING BOMB by Peter Cooksey
Robert Hale...£5.25

Cherished title in my collection include Dornberger's superlative 'V-2' and volumes on the Atlas and Viking rockets, so it was with a keen sense of anticipation that I opened this

factual account of V-1. Right away, it must be said that the coverage here is more on the events surrounding the use of the bomb, than on the actual development work. Opening with a brief resume of earlier experiments and then an outline of how V-1 was devised, the author then indulges in some purple prose about the defences against the bomb, and its effects on the people of S.E. England. There is a chapter on its variations, details of Allied experiments and a final chapter is devoted to V-2, the ballistic missile. No less than 18 appendices wind up the volume giving specifications, diagrams, colour schemes, target areas, numbers launched etc, etc. If all that isn't enough, the text is pointed up by some 30 excellent photographs and 24 line drawings plus a bibliography and index. Excellent value for the money and my only quibble is the repeated reference to the Mosquito bomber as an Allied fighter.

TITAN

John Varley
Sidgwick & Jackson
£5.95

Cirotto Jones heads the 7 person crew of 'Ringmaster' on a mission to investigate the moons of Saturn. One turns out to be a giant ring satellite, 1300 Km across. The ship enters orbit and is captured whereupon the action shifts to the strange world within the ring, as Cirotto and her crew struggle to survive and solve the riddle of the gigantic wheel world. The denouement is on as great a scale as the world itself. Only recently serialised in Analog (which ought to be sufficient recommendation in itself) the story has all the power and scope we have come to associate with Mr. Varley. His characters are full and varied, 'warts and all'; the plot-line always leave just a little more puzzle 'over the hill' to lure the reader on and on. Pace and interest never flag, and helping you build a mental image are numerous full-page illustrations by 'Freff'. If you miss this one, you'll be kicking yourself for a year

A NEW FANTASY TRILOGY.. 'The Chronicles Of Morgon, Prince of Hed'. written by Patricia A. McKillip, and published by Sidgwick & Jackson at £5.95 each part.

Vol.1 'THE RIDDLE MASTER OF HED' Starting off in a low, pastoral key, we meet Morgon, Prince of Hed and Graduate of the College of Riddle Masters who has risked his life in a riddle contest and so won a crown. The Harpist Deth tells him that King Mathom has promised his daughter Raederle to the winner, so Morgon sets off to claim his bride. On the way, repeated attempts are made on his life and these spur him to set off to seek the meaning of the three stars branded on his brow. Accompanied by Deth, he sets off to confront the High One and is again attacked by strange shape-changers which can assume any guise. In the second volume, Raederle is the central figure as she goes in search of her lover, facing great perils and acquiring strange powers before the two finally meet. The final volume see Morgon and Raederle move to a final confrontation with the High One and his harpist, Deth. Highly enjoyable reading, and my only quibble is the fact that only the main characters really come alive, the rest merely strutting their brief parts before they fall away from the scene. This quibble apart, the three tales link into a mighty fantasy, fit to rank with Gordon's 'Eyes' trilogy. There is a richness and variety which gives depth to the fascinating saga, so if you revel in a tale of magic and mystery, this epic is for you.

THIS WORLD AND NEARER ONES

Brian W. Aldiss

Weidenfeld & Nicolson £6.95

The author has been actively involved in the SF field for many years.. as a writer, critic, speaker, reviewer and of course, con-geer. Here he presents a wide-ranging selection of essays and articles culled from the variety of media to which he has contributed. There are some thirty items, fourteen photographs and a (very necessary) index crammed into the volume. Topics range widely over an encyclopaedic range, but for convenience are grouped into sections; 'Writing' includes commentary on Blish, Dick, Verne and Vonnegut. A quick look to the year 2001; 'Living' examines man and his works..today and tomorrow. 'Seeing' includes pieces on SF art, films and our surroundings. The final two sections, 'Rough Justices' and 'This World' contain essays on politics in SF, a glance at Russia and an equally perceptive peep at California and its people.

As a person, the author is warm, friendly and the nicest chap you could meet in a day's march. As a writer, he is witty, astringent, getting inside his subject with uncanny accuracy and pulling no punches as he does so. This collection (which sadly, contains none of his fiction) is thoroughly entertaining and thought-provoking from beginning to end.

BLIND VOICES

Tom Reamy

Sidgwick & Jackson

£5.95

The opening chapter sets the scene of a sleepy little back-water American town..all is peaceful, introvert and beautifully developed. Then Haverstock's freak show hits town and shakes the inhabitants with what seem to be bizarre monsters. The town's younger set (around whom, the story is built) react in different ways, and each contact with the show and its owner increases the horror. Then the star performer runs away and another rapes one of the town's nubile maidens. Suddenly things come to a head with an exciting finale..with an unsuspected little twist. Lyrical, evocative, more descriptive than Bradbury, more 'folksy' than Simak..but without the schmaltz of the former..or the latter's overkill. This is one of the best pieces of atmosphere building to come along in many a year..the shame is that because of its author's death..it is a first..and last, novel.

FALSE DAWN

Chelsea Quinn Yarbro
Sidgwick & Jackson
£5.95

Picture a post-war world, polluted by radiation; all civilisation, law and order destroyed and bands of 'Pirates' roam America..looting, pillaging and raping. There are groups of mutants to be tortured. Warped and diseased untouchables to be avoided, even venomous water spiders and packs of man-hunting wilds dogs prowl the wastelands. Against this background, mutants Thea and Evan Montague set out to cross the Sierra Nevada in search of some sort of sanctuary. Along the way they are beset by horror and villainy..Thea gets raped and Montague grows a new arm after the old one was cut off by a bandit-wielded power saw. We had a spate of such novels in the late forties..but less violent and without today's sex and swearing. If you like such themes, then dig into this.

UNIVERSE SEVENUNIVERSE EIGHT

Edited by

Terry Carr.

Dobson £4.25 ea.

Regular readers of the Universe series will need no other introduction..for newcomers, these are the latest two volumes:- 'Seven' has a mathematician's first love and an alternate universe; regression to the primitive life; a tale of Rafferty's bar; life recordings; a change in reality; and automated chess-player; pornographic Tibetan grammar and time travel. 'Eight' deals with a septagenarian, 7-unit marriage, two telepaths and body-sharing; becoming a painter via computer implant; a strange space weapon; the dangers of an ecological house; problems of age v. longevity; clinging to the past, and even a bit on TV in the 19th Century.

Authors include Aldiss, Wolfe, Lafferty, Eklund, Benford and others, with eight stories to each book. As before, the tales are mainly in the modern vignette style where plot is subordinate to style and form. If you appreciate this trend, then here it is at its best..pick either, but if you can only afford one, then I'd suggest you get Universe 8.

THE MAN WHO RODE HIS 10-SPEED BICYCLE TO THE MOON

Bernard Fischman

Hodder & Stoughton £4.25

Sinking into a rut until his wife buys him a 10-speed bicycle, 45-year-old Stephan finds cycling hard work. Then he leaves Dorothy, loses his dog and begins to find himself as his skill develops. He meets and loves, the lovely witch Pia; venturing further afield as his power improves. Occasionally, a strange rider on a penny-farthing crosses his path, but Stephan never discovers his identity until he loses all fears and rides off to the moon. Not a novel of science fiction, but a

fairy-tale allegory of how one man has almost lost his identity, but then recovers it and really finds himself. Gently written and enhanced by the evocative illustrations by Barbara Lanza.

FORTHCOMING TITLES FROM ROBERT HALE.

TRIPS IN TIME.. Ed. R.Silverberg £4.35
DEATH WEARS A WHITE FACE..E.C.Tubb £4.35
A CIRCUS OF HELLS..Poul Anderson £4.35
POINT OF IMPACE.. Iain Douglas £4.35
ARENA Julian Jay Savarin £4.35
IN HIS OWN IMAGE Mark James £4.35





XANTHE AND THE ROBOTS

Sheila Macleod
Penguin 95p

While the outside world regresses into chaos, introverted research worker, Xanthe and the other members of the Institute, work blissfully on their robots. Then their charges begin to develop free will and demand to express their individuality. As they awaken to a new life, so does Xanthe gradually thaw under the attentions of the handsome, lustful, Daimion. Slow-paced and introspective..this is probably a blueprint for robot independence.

MORE WOMEN OF WONDER

Ed. Pamela Sargent
Penguin 95p

Seven stories, by and about women in SF, opening with a potted history of the theme before C.L.Moore's tale of the fabled Jirel of Joiry. Leigh Brackett has 'The Lake Of Gone Forever'; Joanna Russ, 'The Second Inquisition' and Josephine Saxton, 'The Power Of Time'. Then we get Kate Wilhelm's 'The Funeral'; Joan D. Vinge's, 'Tin Soldier' and Ursula Le Guin's 'The Day Before The Revolution'. Rounding out the varied collection is a list of titles for future reading and a brief biographical note on each writer. If you're not a male chauvinist pig, then you'll enjoy this little lot.

TROUBLE WITH LICHEN

John Wyndham
Penguin 85p

First of a couple of classic 'disaster' novel reprints. neither of which should need much introduction here. 'Lichen' is the story of an anti-ageing drug discovered by research worker Diana Brackley (who never really emerges from her starched cardboard cocoon) as she secretly administers the drug to selected customers at her Nefertiti beauty parlour...until the secret leaks out.

THE DAY OF THE THRIFFIDS

John Wyndham
Penguin 95p

is the story of the mobile, stinging plants from Russia which become a deadly menace when a world-wide shower of strange, green meteorites, blinds everyone. If you only saw the film, ignore that..the film was lousy, whereas this novel, arguably Wyndham's greatest disaster novel is gripping in its menace and atmosphere of credibility. Read this, and you'll never turn your back on another unidentified weed again.

THE STATUS CIVILISATION

Robert Sheckley
Penguin 75p

Will Barrent awakes, memory-wiped and convicted of murder, aboard a prison ship landing on penal planet Omega. Once down, he finds an invorted anarchistic society where status is gained by killing. Barrent rises quickly in status, but refusal to accept drug addiction and pseudo-religion lands him in trouble. Inprobabilities and implausibilities abound but the main story line is so action-packed and entertaining you soon suspend your sense of quibble and simply enjoy the adventure.

TIGER! TIGER!

Alfred Bester
Penguin 95p

Originally, 'The Stars My Destination', in the 1956, 4-part Galaxy serial. In the 24th Century, teleportation belongs to virtually everyone, but the only person knowing the location of the space-wrecked 'Nomad' is Gully Foyle, but he is so set on gaining revenge that he can not be forced into leading money-baron, Presteign to the ship's cargo of Pyre. This was a smash hit when it came out..and it still has as much impact as ever...don't miss this one.

THE INCANDESCENT ONES

Fred & Geoffrey Hoyle
Penguin 75p

Peter's father vanishes when Peter is young..but appears again when Peter is grown up and on a secret mission in Russia. Seems they are both aliens who keep Earth's peace by controlling the power beams..etc. Highly improbable/implausible...and as dull as Bester's novel is brilliant.

PLANETS FOR SALE

A.E. van Vogt
Panther 85p

This is the collection of Artur Blord stories from the Asf of the mid-forties..originally appearing under the name of van Vogt's wife, E.M.Hull..who only gets a sub-title inside. Presumably van Vogt has done the linking as the stories of the super entrepreneur of the Ridge Stars are neatly welded into one superior volume. These 'anything goes' free-wheeling tales have always taken my fancy and this is a real nostalgia treat as Blord, 007 style business and con man defeats criminals and the Skal Thing in a wide canvas.

CHAINING THE LADY

Piers Anthony
Panther £1.25

Second in the 'Cluster' series, and again the Andromedans are working undercover to take over the Milky Way galaxy. This time they have developed a method of forcibly taking over host bodies and are infiltrating the battleship crews of the home fleet. To combat them, Melody, an alien, assumes the host body of the beautiful Yael and aided by a super Tarot pack, sets out to defeat the invaders. I particularly liked the 'alien viewpoints' and the contrast and interaction between Melody and Yael. Oh yes, and if you porn pages against pence..this one gives 350 excellent pages for your money.

WHEN THE WORLD SCREAMED

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
Pan 80p

A 7 story collection of 'strange' tales from the borderline between fantasy and main stream. The title story concerns drilling into a live earth, then a vanishing train; next a ghostly prize fight; a tropical island mystery; a boxing match; an execution that goes awry and finally, an incident in the desert. Rather naive by today's standards, but still good fun and an entertaining read.

DECADE THE 1960's

Brian W Aldiss &
Harry Harrison

PAN
90p

After an Introduction extolling the decadent 'New Worlds' and explaining the sixties, you get 18 assorted stories on themes such as :- a bit of bad-taste Ballard on the Kennedy assassination; enforced (in)equality; a neat (and fatal) computer snafu; an endless escalator, giant mobiles; Indian poverty; a revolt of sentient cars; a penal colony in the past; a sleazy future world;..all these and many more. The trend is toward the wordy, 'non-story', but there are some excellent exceptions. Companion to the authors' DECADE 40's and DECADE 50's. Very good value, but I prefer 'real' yarns.

THE PARANORMAL

Stan Gooch instance and discuss a variety of phenomena. He covers dreams, mediums, psychic guides, Kirlian auras, trances, the Bermuda Triangle, reincarnation, astrology ESP, etc, etc., going into a wide range of examples, both in support of - and against his case. Although a believer in most of his topics, the writer is not afraid to debunk the doubtful and downright fraudulent..such as Uri Geller or the Phillipine 'healers'. A glossary and a bibliography are included and among the three appendices, there is even one showing how your Karma can supply money. Personally, I'M a sceptic but if you believe in the paranormal, then this is a well-balanced and thought-provoking account.



COLONY

Ben Bova
Methuen 'Magnum'
£1.35

In the 21st Century, Island One in the 14 orbit supplies Earth's power. On the surface, famine, poverty and the population explosion make life intolerable. The World Government is tottering under the combined blows from big business which not only owns Island One, but is using weather control and support for the anarchistic, 'People Revolutionary Underground. David Adams, test-tube born and computer-linked 'superman' sets out to do something about it. Bova's message is clear - our future lies in space! He drives this home in compelling and chilling fashion, with no holds barred. Top-level sf, realistic, prophetic and excellent reading.

EXTRO

Alfred Bester
Methuen 'Magnum'
85p

Originally 'Indian Giver' in Analog, this is the story of a small group of immortals who acquired their ability by undergoing a painful 'death'. It is planned to recruit scientist, Sequoya in a similar way, but he becomes involved in taking over/linking with the super computer, Extro. Whereupon the Immortals are suddenly fighting for their lives. Characters and the future idiom are well brought out and even if you have the serial, it's well worth 85p just to get it all inside one cover. (re-issue under new price) (1976)

OF MEN AND MONSTERS

William Tenn
Methuen 'Magnum' 95p

On the 'humans as vermin' theme. Aliens have taken over Earth and mankind lives in burrows in the walls. Eric the Only, having made his ritual theft from the creatures and become a man, has to flee his tribe when he is to be tortured for heresy. After numerous adventures, he finds a mate and joins a tribe which has a master Plan to make mankind triumphant. Entertaining, but nothing really new brought to an old idea.

IN SOLITARY

Garry Kilworth
Corguin SF 75p

The bird-like Soal have subjugated Earth and force humans to live in isolation, meeting to mate only every three years. Cave, a friend/pet of the aliens is exiled for a misdemeanour and while hunted by a vindictive Soal, sets out to join others and overthrow the rulers. I can't see an Earth-beating race being so utterly dependent on weather control..and as for the 'deus ex machina' of the ending...the writer has style for a first novel, but still has some way to go in the probability/believability side of the art. The story reads well, but one never really 'gets inside' the credibility area. Happily, the author's second novel, 'Night Of The Kadar' is really powerful and I gather it will be issued by Penguin in the near future.

KINGDOMS OF ELFIN

Sylvia Townsend Warner
Penguin £1.25

Sixteen tales about the elves, changelings and fairies (the winged kind) inhabiting the varied realms of fairyland. We meet strange characters

and strange intrigues in yarns which are gently humorous, kindly or cruel as the fancy takes. I loved the, "Be a good boy and tomorrow you may have a billiard lesson".

Don't be deterred by the idea of 'fairy stories'..the tales are as entertaining as any by Andersen or the Grimms, and without their pontificating.

Full of delicacy and charm, I found 'em irresistible.



FLAMERS

Nicholas Fisk
Knight 60p

13-year old Mykly tours the galaxy with his parents, but gets stranded on the planet Splatterbang when Flamers attack. He takes shelter in an unexplained 'Settlement', acquires an invisible computer companion and finds a gypsy girl, marooned like himself. One rescue ship is destroyed by Flamers and the pair have to work out a way to escape the planet. A hectic, out and out juvenile, with several unexplained items. However, to the uncritical reader, this will probably go down very well, so why not get it for any would-be SF convert?

THE PALE INVADERS

G.R. Kesteven
Knight 70p

Another juvenile, but far more ambitious. In a post holocaust world, a tiny community ekes out an existence in a secluded valley. Young Gerald doubts the tales of an oldster about 'carz', 'shopz' and 'townz', but then he learns to read and his friend Susan actually finds a 'carz'. Next, strangers come in search of coal and gradually, the community has to face the riches their coal can bring..and the inevitable change in their simple life. Gentle, delicate in its unfolding and I would fancy an excellent staring point for any young reader. If you can only get one...then make it this one.

KIRLIAN QUEST

Piers Anthony
Panther £1.25

Volume three of the 'Cluster Trilogy'. When an alien astronomer observes a threat to the Galaxies and goes into shock, Herald the Healer is called in to find what caused it. He becomes involved in the problem, falls in love and after a few Sprague de Camp style adventures is finally faced with a fight to the death against the invading 'Space Amoeba'. If you enjoyed the first two parts of this series, then this one will fascinate you with the varied assortment of aliens and customs. For good measure there is even an explanatory chart at the back explaining the symbols used throughout.

SIMULACRA

John Michell
Thames & Hudson £2.95

If you're one of those people who love to conjure up 'pictures in the fire', profiles in clouds, or indeed any sort of vision accidentally composed by nature's quirks, then you'll enjoy this large (7" x 10"), 128 page collection. The first chapter covers scenes described by various visionaries (even the Shaver 'photos' are here), while the text tries valiantly to build mountains out of molehills rather than let the pictures speak for themselves. Chapter 2 (about 1/3 of the book) is where the scenes really come into their own, with seeds, insects, animals, humans, writings and personalities (some, artist augmented). Some require considerable imagination, but the overall effect is visually stimulating and entertaining.

NIGHTMARES AND GEEZENSTACKS

Fredric Brown
Bantam 85p

No less than 47 ultra-short stories, or if you prefer, extra-long jokes. In each, the author builds to his climax of humour or horror or whatever with an utter minimum of words and no padding whatsoever..then hits you with a superb punch line. Oh there are one or two..and only two..rather feeble items (and the odd near-Feghoot), but overall this makes a delightful selection with only the unexpected being predicatable. Ideal for a quick read or long browse, either way it's sheer enjoyment.

FANTASTIC VOYAGE

Isaac Asimov,
Corgi 85p

Yet another reprint of this excellent 'story of the film' in which a medical team and their sub are miniaturised and placed in the body of an injured scientist with the aim of curing him. Until I read it, I had expected another 'ho-hum' yarn..but the story is so well-developed and the impossible made almost credible, that I enjoyed it immensely..no wonder it stays in print on and on.

DARK STAR

Alan Dean Foster
Futura 90p

If you enjoyed the movie, then all you need to know is that here it is in book form. For newcomers, Dark Star is a long mission spacecraft seeking out and destroying 'unstable planets'. Life is boring, and each crewman has his own way to combat it. Pinball has a pet alien, 'Beachball' and Doolittle dreams of finding the perfect surfing wave. When one bomb hangs up, their problems multiply as the semi intelligent device argues the point..and Doolittle gets to ride his wave. Hilarious, and I enjoyed it far more than the film as there was no garbled sound track to spoil it. Enjoy.

THE DOSADI EXPERIMENT

Frank Herbert
Futura £1.00

Over a period of many years, humans and the frog-like Gowachin have been spirited away and located on the planet Dosadi behind a force-wall maintained by one of the Calebans..intelligent stars which gave civilisation their 'jumpdoors'. Agent McKie of the Bureau of Sabotage and Gowachin-trained sets out to investigate, finds a monstrous social experiment which has transformed the Dosadi into a menace to the galaxy.

A gripping novel with a wider and more detailed canvas than Dune..and with more intricacy than van Vogt. If you enjoyed Dune, you'll love this.

ALIEN

Alan Dean Foster
Futura 95p

When the crew of the deep space tug Nostromo wakes from deep sleep, it is to a distress signal from a nearby planetoid. They investigate and are pitched headlong into a confrontation with an utterly weird life form. There are touches of Campbell's, 'Who Goes There?' and strong influences from van Vogt's 'Discord in Scarlet'...but this is a blockbuster of superbly handled suspense. Having seen numerous film 'stills', visualisation of the alien setting was made easy..and more frightening...if this is the book, then I can't wait for the film.

TITAN

John Varley
Futura £1.25

Having all ready dealt with this title in its hardcover form earlier in this department, all that needs to be added here is that it contains all the Freff artwork..and if you can't afford the hardback..then DON'T miss the paperback.

SARGASSO OF SPACE

Andre Norton
Methuen 'Magnet' 70p

A sea adventure transposed into space as apprentice Dane Thorson joins a trading ship on a charter mission to a planet devastated by the 'Forerunners'. Once on the surface, their charter boss takes over a device which hauls in all spacecraft for looting. Plenty of high adventure in this juvenile...which is of better quality than many 'adult' novels. You can enjoy it yourself..or buy it for some lucky youngster.

THE UNTELEPORTED MAN

P.K.Dick
Methuen Magnum 80p

Teleportation could get a man to the stars in 15 minutes, so 18 year ship trips were out..but the quick route allowed no returns. When a bankrupt shipowner suspects the glowing messages sent back and proves them to be faked, the action gets under way...as he sets out to travel the long way. Enjoyable, but I felt the ending flagged a bit.

DR. FUTURITY

P.K.Dick
Methuen Magnum 85p

Dr.Jim parsons is hi-jacked into the future where healing is a crime. His kidnappers want him to revive their dead leader, incestuous father of their tribe..but trouble arises as time loops complicate things..(and Dick proves time travel impossible). Nevertheless, he constructs a good yarn on his theme..even explaining the successes of history's great explorers. Highly readable, if not an epic of the time travel genre.

STAR MAKER

Ola Stapledon
Methuen Magnum
£1.25

A re-issue of this 1937 classic in which the central character goes into a trance and his ego travels out across the light years. On the way, encountering 'The Other Earth' on which the inhabitants have taste organs on their genitals and sex is disseminated by radio. After the satire, the traveller goes on to envisage the history of the universe and confronts the Supreme Creator. The narrative style makes for difficult reading, but this is still a source book for much modern plot structure if you can stand the pace.

STARS OF ALBION

R. Holdstock &
C. Priest.
Pan. £1.20

A round dozen tales by British authors, with Introduction and Afterword by the respective editors. Aldiss writes of a prisoner, Shaw on the Mona Lisa as a frame in a porno film, Brunner tells of what happens when population count exceeds available number of souls. There's a nice send up of sword and sorcery, a journey through the earth in a subterranean vehicle, and Britain over-run by Germans. All these and more...a few too many hinge on the fragmental 'New Wave'..but there are still plenty of real stories.

THE MIDWICH CUCKOOS

Penguin 75p
John Wyndham

Little comment is needed for this classic re-issue. The village of Midwich is isolated and all eligible females, married, single and virgin awake to find they are pregnant. When born, the strangely talented, genius children begin to prove a terrible menace as they mature. One of the more chilling of the author's disaster novels...and filmed as 'Village Of The Damned'.

THE SPACE MERCHANTS

Pohl & Kornbluth
Penguin 75p

Unscrupulous advertising agencies rule America, the top one Being Fowler Shocken with accounts for 'Kiddiebutts' and the addictive Coffiest. The boss, who rides a pedal-Cadillac, appoints Mitch Courtenay to 'sell' Venus to colonists...but Courtenay gets shaghaied and the conditions he encounters lead him to change his allegiance. The future society is deftly and frighteningly sketched from valuable wooden rings, to a \$5,000 cure for Caffiest addiction. First appearing in Galaxy, and now a classic of the field.

WOLFBANE

Pohl & Kornbluth
Penguin 75p

An alien planet pulls Earth out of orbit...and periodically re-ignites the moon for a sun. From Mount Everest, a mysterious Pyramid watches the pacified citizens and culls the suitable ones. Then it harvests individualist Glen Tropile as a unit for its circuitry.. but his ego doesn't stay pacified and begins to take over the Pyramid and its powers. Fascinatingly different into its look at Earth's future and alien invasion. If you haven't read it before...a treat awaits you.

ALTERNATING CURRENTS

Frederik Pohl
Penguin 75p

Ten stories, with the opener concerning a public relations job on former enemies; a model on how to set the future with a minimum of explanation. Then there's a man who calls up ghosts; time travel and ant rule; telekinesis and megalomania; a spaceship lost in hyperspace, and a servile, conditioned society. Then there are the pitfalls in changing the past; an amusing tale of an immortal family; an unscrupulous advertising test method and finally, the ruin caused by the non-addictive 'Cheery Gum'. As varied as you can get, and every one a winner

THE BEAST THAT SHOUTED
LOVE AT THE HEART OF
THE WORLD
=====

Harlan Ellison
Pan.90p

The author is vociferous in the introduction when telling us he does not write 'New Wave'..but turns our 'speculative fiction'..in this collection of 12 stories, one might well suggest 'sordid fiction' in some cases. Ellison writes interestingly on his chosen topics..love, death, circular time, a peace-

enforcing Sleeper, the death of an empath, a human bomb, an invisible man and many others...but too often pursues style and fireworks at the expense of well turning his plot. However, here is Ellison in fiery form..try it.

SCIENCE FICTION SPECIAL 31

Sidgwick & Jackson £6.95 Contains three excellent novels at a price lower than you would have paid for any two.

MIND OF MY MIND.. Octavia Butler, concerns 4,000 year old, immortal by mind-transfer, Doro. His breeding experiments culminate in Mary who on maturing, takes over six of Doro's best..and then begins collecting more.

THE MAGICIANS.. James Gunn Private Eye 'Casey' attends a convention of witches and becomes involved in a desperate battle between good and evil.

STARBRIDGE.. James Gunn & Jack Williamson sees interstellar civilisation linked by 'The Tubes', all of which have Eron as centre. Adventurer Horn assassinates the head man, and is immediately involved in a power fight and an uprising. A rattling good, if somewhat pot-boiling adventure.

This is one of the best buys in this excellent series, and at £6.95 is an excellent 'buy'...the Butler story alone being worth the price of admission. So if you missed these...get in now.. and the same applies to the next excellent offering...another 'SPECIAL'... this time, ...

QUANTUM SPECIAL 1.

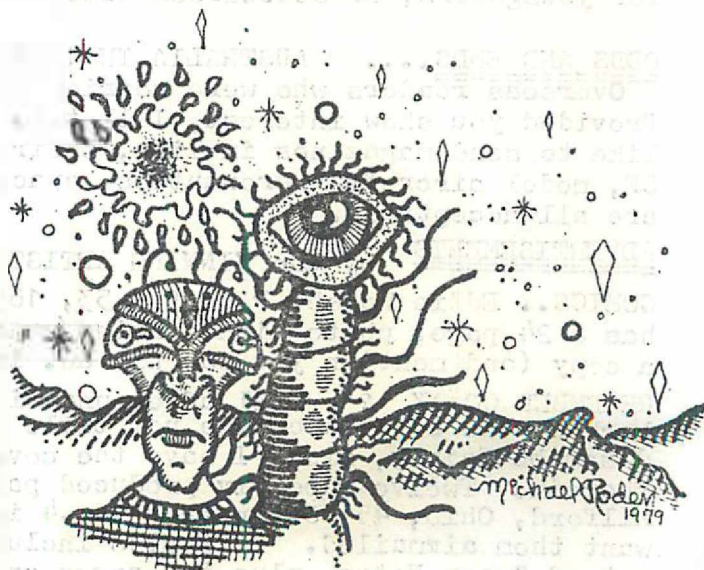
Sidgwick & Jackson £6.95 Two 'Quantum' tales in this one :-

THE OPHIUCHI HOTLINE.. John Varley tells of one way interstellar communications and the benefits therefrom...then payment is demanded. Boss Tweed clones a death-row criminal and uses here to further his ends. The plot is intricate, has excellent background setting and the pace never flags.

IN THE OCEAN OF THE NIGHT.. Gregory Benford, sees comet 'Icarus' passing near Earth and Astronaut Walmsley lands to plant a nuclear bomb and Icarus sends a signal bringing in a robot space probe which Walmsley is also sent to destroy..but he, and the intelligent probe, have other ideas.

Both yarns are top-level and excitingly different..and if you think the latter is a mixture of 'Berserker' and '2001'...try it and find just how different ..and better, it is.

If you can only afford one, then I'd be inclined to plump for the Quantum volume by a short head. If you put page against price, '31' has a few more pages, but since each run to around 570, pages, you get darned good value either way, and Messrs Sidgwick and Jackson do the SF field a service by producing these huge collections of high quality at low cost.



THE RAVENS OF THE MOON

Charles L. Grant
Sidgwick & Jackson \$5.50

After the Oil Wars, countries have formed power blocs and in Noran, roving ratgangs control the land between the cities. Then the Government uses the ratpacks as the focus of a revolt to avoid joining a war in Europe. Things go wrong when ambitious politicians seize the chance to take over. Easy-going Shanlon Raille, venner and conjurer is made scapegoat of an assassination and is hunted, by all. Gradually, his actions join with those of several other central characters, each of whom has a part to play in the fight against the plot. Adventure type SF, but an enthralling, multi-faceted tale in which the future setting and idiom are particularly well handled.

A CALLER FROM OVERSPACE

John Lymington
Hodder & Stoughton \$5.25

An omniscient being watches a pre-invasion inspection of Earth (by invisible aliens), then the scene shifts to a complicated menage of four spouse-swappers in a Cornish village. A strange figurine is found and strange events ensue as the intruders make tests..often with results akin to an Edmund Cbeper sex-remp. The yarn is full of incident, strange, cryptic and downright funny. There is some hilarious, uninhibited dialogue and the whole thing entertains from start to finish. Style is gentle and without menace and the whole parcel makes a light-hearted novel.

THE WORLDS OF SECTOR P

K.D.Franklin
Dobson \$4.25

When Space Captain 'Kippo' Watson is list on a mission to Sector P, his old friend 'Pranger' Kite steals an aged spacecraft and sets out to find him. He is accompanied by Police Officer, Don Atkin and together they encounter a strange robotic society. The trail oends to a planetary maze controlled by the robot overman and a menacing mind-creature.

Although not stated, I suspect this was written as a juvenile on the adventure level. Judged by this standard, it makes exciting reading and a good introduction to SF -- although I shuddered at using only oxygen masks as protection when a ship's air was evacuated -- and a barrier of dead suns, so close as to need computer guidance to avoid them..(what happened to gravity ?) Ignoring the petty detail, there are still several unsecured 'loose ends' around...but not to worry, this is a smoothly flowing, puzzle-on-puzzle action story which has no offensive passages and is well-suited for youngsters, or schoolroom discussion use for any English teacher.

ODDS AND ENDS.... AUSTRALIA IN 1983..support the bid.

Overseas readers who were worried about the 'send-a-stamp' idea may relax. Provided you show interest, I'll take this as the equivalent...but if you do like to send magazines in lieu, their cover price will be credited as subs... SF, model aircraft, aeronautics, space, mechanics and science, movie-making, are all acceptable.

ADVERTISEMENTS

by the WINNING ARTIST in the recent TWLL DHU Poll!!

COMICS.. Eddie Walsh, P.O. Box 53, 16 Wimbledon Arcade, LONDON SW19 1PR has a 24 page, photo-lith fanzine/catalogue 'FANDOM' send him an SAE for a copy (and mention you saw his ad. in ERG. An excellent variety of stock.

REMEMBER CO-AX ? Well after unavoidable delays, Mike Banks has got it back on the road under the new title of 'NIGHTMARES'. No.01 is hard to describe fairly, since I have the cover spot, numerous illos and an interview therein. Twelve superbly produced pages..4 issues \$3.00 (Mike Banks, Box.312 Milford, Ohio, 45150..or from no..4 issues for \$2 sent soomail..or \$3 if you want them airmailed. It also includes some excellent book reviews and a set of Space Notes..plus two pages on Model Rocketry.



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P-19180

PROBING JUPITER'S ATMOSPHERE — Red-hot nose cone separates from probe portion of Galileo spacecraft as it "hangs on the skyhooks" and samples the atmosphere of the largest planet in the solar system. Painting depicts key moment in flight of Galileo, the new planetary project planned by Caltech's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. The Galileo spacecraft would be launched in January 1982 — the first planetary mission aboard the space shuttle — and would arrive at Jupiter late in 1984. The probe will enter the sunlit side of Jupiter's atmosphere and provide the first direct sampling of that planet's atmosphere. Jet Propulsion Laboratory has overall management responsibility for Galileo. NASA's Ames Research Center is responsible for development of the probe.