

fantasy newsletter

\$1.50



october

no. 29

Editorial

In FN #27, I printed a letter from Andrew J. Offutt protesting the high room rates (\$49 single and \$57 double) at the Marriott Hunt Valley Inn, site of the sixth World Fantasy Convention in Baltimore this year. Similar letters of protest were sent elsewhere by Offutt.

Unfortunately, it is a simple fact of life these days that one can't stay very cheaply anywhere. Jack L. Chalker recently responded to that letter (with copies sent elsewhere), lamenting this fact of life and noting that high room rates are unavoidable due to the nature of the World Fantasy Convention. When established in 1975, the convention was designed to be small and informal with a maximum attendance of 750 people: for the express purpose of *avoiding* what many SF conventions have become--so large and overwhelmed with masses of bodies that they are not enjoyable. The virtue of being small and informal carries with it, however, a penalty: the inability

to negotiate low room rates by "taking over" a hotel.

One solution to the problem is to find a friend planning to attend the convention and share a room--effectively reducing the rate to around \$30 per night. That's what I will be doing in October and, quite frankly, the cost is almost negligible compared to the air fare I've paid to get there.

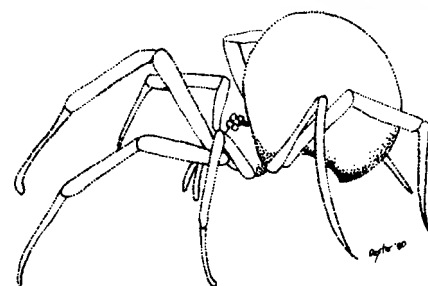
Fortunately, convention chairman Chuck Miller has responded in admirable fashion. In a recent letter to convention members, he acknowledges the high room rate and offers the following:

"In the Progress Report which will be sent out this summer, I will list several alternate hotels within the area. I'll do the best I can to arrange accommodations for anyone wishing to share a room. If anyone requires this help please feel free to write or call me collect: 717-684-2925 (9 to 5 only please). I'd like to make this a smooth, enjoyable convention for everyone concerned." If you'd like to save Chuck the cost of a collect call, his address is: 239 N. 4th St., Columbia, PA 17512.

Although I wouldn't object to seeing the 750-person limitation expanded modestly, I support the notion of a relatively small, informal convention. Crowded conventions with overloaded hotel facilities and a "mob" atmosphere are not my idea of fun, even if it does mean saving \$20 a night on a hotel room. Since I'm already spending several hundred dollars to attend the convention in the first place, I'd just as soon enjoy it.

Thank you, Chuck, for going out of your way to be helpful. I hope that Andy, and others, will plan to attend--I'd like to see you there.

-- Paul Allen



News in Brief

Since there isn't room for a "Magazines" section this issue, here are the contents to a couple of upcoming magazines.

The first new issue of *Galaxy*, edited by Floyd Kemske and published by Avenue Victor Hugo (publishers of *Galileo*) will feature the following stories: "In the Shubbi Arms" by Steven Utley and Howard Waldrop, "The Colony" by Raymond Kaminski, "The Night Machine" by Dona Vaughn, "In the Days of the Steam Wars" by Eugene Potter and Larry Blamire, and the concluding fifth installment of Frederik Pohl's novel, *Jem*. (The Pohl novel was begun by *Galaxy* in late 1978 and appeared in hardcover from St. Martin's in May, 1979.) Also included are a number of science articles, as well as a profile of artist Michael Kaluta, a film column by Robert Stewart, and book reviews by Noralie Barnett. The new *Galaxy* will appear in the same format as *Galileo*.

Coming in the October issue of *F&SF* are a novella, "Tell Us a Story" by Zenna Henderson, and three novelettes: "The Attelborough Poltergeist" by Richard Couper, "Wolfland" by Tanith Lee, and "Feesters in the Lake" by Bob Leman. Short stories include "Echo" by Walter Tevis, "The World Science Fiction Convention of 2080" by Ian

Watson, and "Death of a Foy" by Isaac Asimov. A star-studded anniversary issue with book reviews by Algis Budrys and a cover for the Watson story by Barclay Shaw.

In FN #27 I noted the forthcoming August publication of *Basilisk*, a new fantasy anthology edited by former Ace Books editorial assistant Ellen Kushner. Ace's new editorial assistant for SF and fantasy, Terri Windling, informs me that the series will be continued and that she is accepting story submissions for the original-and-reprint anthology. "This will be an anthology of 'high fantasy'--thus we are not looking for horror, barbarian sword and sorcery, or science fiction," she notes. Ms. Windling was the artist for the first *Basilisk* volume. Terri Windling, Ace Books, 51 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10010.

The John W. Campbell Memorial Award for best science fiction novel of 1979 was awarded, July 13, to Thomas M. Disch for *On Wings of Song*, published by St. Martin's Press last year. Cited for honorable mention by the awards committee, chaired by James Gunn at the University of Kansas, were *Engine Summer* by John Crowley and *The Unlimited Dream Company* by J. G. Ballard.

Christopher Zavisa at The Land

of Enchantment writes in to note that he has run into delivery problems with his *Bernie Wrightson: A Look Back*, published earlier this year (see FN #3,27). Due to a dispute with his printer, only 800 copies of the deluxe art volume have been distributed. "There are 1,800 more in the printer's warehouse pending a settlement of the controversy. This situation is doubly tragic since I sold the 800 copies in less than three weeks and have over 600 orders which I cannot at this time fill." The controversy is over the price for printing the volume.

On a happier note, dentist Stuart David Schiff reports that he will be leaving the Army in November. "This may allow me to devote more time to my hobby, if I can still afford it. Or, I may just open up a storefront: Books Sold, Teeth Fixed."

Gerry de la Ree writes in to correct a misimpression regarding *The Sixth Book of Virgil Finlay* (see FN #28): "I guess it was my own fault that I gave the impression the book contains only 80 pix. Actually, there are about 115, 80 of which were covers (to astrology magazines) and the balance interiors." He adds that the likely publication date will be October 1st.

fantasy newsletter

*The Monthly News Magazine of the
Fantasy and Science Fiction Field.*

Vol. 3, No. 10, Whole #29
October 1980 issue
ISSN 0199-3151

Fantasy Newsletter is published monthly
by Paul C. Allen, 1015 West 36th St.,
Loveland, CO 80537. Single copy price
is \$1.50. Back issues: #1-17, 19 are
50¢, #20-28 are \$1.50. Subscriptions:

North America:

\$12.00 per year second class
\$17.00 per year first class

Elsewhere:

\$12.00 per year surface mail
\$24.00 per year air mail

Display advertising rates are available
upon request. See classified section
for classified rates. *Fantasy Newslet-*
ter is available at wholesale rates to
dealers on a fully returnable basis.
Fantasy Newsletter is also distributed
by the following:

Sea Gate Distributors, Inc.

Box 177, Coney Island Station
Brooklyn, NY 11224

Bud Plant, Inc.

P. O. Box 1886, Grass Valley
CA 95945

Offset Distribution

339 Newbury St., Boston
MA 02115

F & SF Book Company

P. O. Box 415, Staten Island
NY 10302

Unsolicited submissions must be accom-
panied by a stamped, self-addressed
envelope. Although all materials will
be treated with care, the publisher
assumes no responsibility for unsolic-
ited materials. Letters to the editor
will be considered publishable submis-
sions with copyright assigned to *Fantasy
Newsletter*, unless otherwise directed.
All cover reproductions appearing in
this magazine are courtesy of and copy-
righted by the publishers identified in
the accompanying text. All other con-
tents copyright © 1980 by Paul Allen.
All rights reserved.

Second class postage paid at Loveland,
CO. POSTMASTER: Send address changes
to *Fantasy Newsletter*, 1015 West 36th
St., Loveland, CO 80537.



Printed on Recycled Paper by
SUNDANCE PRINTING
Loveland, CO



Contents

"On Fantasy"	by Fritz Leiber	4
Interview: Stanton A. Coblentz	by Dr. Jeffrey Elliot	11
"The Victory Behind Defeat"	by Stanton A. Coblentz	16
"Warren's News & Reviews"	by Bill Warren	24

Specialty Publishers	8	Editorial	2
Trade Books	9	News in Brief	2
Paperbacks	20	Book Reviews	6
The Fan Press	27	Classified	30
Work in Progress	31		

Cover by Roy G. Krenkel - "Music"

Photo Credits:

Angelo Butero Studios - p.11,17

Art Credits:

Susan Dexter - p.2,3,5
R. Garcia Capella - p.4



ON FANTASY

by Fritz Leiber

This column I want to finish up last bimonth's piece about how I select the books I read and also say something about the forthcoming sixth World Fantasy Convention in Baltimore (and its Lovecraft awards), which signals the anniversary of my association with *Fantasy Newsletter*.

The first task was underlined for me when Paul Allen printed Chester D. Cuthbert's letter with its concise statement of his problem, which is also my own: "I have on hand more (fantasy books) than I shall ever live to read." Here's a man two years younger than me, I said to myself, who's feeling the same pressure of all the new fantasy books being published, and good old ones being reprinted, and being all too honest about our shared problem. And when I think of the young fans and fledgling writers who've assumed that as a successful professional writer I've of course read every book published in my chosen field during my lifetime... It is to weep.

But to get on with it. I'm sometimes asked by publishers or editors for a few prepublication comments on a book--comments that will assist in its merchandising. This wholly legitimate request is generally accompanied by galleys or page proofs, bound or unbound. I generally turn it down unless a friend's book is involved, but a year ago I "reviewed" Robert Stallman's off-trail werewolf novel, *The Orphan*, that way, though I had to speed-read to manage it in time. The result was a thumbnail bit of praise which Pocket Books quoted:

"Vivid, earthy, erotic--a vision of the perilous coming-together of the man-soul and monster-soul in us all. The result is an exciting blend of love and violence, of sensitivity and savagery."

I stand by that statement, certainly, but I'd like to add that *The Orphan* is also a realistic and original study of growing up sexually in the country--erotic games farm children play, very interesting (Postoffice was never like that!)--and so is more analytic than frightening, at least for me. The novel narration--first-person werewolf (the boy's subconscious, largely), describing what the boy (the boy's ego, that is) does--reinforces this approach.

On the whole, though, reading a book in order to find something favorable one can honestly say about it is simply not the most comfortable way to do one's reading. I'm more than ever determined to avoid it. Reviewing books--especially when one's paid for it!--is another thing. I've got a lot of good (and bad, but enlightening) reading done that way.

I'm sure I read a couple of Manly Wade Wellman's John stories when they first appeared one by one in *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* twenty to thirty years ago. But it's a revelation of his great stature as a writer to read them all together. (*Who Fears the Devil?*, Dell, 1980, \$2.25.) There's nothing like the genuine American Mountain-Folk legends to give power and atmosphere to an American horror tale. Same for Amerindian myths, however Wellman crafted his evil shadowy Shonokins.

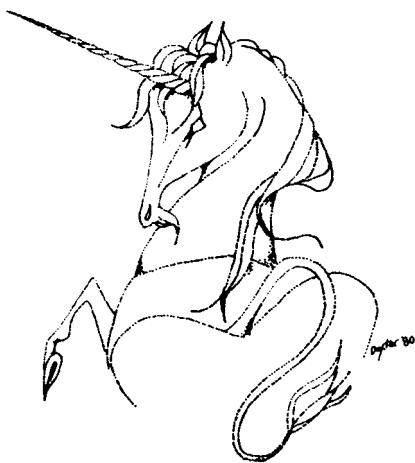
I also recently reread Huysmans' *La-Bas* (*Down There*, Dover, \$3.50). This novel of turn-of-the-century Satanism in Paris stands up very well. After floods of newer sensational stuff on the topic--especially in the films--it conveys the actual truth about the devil cults and their doings, much more often nasty and pipsqueak than grand. Dover books are among the finest bargains anywhere, incidentally. The violet cover has a charmingly theatric cloaked skeleton and uncloaked sister of the night by Odilon Redon, the masterly weird draftsman of Huysmans' period.

Ten days ago I was teased into reading another new novel by the coincidence of its author turning up in two new and very dissimilar anthologies of original short stories: *Amazons!*, edited by Jessica Amanda Salmonson (DAW, 1979, \$2.25), and *Other Worlds 2*, edited by Roy Torgeson (Zebra Books, 1980, \$2.25).

The writer was Tanith Lee, and the novel, *Sabella, or The Bloodstone*, A Science Fiction Vampire Novel, DAW, 1980, \$1.75. Yes, more space vampires following those of Colin Wilson, but Ms. Lee's have an ingenious science-speculative explanation--and a typically Martian one, requiring water-dearth and fairy ruins, "thin pillars soaring, leveled foundations crumbling, cracked urns whispering of spilled dusts--all the Martian dreams that old Mars denied to mankind." So Ms. Lee gives us, swinging around another star than Sol, "Novo Mars, enough like old Mars to have been dubbed with the name, but a pink planet rather than red," both vampire colors. *Sabella* is a memorable heroine whether hunting through the low hills with the Martian wolves, or the garish night streets of the boom town of Ares in her "white frocks and red, and stockings with silver seams."

Amazons! is a good workmanlike job of assemblage and by its subject matter and our times most satisfyingly feminist. My congratulations to its transsexual editor, who provides us with an interesting introductory essay on warrior women down the ages, including the Trung sisters, who liberated Vietnam from the Chinese two thousand years ago. There is one male contributor, Charles R. Saunders, with a fine African story, "Agbewe's Sword," a tale of the female warriors of the Leopard King of Abomey. All the rest are women, writing in the sword-and-sorcery or mythic and anthropologic vein, which these days they do handle with a greater seriousness and earthy convincingness than most men--so much so that it seems to me I could get onto another new competent female heroic fantasist every other month and never catch up.

Well, this other month it's Tanith Lee, who launched into heroic fantasy with the novels *Birthgrave*



and Vazkor, *Son of Vazkor*. Her contribution to *Amazons!* is "Northern Chess," whose chief character is Jaisel, "a girl knight with intimations of the reaver, the showman, and (for what it was worth), the prince...with slender strong hands dripping with frayed frosty lace at the wrists." One of her briny answers conveys much of her spirit and that of the entire collection, too:

"'Probably you have been raped frequently?' 'Once,' she said, 'ten years back. I was his last pleasure. I dug his grave myself, being respectful of the dead. And when I am in the district, I visit his grave and spit on it.'"

By contrast, the authors of *Other Worlds 2* are all men *except* for Tanith Lee, which ought to indicate something about her. The male editor writes flamboyantly, "My attitude towards fantasy literature is similar to my attitude towards women. From time-to-time I am especially interested in or in love with a certain 'type' of woman or even a specific woman. But I continue at all times to look at, speak with and appreciate the wonderful variety of women who exist." When I first lamped that effusion, I thought it the most egregiously lordly sexist statement I'd ever read, but on each rereading I become less sure. Keep that in mind.

The lead story by newcomer James Tucker, a strong moody tale loaded with Braburian nostalgia, is "The Man Who Lived in Kaleidoscope Glass," which is dedicated to the proposition that Life's like that: a series of wonderful clear-cut visions that are neither true nor false but simply *are*...and that keep on coming.

By some trick of circumstance or Torgeson's taste, most of the stories in this anthology have something of the same mysterious, One-Damned-Thing-After-Another* quality about them, with the reader left to

figure out some of the hows and whys of the happenings--to the point that for a weird while I got scared that Tucker's kaleidoscope had spun loose and got into the rest of the book; an uncanny experience for yours truly, believe me!

Tanith's tale, however, supplies its own surprises and revelations. The slender swordsman Cyron, "a demoniac angel," is accosted at midnight and required to solve the mystery of an ancient murder or else die. He interviews the witnesses and suspects, and then does so, as expeditiously as any modern sleuth. But then the question of whether *anyone* is alive arises.

Well, those (and last bimonth's) are some of the ways I pick the books I read. I'll never be able to read a tenth of the fantasies available, any more than I'll be able to know a tenth of the stars in the sky and muse about the unique feelingful life accompanying each--or really make friends with a tenth of the attractive, lively-looking people passing by. Stories *are* like people, as Torgeson says, and to know some is better than to know none at all. And I know I have to try to understand and make friends with books, if they're to mean anything to me. There's something more to it than viewing the available assortment and asking like a harem prince, "Which one shall I sleep with tonight, tra-la?"

About Fantasycon Six, I'm not one of the judges, but of the novels published last year and qualifying for the Lovecraft award, it strikes me that the two outstanding contenders are Stephen King's *The Dead Zone* and Peter Straub's *Ghost Story*.

The latter is a monumental writing achievement simply on the basis of the number of main characters it manages to make individually real (like the Altman film, "Nashville," with its vast cast of principals) and by the number of suspenseful plot lines and chronologies it sets in motion and keeps neatly dovetailed so that they reinforce each other and their climaxes are beautifully synchronized. A group of men in a New York State town meet once a month to share ghost stories--what could be more old-fashioned and unalarming, even Christmasy? But then the stories begin to illuminate each other, they start to fit together, and we gradually learn that the men are telling the stories to save their

sanity, to catharsize all too real present fears. There's a very beautiful and sinister woman who moves through them, bearing different names, and there's something ghastly that happened at a party a year ago, and something worse that happened almost a half century ago, and something that's still horrifically to come...and none of it confuses or is "too much."

Ghost Story is the third outstanding novel to employ the theme of a New England (well, northeastern U.S., anyhow) town infected with vampires, until every last inhabitant is suspect. The other two are King's *Salem's Lot* and Charles Grant's *The Hour of the Ox-run Dead*. No borrowing here, it's an idea that's been in the air, as witness the cult-success of the film, "The Night of the Living Dead." This very picture plays a part in *Ghost Story*, while when the book opens the local movie palace is showing "Carrie"--lots and lots of influencings at work.

Straub writes at times like Hawthorne or Henry James--a Henry James who at least knows a little Freud and understands something of why pure and sensitive young men tend to pine away and expire at the least touch of real life, especially if a mite sexy woman is involved. And at times he writes like William Sloane in *To Walk the Night* (which has an even more memorable female)--the college sequence is neat. And toward the end he writes more like a hard science fiction man--at any rate I was reminded of Campbell's *Who Goes There?* and Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters*.

His vampires, by the way, aren't of the sort who quail at the cross or are burned by holy water.

Likewise, *The Dead Zone* has no particular traditional religious superstructure. On the whole, this element seems to be losing importance in modern supernatural tales. I doubted this for a while because King's psychic hero has an enigmatic vision involving the color blue, but this turns out to have nothing to do with justice, the sky, or holy things; the actual explanation's a beaut of a surprise. I think it's the best of King's novels so far, well thought out, plotted soundly and carefully, no holes I noted, a sympathy-rouser with strong feelings, no flamboyant supernatural trappings, but a chilling area of inner space at its center. And it's rooted in the real world of proclaimed psychics and ambitious politicians, where the fakers outnumber the honest performers ten to one. But better than *Ghost Story*? By a

(Continued on page 23.)

* The poet John Masefield published an adventure novel acronymically titled *ODTAA* back in the days when people fussed at printed blasphemy.

Book Reviews

Changeling by Roger Zelazny. Ace Books, New York, June 1980, 272pp. \$6.95

Someone recently made a very perceptive comment about Zelazny, which I'll repeat here: of his first two novels, *This Immortal* proved far more influential on his later work than did *The Dream Master*, and it might have been better the other way around. *Immortal* was jazzy, witty, and polished, but without much depth. *The Dream Master* was an elegant, substantial tragedy. The course he took later caused Judith Merrill to ask, "Will Zelazny ever write the insides of his novels? Can he?"

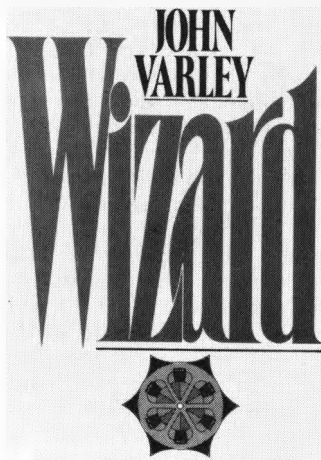
He certainly didn't this time. *Changeling* is all around more satisfying than his previous one, *Roadmarks*, but still it has no insides. By way of improvement, it is a fairly *complete* story, which shows few signs of slapdash until the rather perfunctory end. It is not much ado about nothing, but the characters are sticks of wood.

Zelazny's powers of invention are working full force. The background is extremely good: through great battles in the past, magic and science have split into separate continua, the world of science being almost like our own (perhaps our future). When a wizard is overthrown, his infant son is carried into the scientific world and switched for another. Both children grow up as misfits. They become great powers. The wizard's son is brought back to combat the other. There is a woman who loves them both, but ends up aiding the wizard. The supporting cast includes friendly dragons.

The problem is that Zelazny has overlooked the potential for tragedy. Instead he has written a light romp, like a very literate prose comic book. Mark, the one from the scientific world raised in the magical one, starts out as a decent, sympathetic type who is warped by hatred and misunderstanding until he becomes destructive. Even his "twin" tries to work out a reconciliation with him, but he is driven to his end. This is powerful stuff, but most of it happens off-stage and out of the book. Remaining are a set of one-dimensional figures, Hero and Villain, and when the latter conveniently falls off a ledge at the end, it hardly seems to matter. There are moments of wit, and wonder, and even beauty beforehand, but they don't add up

to much. This is only an average quality novel after all. I'd rate it a C+.

-- Darrell Schweitzer



Wizard by John Varley. Berkley/Putnam, New York, July 1980, 355pp. \$12.95

Wizard is the latest book of a trilogy focussing on Cirocco Jones, "Rocky," an ex-space captain in the service of Gaea, a godlike creature orbiting Saturn--an artificial planet or natural, take your choice--complete with inhabitants, a tourist bureau and clearly defined countries. It's an exciting adventure/quest story crammed full of invention and questions concerning man and woman, a place where consorting with centaur-like Titanides does not come under the category of forbidden, bestial sex, but sex with an alien...who's not that alien after all.

There's nothing quite like John Varley's work. It's feminist; it's equalitarian; it's constantly breaking rules and playing with our minds. Reading a book or short story by Varley is like riding a roller-coaster--you might not like some of the dips and rises, but you're sure gonna get a helluva ride.

Wizard, a sequel to the award-winning *Titan*, takes place 75 years later. Both Cirocco and her lover Gaby are still young, due to Gaea's magical gift. Cirocco has earned it by being retained by Gaea as her main underling and Gaby, through free-lance jobs. Rocky's become an alcoholic, consumed with guilt. But where Rocky was the sole main character in *Titan*, she shares the

limelight in the sequel with several colorful characters, a successful tour-de-force in that the main character in *Wizard* is an ensemble. Besides Gaby (who's plotting to overthrow Gaea), there are also two engaging humans from Earth, seeking cures for their respective illnesses--Robin of the Coven (an all female L-5 colony) and Chris Minor (later to be renamed Major). Backing up these are a few Titanides with thoroughly defined personalities, especially Valiha, the Titanide Chris eventually falls in love with. They are thrown together on a quest with no absolute certainty of a reward at the end, at the mercy or non-mercy of a god who likes American TV and looks like Charles Laughton.

It's about heroism, religion and sex. Pretty heavy stuff except Varley constantly lightens his work with goofball humor (on the quest as they travel down the road they all sing lustily, "We're off to see the Wizard," and then there's the scene where they're doing battle with the sand wraiths and the only way to kill them is to spray water on them--"It's going to be tough in this sand. Throw some water around before you dig. Oh, and if anyone has the slightest urge to pee, do it now, don't be shy. It's useless in your bladder.").

His style combines all of the visual bombardment Varley received as a child through comics and television. He's been compared to the young Heinlein, but for me he captures a freshness and eccentricity that puts him in a category all by himself. Varley lives in a world where changing your sex is like changing your clothes, where sex is a pleasure that can be shared with anyone of any gender, where gender itself is under dispute, where, quite honestly, anything is possible. It's a world you don't have to agree with to investigate, because above anything else, Varley loves his characters and this love seduces you into listening.

In *Wizard*, Varley takes us on a quest. Unlike most of the quests found in the fantasy genre, his quest has science fictional trappings--("so there's the plants that grow transistors...")--and may not be regarded as accessible to the fans of Tolkienesque fantasy. But to miss out on Varley's "fantasy on a rational values basis" is to miss out on one of the most original minds of the decade.

-- Melissa Mia Hall

The Berkley Showcase, Vol. 2 edited by Victoria Schochet and John Silbersack. Berkley Books, August 1980, 200pp. \$2.25

I should preface this review by mentioning that, for all the financial prosperity, I don't think the field is in very good shape these days. I see a malaise of dullness creeping in. Too many stories are just...ordinary. The old time writers are not doing their best or they aren't doing anything at all, particularly in shorter lengths. The newcomers brought in to replace them sometimes show promise, but aren't up to strength yet. By the standards of ten years ago, *The Berkley Showcase, Vol. 2* is fairly bad, but today... I can readily believe editors Schochet and Silbersack didn't receive anything better. Either that, or I'm just getting jaded and grumpy.

The story of most interest to fantasy readers is "Soldier of an Army Unacquainted With Defeat" by Glen Cook, a novella in his "Dread Empire" series. Tain, a former centurion of the Demon Guard, seeks a new life. Inevitably, as he becomes involved in the lives of rural villagers, he is forced back into his murderous ways. What disturbed me about all this was that I kept seeing it as a Samurai movie, or a sword and sorcery version of *Shane*. There is even a little boy who wants to be a soldier. But the story is redeemed by an interesting background, some vivid sorcery scenes, and good characterization. The author's name choices aren't the best, though. A fellow from the East named Kai Ling. And Tain. Why not somebody named Iliad?

R. A. Lafferty's "Lord Torpedo, Lord Gyroscope" has moments of typical Lafferty madness ("Karl Riproar was the unusual son of two torpedo-makers, Epstein Riproar and Natasia Hectic-Smith... The smartest kid ever tested... You could drive a truck down some of the grooves in his brain."), but it fails to live up to expectations, mostly because it synthesizes a series of events, rather than bringing them alive in effective scenes.

"The Foetus" by Thomas Disch is about a demonic foetus that refuses to be born, and controls people. Again, flashes of what the author is capable of, but the story as a whole falls short, mostly because it stops short before any interesting complications develop. "Song of Mutes" by Ross Appel (new author, first sale) begins slowly, but builds up to a genuinely interesting idea, which could be extreme-

ly powerful if better handled.

From these, it is downhill rapidly. "Hear Today" by Freff is a cute joke, but nothing more, and illogical (if the professor had the time-horn to his ear, how could the kid, who didn't, hear the future, also?). "Doll's Eyes" by Karl Hansen, like the Appel story, treats a potentially powerful idea awkwardly. The story is almost moving, but murky at crucial points. "To See" by Edward Bryant is an exercise in metaphor, not a story. And I did not finish "Hejira" by Eric Van Lustbader (incoherent) or "Child of Darkness" by Pat C. Hodgell (the old institutionalized violence on campus routine, with no attempt to make it real, told through semi-opaque dialect).

Also included is an interview with Barry Longyear, a rising Berkley author. The anthology as a

whole is quite typical of current SF. The editors know their stuff. The money is better than ever. Come on, people...

-- Darrell Schweitzer

The Hidden Magic of Uxmal by Enrique Hank Lopez. Fawcett Books, September 1980, 224pp. \$2.25

Every now and then one runs into a novel that turns out to be something radically different from what one expected. *The Hidden Magic of Uxmal* is a good example. Its title evoked in me the excitement of a grand old lost-race adventure set in the wilds of Yucatan complete with Aztec pyramids, blood thirsty high priestesses and a witless wanderer from civilization who

(Continued on page 31, col. 1.)

1371 WESTWOOD BLVD.

A CHANGE OF HOBBIT

SPECULATIVE FICTION BOOKSTORE

& FANTASY PAPERBACKS • HARDCOVERS • MAGAZINES

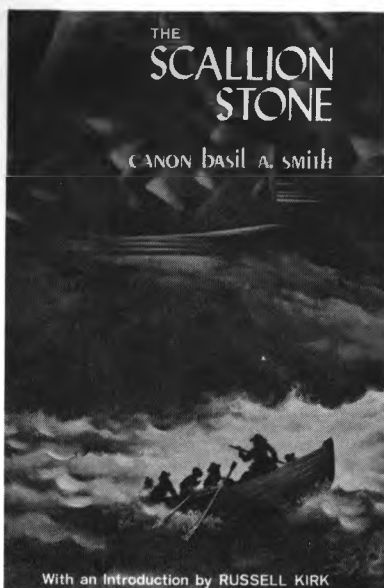
Dial (213)
"GREAT SF"

NEW • USED • OUT OF PRINT SCIENCE FICTION • HORROR

Send Want-Lists
Free Search Service

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.
90024

Specialty Publishers



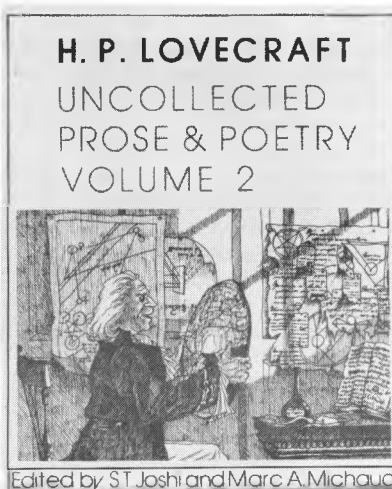
(Artist: Stephen Fabian)

WHISPERS PRESS

Following a lengthy delay due to the loss of a dust jacket painting originally planned for the book, *The Scallion Stone* by the late Canon Basil A. Smith has appeared from Whispers Press. The volume is a collection of five horror stories: "The Bishop's Room," "The Wine Glasses at Hagthwaite Hall," "The Pedlar of Pendle," "The Property Bequest," and the title story. The latter is the only one previously published (in *Whispers*, Doubleday, 1977). Included is an introduction by Russell Kirk, along with ten very nice interior illustrations plus a color dust jacket by Stephen Fabian. The 148-page book is bound in a heavy cloth and is 6" by 9½" in size. The trade edition, limited to 1,750 copies, is priced at \$12 and a 250-copy signed and slipcased edition is priced at \$25. As in the past, Whispers publisher Stuart David Schiff is offering the trade (\$12) edition of the book to *Fantasy Newsletter* readers at the reduced price of \$10; mention you read it here and get your order in within a month. Whispers Press, Box 1492-W, Azalea St., Browns Mills, NJ 08015.

NECRONOMICON PRESS

Marc Michaud at Necronomicon Press recently issued three new publications of interest to Lovecraft enthusiasts. *H. P. Lovecraft: Uncollected Prose & Poetry, Vol. 2* is a 60-page (7" by 8¼") booklet



(Artist: Jason Eckhardt)

gathering together previously uncollected material by Lovecraft, in addition to reprinting some material that has appeared in Lovecraft collections but with annotations to help clarify the text. Included are three stories ("Ibid," "The Trap," and "Collapsing Cosmoses"), five poems, and seven essays. The pamphlet is edited by S. T. Joshi and Marc Michaud and is priced at \$4.95.

History of the Necronomicon by H. P. Lovecraft is a 16-page pamphlet (same format) that reprints the 1938 pamphlet in facsimile form and includes an afterword by S. T. Joshi. This is *Necronomicon's* second edition, priced at \$1. *For the Ahkoond* by Ambrose Bierce is another 16-page pamphlet reprinting a scarce and humorous short story last published in 1912. Price is \$1. Due out very shortly is *Looking Backward* by H. P. Lovecraft, a facsimile reprint of his essay on amateur journalism, published in 1944. Price will be \$1.50.

Planned for fall publication is *The First World Fantasy Convention: Three Authors Remember*, with essays by Robert Bloch, T. E. D. Klein and Fritz Leiber. No price has been set yet. Necronomicon Press, 101 Lockwood St., West Warwick, RI 02893.

M. P. SHIEL BIBLIO

With more than two years in the making, work is nearing completion on *The Works of M. P. Shiel*--a massive publishing project on the parts of A. Reynolds Morse and John D. Squires. Originally planned as a mere update of A. Reynolds Morse's

original 1948 bibliography, *The Works of M. P. Shiel*, the project has since blossomed into a four volume, deluxe set that includes one volume of fiction, two of bibliography, and a final volume of essays about Shiel. (For more detailed background on all of these, see FN #3,13,14,18.)

As detailed in FN #18, volume one appeared last September along with a paperbound excerpt from the bibliography section (*The Quest for Redonda*). Now available are volumes two and three in the set, comprising a massive, heavily annotated bibliography, well illustrated with photographs and facsimile reproductions, and including a number of memoirs and letters by Shiel. Together, the two volumes total 858 pages in an 8½" by 11" format. Included in volume three is the aforementioned *Quest for Redonda*.

The two-volume bibliography is available in three formats: 100 copies have been perfect bound in paper covers and, although designed as impermanent review copies, are available at \$35 per volume. 200 copies are available ringbound, in 22-ring binders, with tabbed sections, and are priced at \$40 per volume. 600 copies have been published in quality cloth bindings and are priced at \$45 per volume. Although expensive, these volumes are a must for serious Shiel collectors. All three editions are numbered and volume two is signed by Morse.

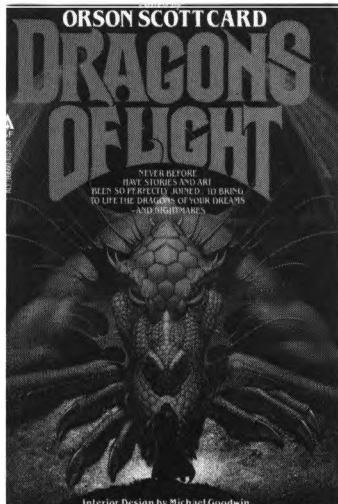
Also available is a three-color 17" by 22" map of the island of Redonda, priced at \$4, postpaid. Yet to come is the final volume in set, *Shiel in Diverse Hands*, a collection of essays about Shiel and his works by such writers as Sam Moskowitz, Paul Spencer, John D. Squires, Harold Billings, Steve Eng, and Mike Barrett, among others. John D. Squires, P. O. Box 67 MCS, Dayton, OH 45402.

SF BOOK CLUB

October selections from the SF Book Club are *Beyond the Blue Event Horizon* by Frederik Pohl, at \$3.50, and *Universe 10* edited by Terry Carr, at \$2.49. The former was a Del Rey hardcover in February and the latter was an early August release from Doubleday (see Trade Books this issue). SF Book Club, Garden City, NY 11535.



Trade Books



(Artist: Michael Whelan)

ACE BOOKS

It seems to be that Ace Books is establishing a tradition of having a trade paperback promotion in October. Scheduled for this October are four trade paperback originals. *Dragons of Light* edited by Orson Scott Card is the first of two original anthologies on the theme of dragons. It contains a dozen new stories plus a poem, each illustrated by different artists. For a complete list of the contents and artists in this and the next volume (*Dragons of Darkness*), see the "Work in Progress" section of FN #23. Price is \$7.95.

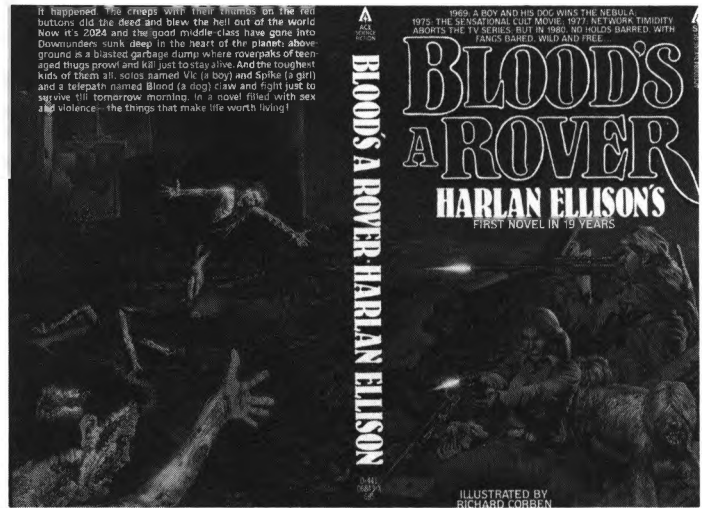
Blood's A Rover, priced at \$6.95, is Harlan Ellison's long-awaited novelization of his earlier story, "A Boy and His Dog," set on a post-holocaust Earth. The trade paperback is illustrated by Richard Corben and contains stills from the 1975 cult movie.

Two original novels are *Direct Descent* by Frank Herbert and *Survey Ship* by Marion Zimmer Bradley. In the former, Earth has become the repository of knowledge for the entire galaxy—"a planet of monkish librarians"—and is thus unprepared when warships of alien invaders show up. The Bradley novel is about the trials and tribulations of six young men and women aboard a Survey Ship seeking new planets for human colonization. Both are priced at \$6.95. Ace Books, 51 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10010.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

Coming from Houghton Mifflin in October is *Unfinished Tales* by

(Artist: Richard Corben)



J. R. R. Tolkien, a 368-page collection of narratives from the world of Middle-earth, assembled and edited by Christopher Tolkien. In addition to an introduction, he provides commentary on each of the tales. The 6" by 9" hardcover volume includes six maps and is priced at \$15.

A nonfiction title of interest is the updated second edition of *Black Holes, Quasars, and the Universe* by Harry L. Shipman. The author provides an account of discoveries and developments in the field of astronomy over the past twenty years and describes the new picture of the universe that has emerged. The \$14.95 book is illustrated with photographs and line drawings. Houghton Mifflin Co., 2 Park St., Boston, MA 02107.

BALLANTINE BOOKS

An October release from Ballantine Books is *The Art of The Empire Strikes Back* by Vic Bulluck and Valerie Hoffman. Following the success of *The Art of Star Wars*, this 176-page, 9" by 12" volume is a collection of production and matte paintings, sketches, costume illustrations and storyboards from the motion picture, all reproduced in full color. The book will be available as a \$12.95 trade paperback and as a \$25 hardcover. Ballantine Books, 201 East 50th St., New York, NY 10022.

FAWCETT COLUMBINE

Fawcett Columbine fall trade paperback releases will include two nonfiction titles of interest. *Toward Distant Suns* by T. A. Heppenheimer (author of the mind-expanding *Colonies in Space*) describes mankind's future expansion into space based upon what we know now. Price is \$8.95. *Isaac Asimov's*

Book of Facts is a 512-page compendium of 3,000 little-known facts (example: the Egyptians trained baboons to wait on tables), priced at \$6.95.

Fawcett's trade paperback of *The Number of the Beast* by Robert A. Heinlein (see FN #24,27) went into a second printing prior to its August 1st release, bringing the total number of copies in print to 113,000. The library hardcover edition of the novel, originally announced at \$10.95, has been priced at \$14.95. Fawcett Columbine, 1515 Broadway, New York, NY 10036.

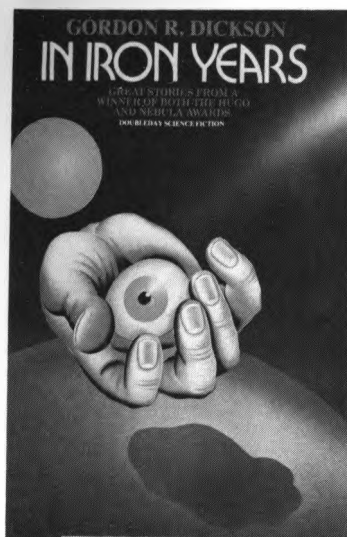
SCHOCKEN BOOKS

Masquerade by Kit Williams is a new, illustrated fantasy for children and young adults due out in October, which Schocken is comparing to the popularity of Peter Rabbit. The hero of the book is Jack Hare, who has been entrusted with the gift of the Moon and the Sun. The 32-page, 8½" by 11" volume contains 15 full color illustrations by the author and is priced at \$9.95. Schocken Books, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016.

DOUBLEDAY

Doubleday releases scheduled for October include a new Arthurian fantasy novel by Parke Godwin entitled *Firelord*, priced at \$11.95. According to Doubleday, Godwin has taken the Arthurian legend and its people "out of the realm of fairy tales and place(d) them in the post-Roman Britain where they actually lived." Also planned for October is a new collection of stories by Craig Strete entitled *If All Else Fails...* Price is \$8.95.

An August release that has appeared (as previewed in FN #27) is *Universe 10* edited by Terry Carr,



(Artist: Soren Amundson)

the tenth volume in his original anthology series. Included in the \$8.95 volume are ten new stories by James Tiptree, Jr., R. A. Lafferty, Lee Killough, Howard Waldrop, Charles E. Elliott, Eric G. Iverson, Mary C. Pangborn, F. M. Busby, and Carter Scholz.

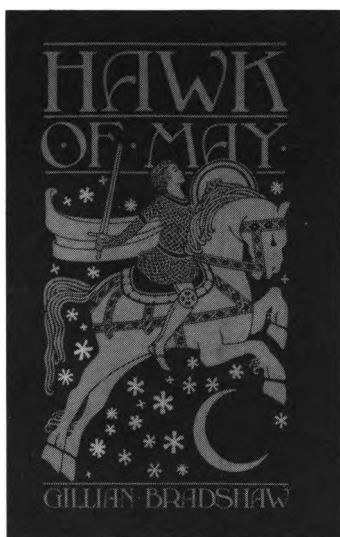
In *Iron Years* by Gordon R. Dickson, which should be hitting bookstores as this issue is being mailed, is his latest story collection. Included are seven stories: "In Iron Years," "Homecoming," "A Taste of Tenure," "The Hours Are Good," "Gifts," "Zeepsday," and "Things Which Are Caesar's." Price is \$9.95. Doubleday & Co., Inc., 245 Park Ave., New York, NY 10017.

SIMON & SCHUSTER

A May release from Simon & Schuster that I overlooked a couple of issues back is *Hawk of May* by Gillian Bradshaw, her first novel in a new Arthurian fantasy trilogy. (She recently completed the second volume, *The Kingdom of Summer*, and is at work on the third.) The novel chronicles the adventures of Gwalchmai, a princeling in sixth century Britain who leaves his home in the fortress castle of Dun Fionn to become a knight in the young King Arthur's court of Camlann. Price is \$10.95.

POMEGRANATE PUB.

Now available from Pomegranate Publications are two unusual and very attractive wall calendars for 1981. The 1981 *Kirwan Calendar* displays 12 paintings by the artist Kirwan--an artist I've never before encountered, but who does some incredibly beautiful work! The scenes are all rather generic fantasy scenes of castles, winged horses, beautiful women, fantastic sailing ships with warriors, etc.



(Artist: Fred Marcelino)

Most are oil on canvas with breathtakingly brilliant colors. A few are scenes of bookshelves with various heroes, heroines and creatures emerging from the tomes. I'm tempted to reproduce one of the plates here, but I couldn't do them justice in black and white. One has to see it to believe it.

The other calendar is *The Unicorn Calendar for 1981*, consisting of 12 paintings of unicorns by eight artists: Stewart Daniels, Jay Burch, Sheila Rose, Wolfgang

Grasse, Vaclav Vaca, Charles Ware, Kirwan (a plate from his calendar), and Dale Rutter (who has five of the plates). This one is nice, but nothing like the *Kirwan Calendar*. Both are priced at \$5.95. Pomegranate, P. O. Box 748, Corte Madera, CA 94925.

BERKLEY/PUTNAM

Two July releases that appeared on schedule from Berkley/Putnam (as previewed in FN #26) are *City of Baraboo* by Barry B. Longyear and *Wizard* by John Varley.

City of Baraboo is a science fiction novel about Earth's last travelling circus, which sets out on a galactic tour performing on other worlds and keeping one step ahead of its creditors. The novel is comprised of stories that have appeared in *Asimov's SF Magazine* and *Asimov's SF Adventure Magazine*. Price is \$10.95.

Wizard is Varley's sequel to *Titan*, taking place about 75 years after the events in the first book. The \$12.95 book bears a jacket design similar to Berkley's paperback of *Titan*, accompanied by two interior b&w illustrations by Freff. Berkley Books, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. *

Call For Critics **Call For Authors**

PAPERS ARE INVITED on more than 60 topics concerning the fantastic in literature, film, art, music and theatre. For complete details, send name and address to:

Robert A. Collins, Coordinator, Conference on the Fantastic, Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, Florida 33431.

READINGS BY AUTHORS of contemporary fiction in the fantastic vein are also welcomed. Professional writers who wish to consider a 30-minute reading from a new work before a select audience are encouraged to contact Timothy Robert Sullivan, 1675 N.W. 4th Ave. # 712, Boca Raton, Florida 33432.

BRIAN W. ALDISS will begin the program of readings with "Last Orders"; Mr. Aldiss will also present the Conference Keynote Address, "The Endurance of the Fantastic."

The Thomas Burnett Swann Fund

SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE Fantastic IN THE ARTS

MARCH 18-21, 1981

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES • FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY • BOCA RATON, FLORIDA

INTERVIEW

Stanton A. Coblentz

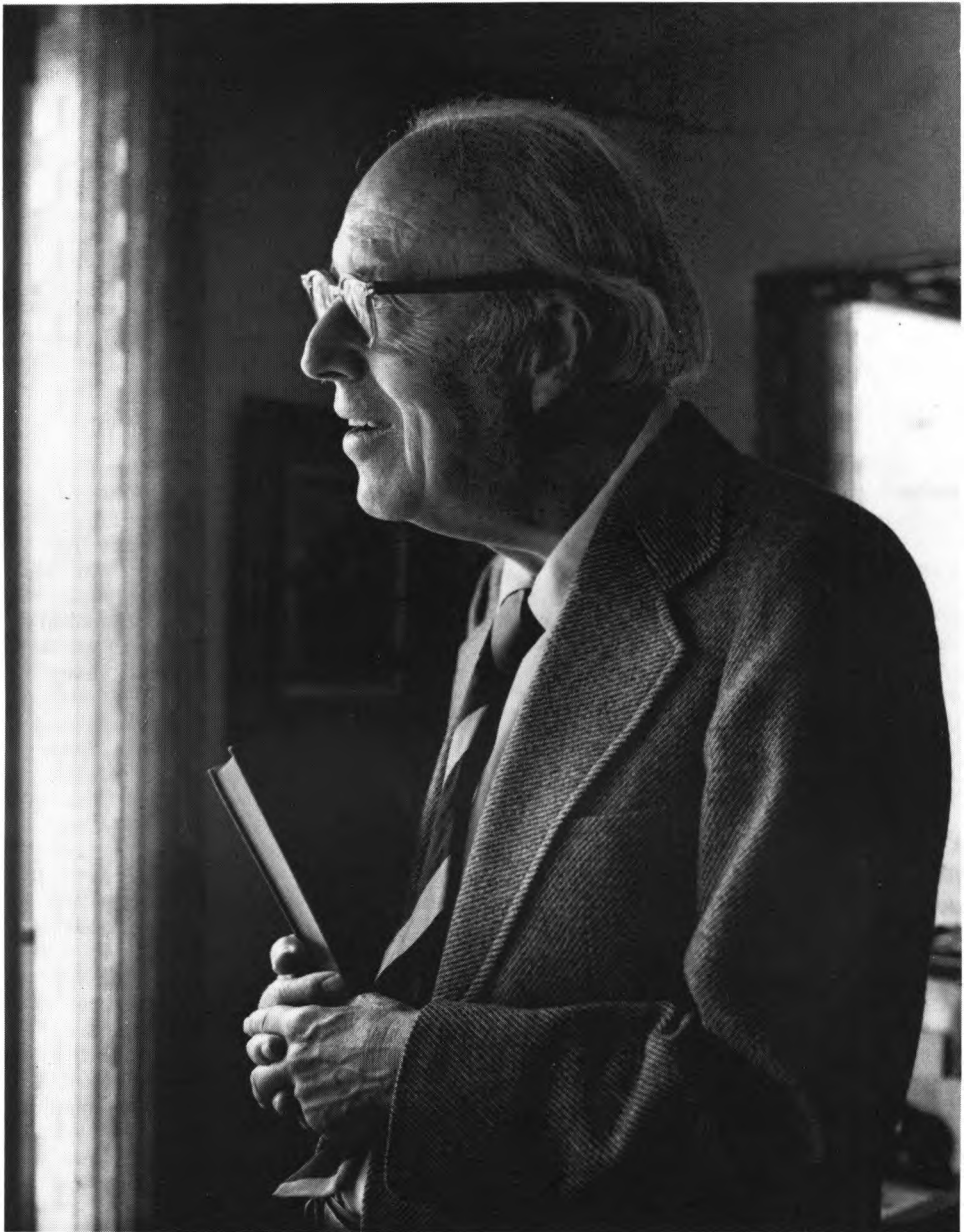
Dr. Jeffrey Elliot

*"I Pant for the Music
Which is Divine"*

Stanton A. Coblentz was born in San Francisco, California, August 24, 1896, and one of his earliest remembrances is that of the great earthquake and fire of 1906. He was educated at the University of California at Berkeley, from which he received a Bachelor's degree in 1917 and a Master's degree in 1919. (His thesis was entitled "The Poetic Revival in America.") In 1918, Coblentz won a Peace Poem prize offered by the San Francisco Chronicle, and shortly thereafter began reviewing books for the long established magazine, the Argonaut. The following year he was employed by the San Francisco Examiner as a writer of daily feature poems. In 1920, Coblentz left for New York, where he remained for eighteen years, as book reviewer and feature writer for the New York Times, Sun, Post, and other metropolitan periodicals. His first prose volume--the first in a list of more than sixty titles to date--was *The Decline of Man*, published in 1925.

It was in the mid-1920s that--without even knowing of the existence of the form of writing later to be known as science fiction--Stanton A. Coblentz wrote some of the novels that were to be hailed as among the early science fiction classics: *After 12,000 Years*, *The Blue Barbarians*, *The Sunken World*, and *The Planet of Youth*, which were to be serialized or published in single issues of magazines. At about the same time, he entered the related field of fantasy in *When the Birds Fly South*, and of pre-history in the cave man story, *The Wonder Stick*. In the realm of imaginative fiction, his stories were featured in many of the genre's earliest and most respected publications, including *Amazing Stories*, *Astounding Stories*, *Wonder Stories*, and *Weird Tales*.

Coblentz has also written deftly on the evolution of society, as illustrated by such books as *From Arrow to Atom Bomb*, *The Long Road to Humanity*, *The Power Trap*, *Demons*, *Witch Doctors*, and *Modern Man*, *Avarice: A History*, *The Challenge to Man's Survival*, and *Ten*



Crises in Civilization, among others. As a social and political commentator, he has written poignantly and tellingly on the subject of war.

In 1933, Stanton Coblentz established *Wings*, a well-known poetry quarterly of which he was editor and publisher during the entire 27½ years of its existence. In the field of verse, he has built a towering reputation as one of this country's most eminent poets. Indeed, in the preface to Coblentz's book, *Time's Travelers*, the famed

fantasy writer, Lord Dunsany, declares: "It is not for me from three thousand miles away to say who is the greatest living poet on the continent of America; I can only say who is the greatest one that I know...and the greatest one I can see to the west is Stanton Coblentz." In addition to such well-received books of poetry and criticism as *The Pageant of Man*, *The Lone Adventurer*, *The Mountain of the Sleeping Maiden*, *The Poetry Circus*, *My Life in Poetry*, and *The Rise of the Anti-Poets*, he has also

compiled five widely praised anthologies of verse: Modern American Lyrics, Modern British Lyrics, The Music Makers, Unseen Wings, and Poems to Change Lives.

As a first-order poet and poetry editor, Coblenz has long championed the traditional values which inspired his heroes: Shelley, Coleridge, Keats, Wordsworth, and Shakespeare. His steadfast stand in favor of classical verse has earned him many adversaries as well as supporters, at times to the detriment of his career.

Asked to assess the impact of his opposition to the excesses of "modernism," he reflects: "It may seem banal to say this, but the qualities I most prize are the ancient ones of earnestness, sincerity, courage, pertinacity, good faith, esthetic sensitivity, a love of man and of nature and animals, and inflexibility in the pursuit of one's ideals... To me it literally seemed that the game was not worth the candle if one did not stick to one's ideals; renown and material rewards in poetry would be of no account if acquired at the cost of principle."

Today, Stanton Coblenz resides in Monterey, California, where he continues to write vigorously and effectively, both as a book reviewer for the Los Angeles Times and other publications and as a novelist, having recently completed a new science fiction work, the first in several decades.

Elliot: In your autobiography, *My Life in Poetry*, you write: "During my entire adult life and even back into the vivid brooding days of adolescence, one subject has had for me a light, an allurements, and a liveliness beyond all others. This subject happens to be that of poetry..." Looking back, what was it about poetry that inspired you as a young man and continues to hold you to this day?

Coblenz: It was in my adolescence that it first dawned upon me, a light, a new sun, a wonder, a discovery, a radiance that put fresh enchantment into the world and pointed to a gorgeous universe having little in common with our mundane realm of streets and houses, trolleys and shops. Poetry not only opened a realm of enchanted sights and colors and majestic sounds and rare images, but also a tremendous domain of feeling, which stirred me with its reality of suffering and sorrow, longing, aspiration and regret. It did not matter that these emotions were not mine,

in the sense that they reflected nothing in my experience; in the deepest and most meaningful sense they were mine, since it was as if the poems had provided a pathway into other minds, or had given me access to that vast underlying substratum of emotion which is the universal heritage, and which awaits to be opened by either of the two great guardians: life or art. In this case, it was the art of the poet that admitted me to the hidden reality, and enabled me to love and triumph, grieve and worship, despair and rejoice with men and women whom I had never met and who, in most cases, had been dead for many years.

Elliot: Early in your life, your reading of poetry proved a consolation for despair. As you tell it, "Over the pages of this book (Bryant's *A Library of Poetry and Song*) I would linger for hours, making new friends and resuming acquaintance with old ones, in whom I found a companionship of thought and mood which, especially after the difficult period after I left home, I did not meet anywhere in the human world about me." Why did you find it so easy to relate to the words of the poet, particularly when so many youngsters find verse so abstract, so distant, so alien?

Coblenz: The reason is plain and simple. The sort of material being dished out to the young as poetry today is more often than not "abstract, distant, and alien." And the work that Bryant selected for his anthology, while characteristic of an earlier age, was rarely if ever those things. It spoke directly to the mind and heart; it aroused the imagination; it appealed to the esthetic sense, not only because of the sights and scenes of beauty which it celebrated, but because the regular meter and rhythm of the work, the rhyme (even though some of the noblest writing was in blank verse) and the mellifluous verbal effects all had the appeal of finished craftsmanship.

Elliot: As an aspiring poet, you dreamed often of what it would be like to be part of that world, though you had little first-hand contact with any poets. Interestingly, you had a clear picture in mind of what a poet was like. He was, in your words, one of those "divine creatures who were born old and gray bearded, with a great shock of grizzled, unkempt hair, blazing eyes, and perhaps long, trailing, patriarchal robes." What were your reactions when you met your first poet "in the flesh?" To what degree

did he conform to your stereotype?

Coblenz: I do not recall which was the first "real" poet that I met; the list included Leonard Bacon, Witter Bynner, and George Sterling. But it was perhaps Sterling that I came to know the best. He was in every sense of the term a poet, a genuine poet who was widely known in his time and deserves much more than the near-oblivion into which he has fallen. He comes back to my mind as tall, lean, and handsome, with something indefinably different in his appearance. The scene of our first meeting was the Bohemian Club, where he had a room provided to him by the members in recognition of his poetic accomplishments. He did not at all look like the patriarchal bearded poet of my earlier imaginings. That role came nearer to being fulfilled by Edwin Markham, whom I met at his Staten Island home in 1920, and whose gracious aspect and manner I have never forgotten.

Elliot: Can you trace the source of your first attempted poem? How did it come about? How does it stand up?

Coblenz: The source of my first attempted poem was the sorrow and mystery that attended the death of my mother, who died rather suddenly and unexpectedly at the age of 39, when I was but 13, the oldest of three boys (I had no sisters). Brooding upon death and its mystery caused me to make my first effort in poetry, a bit of blank verse whose first two lines I recall, though most of the rest has long ago passed out of my mind:

A boundless ocean of eternity
Stretches on all sides of a
tiny isle.

I do not consider this either a good or an original poem, although some deep feeling went into it. As to how it was received? I doubt if more than half a dozen people ever read it, including my father; and I cannot recall that anyone overflowed with praise. I never made an effort to have it published.

Elliot: Like many young poets, your apprenticeship proved to be a thorny one, full of unexpected obstacles. What were some of the trials you experienced in the process of establishing yourself as a published poet?

Coblenz: This period was surrounded by difficulties, but it seemed to me at the time and still seems to me that I had reason to be grateful for the acceptance that was

accorded me. My first book of verse, *The Thinker and Other Poems* (1923), though far from my best in my opinion, was more widely and sympathetically received than any book by a newcomer could even hope for nowadays. It is true that I had to steel myself against the constant flow of rejection slips in my direction, but that was but the lot of every young poet, and the rejections were seasoned with perhaps more than the average percentage of acceptances. It was also true that few if any of the larger and better established publishers would so much as consider the work of the young and unknown. It was true, furthermore, that even after one had found a publisher, not all was pearly on the road before one. I remember, for example, that after the appearance of one of the books I most prized, the first edition of *The Lone Adventurer* (1927), I was astonished to find copies of a new edition, with the original paper but narrower margins, on the bargain counter of a large New York drug store. Investigation disclosed that the publisher had gone bankrupt (not, I hope, due to his selection of my book); and the binder, one of the largest and most reputable in the city, had seized some hundreds of unbound copies of *The Lone Adventurer*, bound them at his own expense, and distributed them to low-priced retail outlets. Of course, he had no right to do this, as it was in violation of my copyright. But he was an affable man, and readily agreed to pay me royalties. I should add that neither of us grew rich from the transaction.

Elliot: Although you admired the talents of many poets, Shelley was your favorite. Why? What was it about his poetry that made it sing for you?

Coblentz: Shelley was the poet who, more than any other, pointed out the magical paths, the lines over whose sound I would revel, and whose implications lifted me like some wind of the spirit. He had a lyrical capacity never excelled, in my belief, in the English language, or perhaps in any language; and because his lyric depths did not prevent his poetry from being the receptacle of profound thought.

Elliot: To what extent, as you see it, is a poet born, as opposed to learned? What part is genetic in his makeup? What part is learned?

Coblentz: As I see it, a talent for poetry is more innate than acquired. True, cultivation of the

talent is essential. Through the appropriate education; through reading of the poets; through practice at his craft; and perhaps most of all, through encouragement and the knowledge of the existence of an audience, the born poet may advance on his way. But none of these requirements will suffice unless the man or woman has a native gift for poetry; one could as easily turn everyone into a master of the violin or an inventive genius as into a poet no matter what the incentive.

Elliot: As you view them, what are the chief aims and ambitions of the poet, as you lived and practiced them?

Coblentz: It is to express the forces within him that would otherwise be voiceless. It is to delineate truth in the robes of beauty. It is to give body and permanent expression to all that is deepest and most compelling within him. It is to express in compressed, memorable, and enduring speech the moods, the perceptions, the realizations that are distinctively his and yet may form a vital part of the great procession of human thought. The above, of course, represents an ideal. But without the ideal, reality becomes flat and tasteless.

Elliot: In writing about the world of the poet, you state: "When the poet creates, he dwells for a time in a different universe, a universe akin to the realm of trance, wherein he is literally spellbound in the clasp of moods, imaginings, thoughts, and feelings that transport him out of himself and above himself, or enable him to draw upon the better, deeper, and normally hidden parts of himself." Can you describe this world in which the poet dwells? What state comes over him as he pens his verse? What environment is necessary to produce this state?

Coblentz: Nothing but the work of the poet himself can "spell out" this world in which the poet works. What happens to him is that he is literally transferred to some other sphere of consciousness which must be experienced to be understood—that is to say, if it can be understood even then. The necessary environment is one of tranquility and silence, in which the likelihood of mundane interruptions is reduced to a minimum.

Elliot: You have been described in print as "a leading exponent of traditional poetry" in America. Would you concur with this assess-

ment? In what ways would you define yourself as a "traditionalist?" What does this imply in terms of how you view stylistic invention?

Coblentz: All through my life, poetry has been for me a joy and a wonder, a pilot and an inspiration. But the poetry that has called to me has been a poetry of singing and ringing lines, of skylarks and a wild west wind, of lovers and midnight trysts, of mountains and stars and the towers of Camelot. It has been a poetry of all the dreams, the hopes and aspirations that make up life, all life's delights and sorrows, it searches and achievements and despairs, and its passionate reaching toward other worlds. Most of all, it has been a poetry of nobility and music. But this poetry, which has characterized all the great English-speaking bards until our own century, is part of our experience no longer. Not that some recent survivors of the old school, such as Robert Frost and Walter de la Mare, have not received considerable praise. But as far as the present generation is concerned, we in America, and, to a large extent, our contemporaries in England, have abandoned the very type of poetry that gave wings to Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and every other outstanding poet up to and including the earlier Yeats. In place of the mellifluous lines of Shelley, Keats and Poe, we have work that is deliberately raucous and consciously shocking. In place of the resounding utterances and profound meanings of Milton and Wordsworth, we have the apotheosis of triviality. All that was hailed as poetry yesterday has been abandoned today; literally, the non-poets and the antipoets have taken over.

Elliot: In 1933, you established *Wings*, a quarterly verse magazine for the field's most talented poets. What made *Wings* such an important publication? Why did it tower over its competition?

Coblentz: It seems to me, as I look back, that the success of my magazine *Wings* was due primarily to the fact that it fulfilled a need and lived up to an ideal—the need for a new outlet in which poets with "traditional" leanings might find an audience; and the ideal of a medium that would aim to maintain the highest standards, being, as every issue stated on the first page, "an independent poetry magazine, owned and published by the Editor, and without patrons or other financial supporters."

Elliot: Did you envisage, when you established *Wings*, that it would be such a successful publication? What hopes did you have when you launched the project? When did you know that you had created something special?

Coblentz: I did not envisage, when I established *Wings*, that it would be so successful. I remember listening a little dubiously to Flora, my wife, a person of extraordinary psychical powers, when at the very beginning she predicted success for the new venture. My own hopes were vague and general, and I did not realize that I had launched something special, although the thought of starting a poetry magazine had been in my mind in a vague sort of way for a number of years.

Elliot: There are those critics who contend that "real poetry is more often than not hard to read. Not much of it can be read rapidly, or quite understood at first reading--if at a last." Is this quality inherent in poetry itself? Can it be overcome in good poetry?

Coblentz: This is a wholly false idea. Incomprehensibility does not make good poetry--it simply stands in its way. Some poets, such as Browning in some of his work, are indeed hard to follow, but they are not better poets but poorer in consequence. Most of the best poetry, and particularly lyric poetry, is easy to follow.

Elliot: You have taken steady aim at those poets who maintain that because we are "living in an age of rush, nervousness and clangor, the poetry of the time should express itself in the manner of a riveting machine or a bulldozer." Is it dangerous, as you view it, for poetry to reflect such mundane realities?

Coblentz: I have never at any time said or knowingly implied that poetry should not deal with present realities such as a riveting machine or a bulldozer. In my anthology, *The Music Makers*, I include the poem "Gargantua" ("To a Steam Shovel"), by Hugh Wilgus Ramsaur. In my book-length poem, "The Pageant of Man," I frequently bring in the apparatus of the modern world. My point is, and always has been, that here is indeed possible subject matter for the poet, but that it must be treated in the speech and manner of poetry, and not with the voice of a steam whistle or an electric drill. In the poem "Gargantua," mentioned above, the author crosses the gap between prose and

poetry when he imagines "some lost monster of the Saurian Age... Swooping to gore the earth with seething rage... A fuming pterodactyl in a cage."

Elliot: Despite your lifelong affection for poetry, few people in this matter-of-fact world, derive the same inner pleasure. What accounts for this sad fact? Why has poetry failed to capture a larger audience?

Coblentz: As a writer of poetry, the editor for 27 years of a widely circulated poetry magazine, a lecturer on poetry and a reader of my own poetry before the public, I have come across vast hidden currents of poetic interest. But this interest is not in the abstruse, the exhibitionistic, and the freakish work which is no more than prose (and often a low grade of prose) masquerading as poetry. People are interested, I have found, in poetry that has a message for them, poetry that touches upon their own lives and emotions and those of the people they know, poetry that may be "emotion recollected in tranquility" and that speaks to them without affectation and pretense. Such poetry is the kind that, of its very nature, may sing. But such poetry is not such as the typical "moderns" will bring to their doors.

Elliot: You observe in your autobiography: "While the fiction writer may cherish the hope of ultimate acceptance and recognition, the poet need entertain no such illusion. He need entertain no such illusion unless he be gifted with an ample bank account." Could you elaborate on this statement? What does it say about the genre? What does it say about the public? What does it say about the poet?

Coblentz: More than half a century ago, a leading New York publisher informed me that he handled books as he would have handled hardware had he been in the hardware business. Few publishers are so frank, and not all are so crass in their attitude, but this comes very close to expressing the attitude of American publishers toward poetry in recent decades. Why, they ask, should they produce books of verse that booksellers will refuse to stock? Consequently, it is almost impossible for a new poet or one little known to find a publisher. There are, to be sure, the greedily competing "vanity publishers," but they act more often as printers rather than as true publishers. There are also the rare publication

prizes of certain universities and literary foundations, but these are far too few to meet the needs. And an author solidly established for his prose may on occasion be offered a contract by a publisher who wishes to keep the poet on his prose list. But few poets are this fortunate. If this situation is discouraging, even more so is the fact that poetry has been nearly abandoned by periodicals. At one time, the *New York Times*, the *Herald Tribune*, and other leading newspapers offered the poet a daily haven on the editorial page; and most if not all the outstanding magazines published poetry, often of high quality. Today all of this is changed. When alleged poetry appears in magazines such as the *Atlantic* and the *New Republic*, it most often has the qualities of poor and sometimes affected prose, while representing poetry in such an obnoxious light as to discourage possible readers. At the same time, the majority of magazines have dropped poetry entirely. The defect, of course, may be in the age. But it may also reflect a lowering in the standards of editorship.

Elliot: As a newspaper journalist, you had the opportunity to interview Albert Einstein. What do you recall of the experience? How did Einstein impress you?

Coblentz: Albert Einstein did impress me deeply with his quiet but masterful personality, and by the simple but convincing way in which he set out to explain relativity to an unknown young journalist like myself. I recall, on the other hand, how another young interviewer was rebuffed when he asked Einstein what he ate for breakfast. "That question," the great physicist answered, "is too trivial to deserve a reply."

Elliot: You were one of the earliest writers of science fiction, at a time when neither you nor anyone else suspected that the genre would ever be widely popular. What was the state of science fiction when you entered the field?

Coblentz: The state of science fiction, when I entered the field in the late twenties, was that of a fledgling venturing forth uncertainly on an unknown path. Aside from a few devotees like Hugo Gernsback, there were few who took it seriously, even though it did have a long and respectable ancestry, among whom Jules Verne and H. G. Wells had been among the most prominent. I have reason to know that, owing perhaps in large part to the

tional fantasy and some of it isn't fantasy at all. But you may like it. The 68-page issue is priced at \$3 and copies of #1 are still available at \$3. Annual subscriptions to the quarterly magazine are \$10. Magical Blend, P. O. Box 11303, San Francisco, CA 94101.

STARSHIP

Featured in *Starship* #39 are an interview with George R. R. Martin, "Memoir: I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream" by Harlan Ellison, part 3 of "The Silverberg Papers" by Robert Silverberg, and "In Pursuit of Ubik" by Michael Bishop, in addition to the usual columns by Vincent DiFate ("Sketches"), Robert Stewart ("Filmedia"), and Susan Wood (book reviews). The cover this issue is by Paul Lehr and additional artists include C. Lee Healy, Lee Hoffman, Alan Hunter, and Bill Rotsler. With the drop in advertising, *Starship* is now down to 52 pages and priced at \$2.50. Subscriptions are \$8 for 4 quarterly issues.

MASQUERADE

If you're into fantasy and SF costuming or if (like me) you've merely enjoyed watching the masquerade balls at various cons, the

chances are you'll enjoy *Masquerade* #1, published by fantasy writer Mike Resnick. The 52-page issue, printed on slick enamel stock, provides some historical perspective on convention masquerade balls and covers some of the outstanding costumes exhibited at conventions over the past 15 or so years. Also included are articles on costuming by Marjii Ellers, Kathey Sanders and Carol Resnick. The issue features more than 70 photographs of people in (and falling out of) costumes. \$4 per copy. Mike Resnick, 11216 Gideon Lane, Cincinnati, OH 45242.

FANTASY READERS GUIDE

Just out from the Cosmos Literary Agency in Britain is Mike Ashley's second *Fantasy Readers Guide*, this time devoted to British horror writer Ramsey Campbell. Included in the 66-page, digest size guide are two previously unpublished stories by Campbell, "Before the Storm" (an early one) and "The Gap;" an autobiographical essay by Campbell; articles about him by Hugh Lamb, Jack Sullivan and T. E. D. Klein; and a complete bibliography of his works. There's no price on this, but the address to write for information is: Cosmos Literary Agency, 32 Tynedale Ave., Wallsend, Co. Tyne & Wear., U.K.

WHOLE FANZINE CATALOG

If this selection of fan press items turns you on, you might want to try Brian Earl Brown's *The Whole Fanzine Catalog*, a quarterly fanzine containing mini-reviews and ordering information for literally hundreds of fan publications from around the world. Included are all kinds of fanzines, ranging from the slick magazines and semi-prozines that I (for the most part) limit myself to here, on down to even the smallest mimeographed (and dittoed) personalzines. Included are many club zines from many parts of the country (and the world) that I don't have room to cover--there are a lot of them. *WoFan* is published quarterly; the current issue is #16, running 24 mimeographed, digest size pages. Single copies are 50¢ and subscriptions are 4 issues for \$2. Brian Earl Brown, 16711 Burt Road, #207, Detroit, MI 48219.

As usual, all fan press items mentioned here are offset printed and 8½" by 11" in format, unless otherwise indicated. The prices given here include the publisher's postage charge (wherever known) and may therefore be slightly higher than the price printed on the magazine's cover. *

Have You Lost Out On These Unique Items . . .

. . . RIVERWORLD WAR by Philip Jose Farmer (5 unpublished chapters from THE MAGIC LABYRINTH, in a 500 copy signed edition); THE DREAM WEAVER by Jane Yolen (stories by a F&SF favorite, illustrated with full color plates by Mike Hague); THE BOOK OF THE DUN COW when it was first published in hardcover; SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE THEATRICAL MYSTERY (150 copy numbered edition); and much more including unusual fanzines like *Nyctalops*, *Farmer-Age*, *Fantasy Tales*, *Pandora*, *The Weird Tales Collector*, *The Doc Savage Club Reader*, *The Dr. Who Review*, *The Armchair Detective* and many many more!

If so, then you have not been receiving our monthly annotated catalogs of science fiction, fantasy, mystery and pulp material. We stock all of the major new books, paperbacks and fanzines

in all of these fields as well as many other unusual items that you won't find in any other listing. We are full time book dealers and offer fast, friendly, efficient service. Our packers are collectors themselves so treat your order with the same care that they would want shown to books they would order through the mail.

Some of the many publishers we stock include Donald Grant, Miller-Underwood, Carcosa, Whispers Press, Owlswick, Mysterious Press, Del Rey, Phantasia Press, Arkham House, Pulp Press and many others, including a large selection of remainders and bargain books. We also have a huge stock of British paperbacks including over forty Dr. Who titles.

Send now for a free copy of our latest catalog. We think you'll be pleasantly surprised.

ROBERT & PHYLLIS WEINBERG

15145 OXFORD DR. OAK FOREST, ILLINOIS 60452

BOOK
SPECIALISTS

(312) 687-5765

to work with?

Coblentz: Among the "major" science fiction writers of the time, I especially remember Dr. David H. Keller, who, although a physician, was a prolific and accomplished writer in the science fiction field. Was it difficult to crack the market of *Amazing Stories*? I can only tell of my own experience. Having written *The Sunken World*, among other lengthy stories with the hope of book publication, and seeing no promise in that direction, I was interested to read of the establishment of a new magazine to be based upon what was called "scientifiction"—which is to say, stories built about science or scientific possibilities. Promptly, I brought the manuscript down to the office of the new magazine, which was called *Amazing Stories*. Several weeks later I received word that the story would be accepted--if I could reduce its 90,000 words

to 30,000. Such a feat of compression would have tried the skill of a literary Hercules, which I did not pretend to be. Hence, I made my second visit to the office of *Amazing*, and asked for my manuscript, which was duly returned. Several more weeks went by. Then, to my surprise, I received a letter from *Amazing*. If I still had my manuscript, they would be glad to publish it without alteration. This was only the first of my many contributions to *Amazing*, and I was never again asked by them to cut or otherwise change any of my manuscripts. The editor-in-chief was Hugo Gernsback, but the man I worked with was Dr. T. O'Connor Sloane, a scientist who, gray-bearded and with a long serious slender face, had a sense of humor and an affability that made him a delight to work with.

Elliot: *Hidden World*, your popular science fiction novel, satirically

chronicles the lives of two youthful engineers who become enmeshed in an underground world of continuous, senseless war between the states of Wu and Zu. In that book, both the American and European cultures come in for sharp satire. Did *Hidden World* have a specific message? Was your use of satire an effective story device? How was the novel received at the time?

Coblentz: My novel, *Hidden World* (originally published as *In Caverns Below*) certainly did have a specific message. That specific message was connected with warfare and the folly that goes into its making and the tinsel standards honored by those who make it and prepare for it. So far as I am able to judge from the story's reception, satire was effective in this book, which has been several times reprinted in book form as well as serialized in a Canadian magazine.

The Victory Behind Defeat

Many years ago, on an exploratory hike among the rocky fastnesses of Mt. Tamalpais north of San Francisco, my wife and I had a minor experience that seems of more than minor significance. We came out on a bare trail of the mountain's southern flank, where the ridges to the west shouldered out the usual cool sea breezes, and we soon tired in the heat of a remorseless sun. "Let's go back!" my companion suggested. "There's nothing here for us."

I was inclined to agree, but something within me balked at accepting defeat so easily. "Let's go on just a little further," I begged, though my words seemed foolish even in my own ears.

And so once again we plodded on. But we had not trudged another quarter-mile when a side-trail, invisible from our former vantage place, branched off toward a grove of tall steepled redwoods. Here, where a stream of delicious clear water trickled down among ferns and moss, we were to spend reposeful hours many a time in a fairy-like nook. Yet this would have remained unknown to us had we not pushed on when we seemed on a hopeless track.

Sometimes I recall this experience when laboring in uncertainty on another kind of trail--the writer's trail of twists and turns, sunlight and shadow, and unpredictable dips and ascents. Not in my case only but in the lives of many I have known there have been choices

on the mysterious slopes, while some have turned back amid flint and briars beneath a withering sun, while others have gritted their teeth and risen to the majestic heights in the victory that lies behind apparent defeat.

Historical instances are not few. One thinks of the eighteenth century English poet Thomas Chatterton, Keats' "marvelous boy," who, after severe hardships, lost faith in himself and in his magnificent beckoning career and took his own life when still three months from his eighteenth birthday. One thinks of Oliver Goldsmith, whose "Deserted Village" is among the masterpieces of English poetry, although the author, amid work and neglect, had not the self-confidence to devote himself fully to poetry. One thinks of Keats, who lived true to his faith that "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," and took his place among the giants of English poetry yet died in the belief that his name had been "writ upon water." Much of the difference among such poets in the world's eyes can undoubtedly be traced to their own outlook toward their work, the degree of their devotion, faith and perseverance.

And if this is true of the writers of yesterday, it is no less the case with more recent authors. Far too many, from the accomplished but little known English poet John Davidson through our own Jack London and Ernest Hemingway, have fallen beneath the shadow of suicide or

suspected suicide. An example is the California poet George Sterling who earned a well deserved national reputation in the first quarter of this century, only to be clubbed down by his own dismal philosophy when his possibly supreme attainments may have been before him. Other writers such as Coleridge and De Quincey have been clutched by the opium-eater's imprisoning habit, and the same has been true of uncounted numbers on the alcoholic's road to oblivion. One thinks of the outstanding figure of Poe, whose short life surely had greater potentialities than he actually brought to light. And one thinks of lesser writers, such as the English lyricist Ernest Dowson, dead from his own drinking bouts when but 33. In some of these cases, perhaps the outer circumstances were too grim to be overcome by the struggling writer; in other cases, the deadly blow may have been struck by a defeatist tendency to give up before all has been lost. Sometimes we may place the blame on disappointments, the disillusionments, the slippery feet and disastrous falls that trip so many; but on other occasions the individual reactions may be more important, as in the example of the path to the elfin mountain haven which I mentioned above.

Each man, inevitably, knows no other case so well as his own. Therefore I trust that I may be pardoned if I illustrate the point by

Elliot: A science fiction classic, The Sunken World presents a fragment of the intriguing world of Atlantis, the "lost continent," and offers a novel explanation of the mystery. What generated your interest in Atlantis? How did you conceive the idea of the book? Do you believe in the "lost continent?"

Coblentz: I cannot, after well over fifty years, recall all the motives that went into the making of The Sunken World. The legend of Atlantis intrigued me, even though I thought it might be no more than a legend or at best an exaggeration of historical fact. I do not know what gave me the idea of an ideal world surviving beneath a great glass dome under the ocean, but the message of the book may be seen in the tragedy that overtook the sunken world upon its first contact, after many centuries, with the upper world.

Elliot: The Planet of Youth, another popular science fiction novel, presents a world in which men resort to a variety of dreadful means to win passage to this world of eternal life--Venus--the Planet of Youth. Was this novel intended as a commentary on man's preoccupation with youth? How did you attempt to treat this theme in the book?

Coblentz: The Planet of Youth was not meant as a commentary on man's preoccupation with youth, but rather it is a satire on the desire of an extension of man's material existence. For the world of the future, which was Venus as seen through the eyes of Earth, drew upon all the evil motives of those who sought eternal life. For present-day civilization, in view of all that man has experienced and all that he has come to dread in the decades since the explosion of the first atom bomb, the radiation that imperiled the unwary fugitives to Venus may

now be a warning beyond anything the author originally intended.

Elliot: Your science fiction novel, After 12,000 Years, asks the questions: "Will there be any men on Earth 12,000 years from now? If so, what will they be like?" What kind of world does Henry Merwin find himself in when he is transported 120 centuries into the future? Are there any parallels to the real world? Is this how you view the future?

Coblentz: The world of Henry Merwin in After 12,000 Years--a world in which the human race has been split into several species, while wars are waged over the weather with the aid of gigantic insects--does have parallels to our planet of today. I do not predict that this is the future that awaits us. But I do not deny that this is the direction in which we are moving.

by Stanton A. Coblentz

brief reference to some personal experiences. Presumably I have missed as many chances as anyone by sheer lack of perception, lack of hope and faith. Here, in any event, are a few incidents which I recall among a much larger number, and which may be attributed to chance or luck, although they have probably been paralleled in the careers of innumerable writers.

Many years ago I wrote an article which, having been unable to arouse any editor's interest in it, I submitted to a literary agent, who sent it back with the statement that there was no market for it. Not accepting this as final, I sent the article to a reputable but previously overlooked magazine, which promptly sent me a letter of acceptance.

During my same early period, I solicited books for review from a well-known weekly which I will call *Commonwealth*, and was sent a novel, *Main Street*, by the then little known writer Sinclair Lewis. I liked the book immensely but did not foresee that, during the few days in which I was preparing my review, the novel was to become a national sensation. This, I have always thought, was not unconnected with the immediate bouncing back of the review from the book editor of *Commonwealth*, who, in the following issue, published a review of *Main Street* under his own name. This turn-about struck me like an arrow. But not losing faith despite my

discouragement, I sent the rejected review to the well-known literary monthly *The Bookman*, which sent me a check almost before I had had time to wonder whether my article would come back to me again. Years later, the review was reprinted in Bader and Wells' anthology, *Essays of Three Decades*.

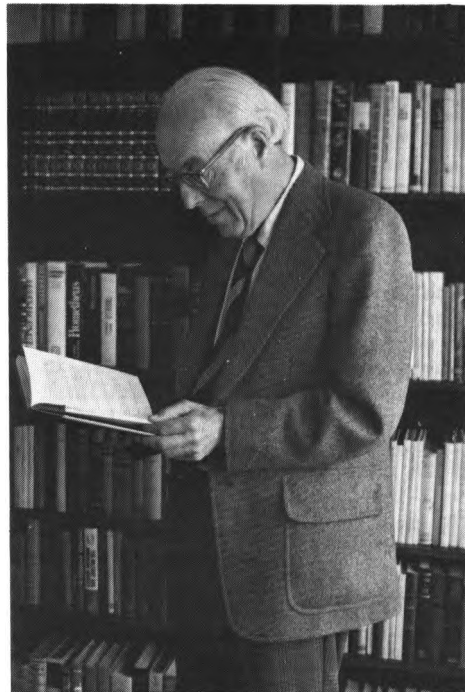
I could continue for many pages with reports of reversals in seeming luck: for example, the time when I took my first science fiction novel to the newly founded *Amazing Stories*, to be told that it would be accepted if I cut its 90,000 words to 30,000--an impossible request, which I refused, only to receive a letter about two weeks later, with an offer from *Amazing* to publish my novel unabridged.

Now for a final example out of the many I might mention. There was the publisher whom I will call Mr. F., who sent me a contract to write a book, which I completed just in time to learn that Mr. F. had sold his business to Mr. G., a man previously unknown to me, and, incidentally, not at all interested in my book. This left me at an impasse, the more so since the book was of a specialized nature; I was apparently left with nothing but a broken contract in my hands. The surprising sequel occurred weeks later: after some further, seemingly useless correspondence with Mr. F., I opened a letter telling me that he was re-entering the publishing business under a new name, and

would issue my book if I returned the manuscript.

Here, then, was a case--one out of many that dotted my path at various times--of the enchanted green retreat that flashed to view unexpectedly when I was almost ready to turn back on a hot, arid and dusty trail.

--Stanton A. Coblentz



(Photo: Angelo Butero Studios)

Elliot: How would you rank your fantasy novel, *When the Birds Fly South*, a work which has received widespread acclaim, with your other works of fiction?

Coblentz: Each author may, I suppose, be allowed his favorite among his literary offspring, and in my case, leaving out of account the poetry, I have never had any hesitation in naming *When the Birds Fly South* for first place, which is not only unique among my books but, in my own judgment, should be placed above any of my other works of fiction.

Elliot: If asked to evaluate your science fiction writing, how would you do so? Does it measure up to the high standards you achieved in your verse? Are you as proud of your efforts in the latter field as you are in the former?

Coblentz: What you are asking me, apparently, is whether I prefer poetry or science fiction. Personally, I would set the universe of poetry above that of science fiction, for the reason that it can reach deeper down into the human soul and into life and its meaning. But that does not mean--and I think my science fiction should say this for me--that I at all disdain the latter. As to how I evaluate my work in the two fields--that, I think, is a question that I can only answer by saying that it is the poetry that has moved me most deeply in the writing and has given me the greatest enjoyment both in the writing and as a finished product.

Elliot: Given the popular success that you enjoyed in the science fiction field, what made you stop writing such stories and turn to other genres?

Coblentz: The reasons for not continuing in the science fiction field were several. One was that it seemed to me that I had largely expressed what I had to express in that area. Another was that, in the later years, there were few if any magazines like *Amazing Stories*, which offered a ready market for book-length novels. And perhaps the most compelling reason was that I was absorbed in other fields of writing, including not only poetry but long prose discourses, some of them requiring extensive research. When you add (until 1960) the complete work of editing and publishing a quarterly verse magazine, you will probably see no need to look for further explanations.

Elliot: Do you still read science fiction? Does it interest you now?

Coblentz: Between book reviewing and a large amount of miscellaneous reading, I have had little if any time of late to read science fiction, although it still interests me. Some of the later work, however, dealing with such things as star wars and intergalactic excursions, is too remote from any conceivable reality to please my taste.

Elliot: Is there any relationship between poetry and science fiction? Did your work as a poet enhance the quality of your science fiction? Does the poet work in ways similar to those of the science fiction writer?

Coblentz: There is a vague relationship between poetry and science fiction, in that they both enter realms of the imagination, and both may at times draw upon the same subject matter (although actually one finds such an identity of theme in surprisingly few cases). Except in so far as there is something in common in the methods of all imaginative writers, I should not say that the ways of the poet are particularly similar to those of the science fiction writer.

Elliot: In your autobiography you indicate that "luck" has played a salient role in your professional life. In what ways has it affected your career development?

Coblentz: I am merely stating a platitude when I say that luck is as important to writers as to men in other fields--luck both good and bad, whose importance it may be difficult if not impossible for the person himself to estimate. In my case, I might mention several examples. It was bad luck of the worst kind as well as a tragedy to one I esteemed when a literary agent, a member of a leading New York firm who had taken an especial interest in my work and seemed on the way to inspiring publishers with his enthusiasm, died in a tragic railroad accident. But it was good luck, and of a kind that might seem nearer to fiction than to fact, when I had just set out as a writer and a four-line poem of mine won a prize in a Peace Poem contest of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and this happy stroke not only was instrumental in getting me regular work as a book reviewer for the well-known weekly magazine *The Argonaut*, but brought me to the attention of Edmund Coblentz (no relation of mine), managing editor of the *San Francisco Examiner*, who offered me

a job in which my main duty would be to write daily feature poems.

Elliot: Throughout your life, you have been an extremely private man. In fact, in one book, you reflect: "No one, not one at all, not even my closest friend, knows much of what has happened inside me." Why have you maintained this distance, even from friends? Has this approach served you well over the years?

Coblentz: I am afraid that I unintentionally gave a false idea in the passage you quote. I did not mean to imply that I was maintaining a distance from my best friends. While I do not mean to suggest that I was given to wearing my heart on my sleeve, on the other hand, I did not put an impenetrable screen between myself and my intimates, except perhaps to the extent that each of us finds it hard to express that which is closest and most precious within himself, and at times hard to understand that which occurs within himself. Perhaps also I was held back on occasion by a certain diffidence, but who is there that has not known such diffidence?

Elliot: To what extent has a severe eye problem, the result of a condition known as "exophoria," compounded by several unsuccessful eye operations, affected your career and influenced your productivity?

Coblentz: It has chiefly affected my career by making it impossible for me to frequent brightly lighted places, and this has kept me from attending many gatherings of the sort that brings needed contact to most writers. It has also prevented me from appearing on television, as in a case, just after the appearance of one of my books, when I was unable to face the bright lights of a leading San Francisco station.

Elliot: Finally, what kind of writing occupies you at the present time? Are you still writing on an active basis? Do you still experiment with new genres? Does writing challenge you today the way it once did earlier in your career?

Coblentz: I still do writing of a miscellaneous nature, including short articles and reviews. Until very recently, I have been preoccupied with writing a book entitled, *Light Beyond: The Wonderworld of Parapsychology*, to be published by A. S. Barnes & Co., and represents my continued interest in a subject that has attracted me during my whole life, as suggested by such

(Continued on page 31, col. 3.)

1980 HUGO AWARD NOMINEE

DOZOIS•FREAS•BISHOP

THRUST summer 1980 no.15

\$1.95

\$1.95

SCIENCE FICTION IN REVIEW

effinger•sheffield•white



We never avoid the issues.

With THRUST—SF IN REVIEW, we've built our reputation on never failing to take a close look at the most sensitive and controversial issues concerning science fiction, and continue to receive the highest praise and most heated comments from professionals and fans alike in the sf field.

In short, you've never read an sf magazine quite like THRUST—SF IN REVIEW.

SUBSCRIBE NOW!

Enclosed is \$_____ for:

- ☐ A six issue (2 year) subscription (\$9.00 US&Canada, \$11.00 foreign) starting with #____.
- ☐ Back issues: 5 8 9 10 11 12 (\$1.50 each)
 13 14 15 (\$1.95)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____



THRUST PUBLICATIONS

11919 BARREL COOPER CT., RESTON, VIRGINIA 22091

Paperbacks

Cover artists: "King Dragon" by Rowena Morrill; "Destinies" by Vincent Di Fate; "Shapes of Midnight" by Kirk Reinert; "Merman's Children" by Benvenuti; "Master of the Five Magics" by Rowena Morrill.



ACE BOOKS

King Dragon by Andrew J. Offutt is a paperback original due out in October that combines SF with the lost world adventures of Burroughs and Haggard. An Earthman is sent on an expedition to a distant world seeded thousands of years ago with genetically modified embryos of Earth species. The \$2.50 paperback features interior illustrations by Esteban Maroto.

Destinies #9 leads off with a second 80-page excerpt from Robert A. Heinlein's forthcoming *Expanded Universe* and includes new stories by Gregory Benford ("Pick an Orifice"), David Drake and Charles Sheffield, among others, as well as



nonfiction by Jerry Pournelle, Frederik Pohl and Norman Spinrad. Price is \$2.50.

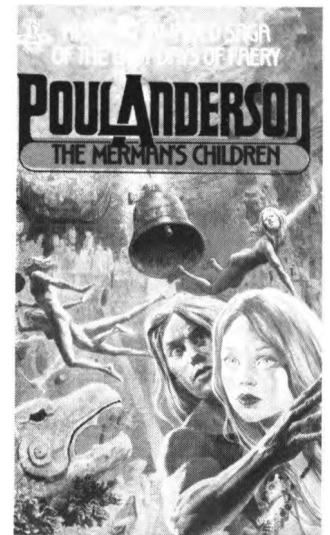
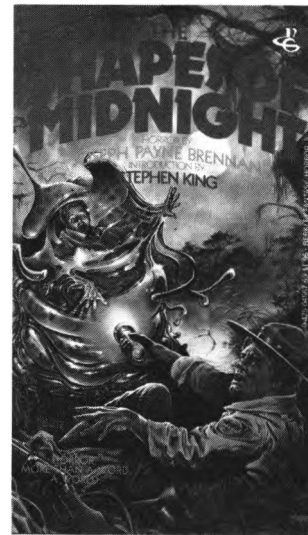
Three Ace releases that originally appeared as trade paperbacks earlier this year are: *Masters of Everon* by Gordon R. Dickson (\$2.25), *Interfaces* edited by Ursula K. Le Guin and Virginia Kidd (\$2.50), and *Your Next Fifty Years* by Dr. Robert Prehoda (nonfiction, \$1.95).

A reissue due out under the Charter imprint is *The Brotherhood of Satan* by L. Q. Jones (\$1.95), a contemporary occult thriller.

BERKLEY BOOKS

New from Berkley in October is *The Shapes of Midnight*, a collection of stories by Joseph Payne Brennan featuring an introduction by Stephen King and priced at \$1.95. Also slated is the first paperback edition of *The Merman's Children* by Poul Anderson, his fantasy novel set in the Middle Ages published in hardcover by Berkley/Putnam last year. Price is \$2.25.

A mainstream release of interest is *Reborn* by Leonard Simon, a contemporary novel about a medical cult that discovers the secret of eternal youth, which requires the acquisition of healthy victims. This will be the first paperback edition, at \$2.50. Yet another first paperback edition is *Jupiter Project* by Gregory Benford, an SF novel about a laboratory orbiting Jupiter whose crew is being recalled by the government bureaucracy. Revised from its original 1975 hardcover publication, it is priced at \$1.95.



DEL REY/BALLANTINE

An original heroic fantasy novel for October is *Master of the Five Magics* by Lyndon Hardy, about an apprentice magician who must master the five different branches of Magic to become a True Magician of the Cycloid Guild. According to Del Rey, author Hardy has devised a highly detailed logical structure to the laws of magic.

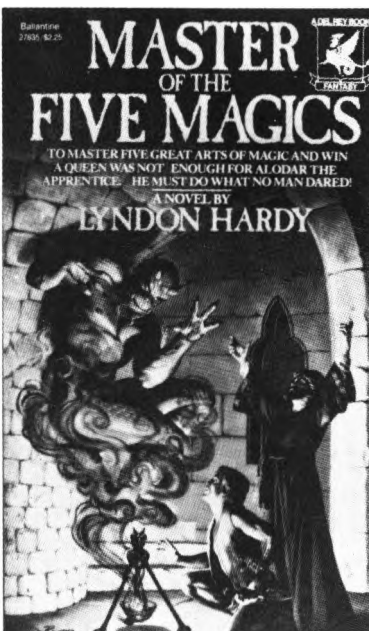
A second original novel is the fifth and final volume in Jack L. Chalker's *Well World* series, *Twilight at the Well of Souls*, in which Nathan Brazil saves the universe. Also scheduled is *The Best Science Fiction Novellas of the Year #2* edited by Terry Carr, collecting the five best novellas of 1979: "Enemy Mine" by Barry B. Longyear, "The Moon Goddess and the Son" by Donald Kingsbury, "Palely Loitering" by Christopher Priest, "Songhouse" by Orson Scott Card, and "Ker-Plop" by Ted Reynolds. The first two are priced at \$2.25 and the latter at \$2.50.

Reprints this month include *The Complete Venus Equilateral* by George O. Smith (\$2.25), *The Seven Sexes* by William Tenn (\$2.25), and *Turnabout* by Thorne Smith (\$2.25).

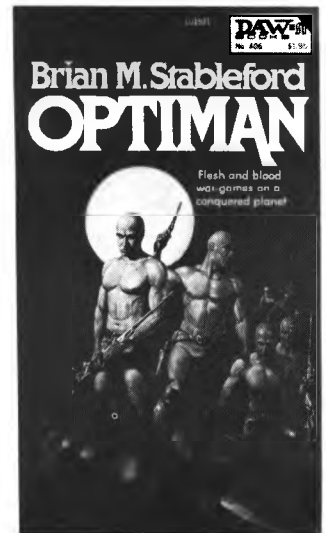
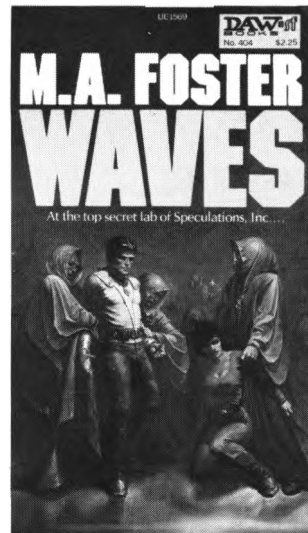
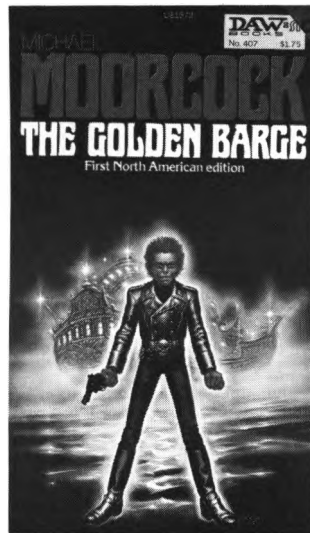
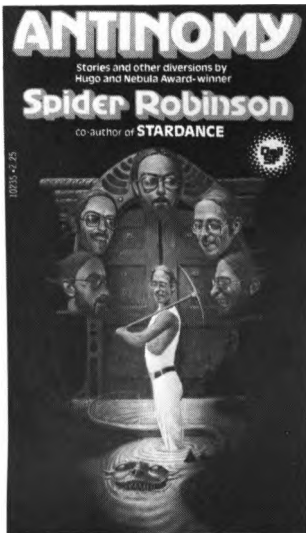
A reissue under the Ballantine imprint is *The Ancient Engineers* by L. Sprague de Camp, at \$2.95.

DELL BOOKS

Coming from Dell in October is a new collection of short stories by Spider Robinson entitled *Antinomy*, which includes "Half an Oaf," "Satan's Children," "The Magnifi-



Cover artists: "Antinomy" by Kresek; "The Golden Barge" by Pound; "Waves" by Ken Kelly; "Optiman" by Mariano.



cent Conspiracy," "Tin Ear," and seven other stories, in addition to puns, songs, illustrations and some other zany filler material. Dell's second release this month is a reprint of *Deus Israe* by Philip K. Dick and Roger Zelazny. Both are priced at \$2.25.

SIGNET

Signet releases for October include the first paperback publication of *The Revenant* by Brana Lobel, a supernatural novel about a Brooklyn couple whose apartment becomes an 18th century mansion. Also scheduled is another "horde" thriller--this time it's a new breed of black beetles--by Richard Lewis entitled *The Black Horde* (previously titled: *Devil's Coach-Horse*). The former is \$2.25 and the latter \$1.75.

DAW BOOKS

Coming from DAW in October is the first U.S. publication of *The Golden Barge* by Michael Moorcock, his first fantasy novel, published earlier this year by Savoy Books in Great Britain (reviewed in FN #26).

Original novels for October are *Waves* by M. A. Foster and *Optiman* by Brian M. Stableford; both are SF novels. The former is about a man assigned to investigate the disappearance of a scientist at Halcyon Station who uncovers a Russian-Turkish combine involved with immortality drugs. *Optiman* relates the problems of human colonization of the planet Heidra and the protagonist's search for a lost mili-

tary installation built by a pre-historic galactic race. *Waves* is priced at \$2.25 and *Optiman* at \$1.95.

Isaac Asimov Presents the Great SF Stories #4, covering the year 1942, includes the following stories: "Nerves" by Lester del Rey, "The Weapons Shop" by A. E. Van Vogt, "The Star Mouse" by Fredric Brown, "The Twonky" by Lewis Padgett, "The Push of A Finger" by Alfred Bester, and "Foundation" by Asimov. Editors are Asimov and Martin H. Greenberg and the price is \$2.25. This month's reissue is *The Warriors of Dawn* by M. A. Foster, at \$1.95.

AVON BOOKS

An Avon original fantasy novel slated for October is *The Rainbow Annals* by Grania Davis, described as a love story between a god and a demoness in a mythical land of gods and goddesses that preceded mankind. Making its first paperback appearance this month will be *Earthworks* by Brian W. Aldiss, an SF novel published in hardcover by Doubleday. Both are priced at \$1.95.

BANTAM BOOKS

Two Bantam originals slated for October release are *The Galactic Whirlpool* by David Gerrold, another of his Star Trek novels (\$2.25), and *Logan's Search* by William F. Nolan, the third novel in Bantam's "Logan's Run" series (\$1.95). Another series volume this month is a two-in-one Doc Savage book, *Hell Below/Lost Giant* (#99 and #100), priced at \$1.95.

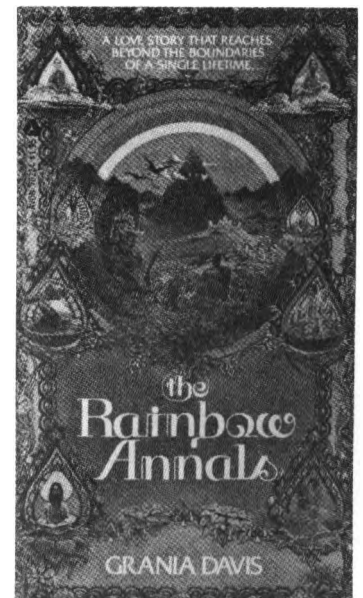
Fundamental Disch is a new collection of short fiction by Thomas M. Disch, edited and introduced by Samuel R. Delany (\$2.25).

FAWCETT/POP. LIBRARY

Only one title up this month and a reprint at that: *Huon of the Horn* by Andre Norton, priced at \$1.95 under the Fawcett Crest imprint.

PINNACLE

Only one new title up from Pinnacle this month, as well: #33 in the seemingly never-ending Richard Blade series, *Killer Plants of Binaark* by Jeffrey Lord, at \$1.75.



The Pocket Books F & SF Page

Browse our buffet selection this month, there's something for every taste: grand adventure from the author of JOURNEY, history second guessed with the stories that could have won the Hugo, volume two of the War of the Wizards trilogy, Silverberg's Best and mystery and fun with a secret secret agent.---D.G.H.

The Eyes of Sarsis

Andrew Offutt & Richard Lyon

The adventures of Tiana Highrider continue in the second volume of the War of the Wizards trilogy. The Eyes of Sarsis hold tremendous power within their glittering facets--power that sets wizards warring and traps an old king and his beautiful daughter. And the spectacular lady pirate Tiana, with her adoptive father, goes into the misty perils of alien lands Andre Norton is "very pleased to see such as she emerge from the mists of a newly discovered barbaric world." 82679-4/\$2.25
A POCKET BOOKS ORIGINAL



Dangerous Games

Marta Randall

Unknown to the Kennerin clan, Parallax, the economic monolith, destroyed Sandro Marquez's family. But only the Kennerins can stop Parallax now...if Sandro can convince them it would be in their own best interests. And which side is the lovely cat-like Tatha on--Sandro's, the Kennerins', or her own?

Readers were introduced to the extraordinary Kennerins in Marta Randall's Journey, which Charles N. Brown, in Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine, calls "the best original novel I've read so far this year." And DANGEROUS GAMES continues the odyssey. Marta Randall "carries the family saga into an exciting new dimension."--John Jakes

A POCKET BOOKS ORIGINAL
82417-1/\$2.95

What If? Vol. 1

Richard Lupoff, Editor

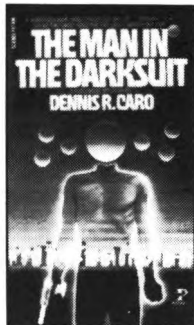
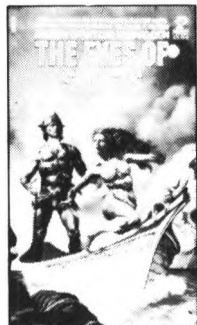
The Hugo Science Fiction Achievement Award was created in response to the popularity of the genre, and it has become increasingly important in its 27-year history. Yet, not winning has often meant that excellent stories have been overlooked. Now...writer and critic Richard Lupoff has brought together the best of those neglected stories for each year since 1953. This first of four volumes of spectacular, innovative tales--that could have/should have/would have won the Hugo--will leave you wondering...WHAT IF?
A POCKET BOOKS ORIGINAL

83189-5/\$2.50

The Man in the Darksuit

Dennis R. Caro

Overweight heiress Muffie Bernstein was surprised to find herself kidnapped, and outraged to discover that someone was tampering with the family business. But when secret secret agent Bos Coggins "saves" her, things really get confusing! "...Fascinating adventure, sophisticated and intense. ...If Mr. Caro can keep on truckin' with future novels this good, he will join the ranks of sf's most distinguished authors..." --Philip K. Dick 83153-4/\$1.95
A POCKET BOOKS ORIGINAL

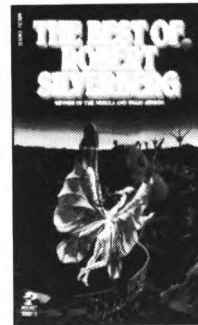
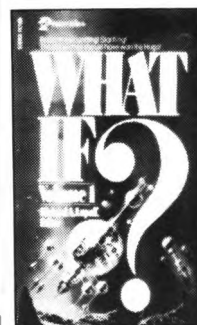


The Best of Robert Silverberg

Robert Silverberg

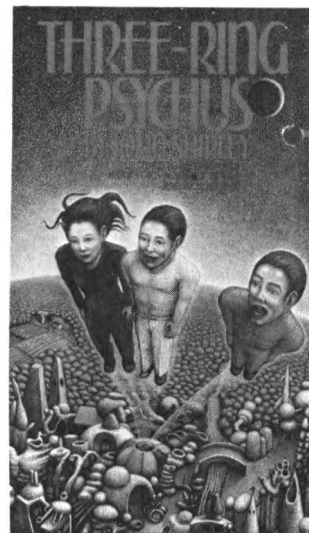
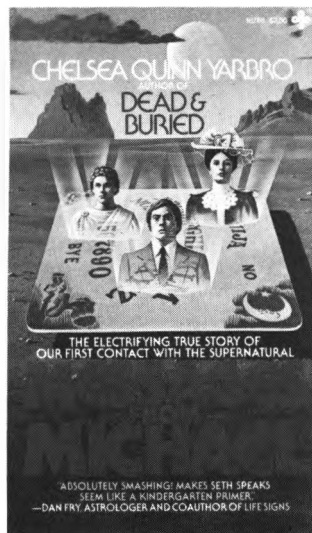
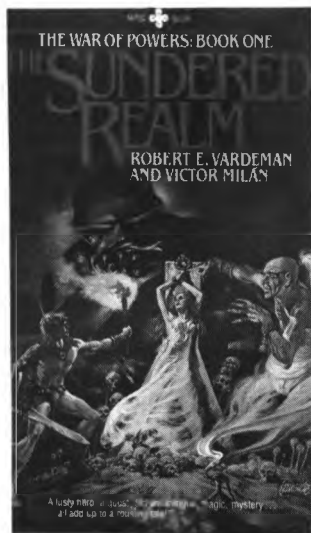
Robert Silverberg was first honored by the sf world with the Hugo Award as 1956's most promising new writer. Since then, he's continued to amaze, astound, and entertain readers. Silverberg's ingenious imagination has produced many fantastic tales, and ten of the best have been included in this dazzling collection, including three award winners.

A POCKET BOOKS REISSUE
83497-5/\$2.50



POCKET BOOKS

David G. Hartwell, Director of Science Fiction



PLAYBOY PRESS

The Sundered Realm by Robert E. Vardeman and Victor Milan is the first volume in a new epic fantasy trilogy, "The War of Powers," due to be published in October, November and December. The cast of characters in Book One include a barbarian hero (Fost Longstrider), a sex-starved genie, a wizard, and two beautiful sisters fighting to become queen. The remaining two volumes in the trilogy are *City in the Glacier* and *The Destiny Stone*.

Another October title is *Mes-sages from Michael* by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, about two couples who sit down to amuse themselves at a Ouija board and end up communicating with Michael--an "ancient entity" who is

"an amassing of souls on a higher plane of existence." *Alien* by George H. Leonard concerns a quest for a UFO. An astronomer and his girlfriend search throughout the world for a UFO so that they can sell a piece from it to an eccentric billionaire.

Also on tap for October is the first paperback edition of Charles L. Grant's much-acclaimed original anthology, *Shadows*, published in hardcover by Doubleday. The Yarbro title is priced at \$2.50 and the remainder at \$2.25.

ZEBRA BOOKS

On tap from Zebra for October is the second volume in Mike Sirota's "Ro-Lan" series, *The Shrouded Walls*

of *Boranga*, in which Ro-Lan returns to the other-dimensional world of Boranga. Also scheduled is *Three-Ring Psychus* by John Shirley, an SF novel set in the next century. Following the partial cancellation of gravity and the physical catastrophe that ensues, the survivors create a new society of people with telekinetic powers. Both are priced at \$1.95.

TOWER BOOKS

Just out from Tower Books is a new heroic fantasy novel by Jeffrey N. Wallmann entitled *Death Trek*, at \$1.75. Set on an alien world, Vantro the barbarian battles a religious cult to rescue a banished princess. *

shade, I think. We'll see.

Jumping ahead to contenders for the 1981 Lovecraft award, I've just read *Firestarter*, King's sixth novel, in bound page proofs, and found it an equally suspenseful and well-thought-out work. It's about a girl with a wild talent for starting fires--but there the similarity to *Carrie* ends. Charlie McGee is an attractive child able to make moral choices, not a creature of ignorance emotionally swamped by an antisex religious maniac of a mother. The book is rooted in the topical realities of the notorious CIA drug experiments--here it's an establishment outfit called the Shop. It has the nitty-gritty reality we've come to expect of King--a baby able

to start little blazes in her crib and sear bad teddy bears would have to be fire-trained by her parents, just as ordinary children are toilet-trained, *nicht wahr?* It has an Indian hit man reminiscent of the Walking Dude in *The Stand*--another memorable death-god figure. And the ending has rather more of the science fictional "We can do something about it," than of the traditional horror story's "We can only be terrorized and run." Very understandable that King should have wanted to rework the *Carrie* material, and he makes a good job of it.

What else is new? Last weekend in Los Angeles I had the honor of presenting Edgar Hoffman Price with the Fritz Leiber Fantasy Award, which reifies Randall Garrett's horrendous pun, "The Gray Mauser."

Ed told us that he began signing his stories "E. Hoffman Price" "because that was the way all good adventure pulp writers did it: H. Bedford-Jones, etc."

I just had a short-short, "The Repair People," published in Vol. 1, No. 1, of Michael Estaban's quarterly magazine, *Transmission* (303 East Acacia Ave., Glendale, CA 91205, \$5.00 a year) which has as its lead article Margo Skinner's study of three fantasy actors: Klaus Kinski, Christopher Lee, and Alec Guinness. And my son Justin's been in Japan, working on his second science fiction novel, *Beyond Humanity*, which brings in the chimps.

-- Fritz Leiber

(Next issue: "On Fantasy" will be written by Karl Edward Wagner.)

WARREN'S NEWS & REVIEWS

film news by Bill Warren

Summertime Movies

In the summer, it has always been traditional for most of the movies released to be lightweight entertainment. Musicals, youth-oriented pictures, horror and science fiction movies, exploitation films of every stripe--these are the fodder for drive-ins and other theaters. When it's hot outside and the schools are out, distributors assume people don't want to have to think. For the most part, *serious* films are reserved for fall and winter release.

Next time, I'll return to commenting on news, but this month there are a slew of summertime fantastic films worth mentioning.

Black Friday

The biggest hits from Paramount Pictures this summer have been two of the largest-grossing films released so far this year. They are the very funny *Airplane!* and *Friday the 13th*, neither of which had a large budget.

Friday the 13th is derived from *Halloween* by way *Carrie*. It's amateurish, slow-paced and unpleasantly violent. And it is making a great deal of money.

The script by Victor Miller is standard Idiot Plot material. Everyone in the story acts like an idiot; if they acted in any other way, nothing would have happened. In *Friday the 13th* the characters are merely all doomed bags of meat, knocked off one at a time by an imaginative and determined lunatic. (This time the setting is a summer camp about to open; the counselors are the victims. The setting hardly matters.)

Director-producer Sean S. Cunningham is a clod; he has only two ways of producing suspense, which he painfully overuses. One: the camera is observing one of the potential victims, and the vantage point suddenly moves restlessly, indicating an unseen watcher. (Poor editing sometimes gives false clues in this direction.) Two: a character will do something very ordinary at great length (making coffee, for instance), until you want to scream for another camera angle or simply a change of scene. This is supposed to make us Very Tense, but instead

simply makes us edgy with impatience. However, that *does* serve the director's purpose; he may not know the difference.

The photography is elementary; the editing is colorless; the music is dreadful. The makeup effects by Tom Savini, featuring slit throats, punctured eyes, etc., are bloody but unconvincing. Except for Adrienne King and Betsy Palmer (and where has *she* been?), the acting is largely poor. Some characters, such as a motorcycle policeman, are apparently in the film solely because they know or have something on Cunningham; the roles have no plot function.

Miller's script is atrocious, the characterization all Archie-comic stereotypes, and that's insulting to Archie comics. Audiences of ordinary people boo the picture at the end, although some get quite excited during the gory proceedings.

So why is the picture making so much money? Because it does what the ads promise. Part of the excitement and pleasure of certain movies comes from knowing what's going to happen, from being ahead of the story. In *Friday the 13th*, you're never in any doubt, until the confrontation between the killer and the sole survivor, just *what's* going happen. The only questions are *when* and *how*. All audiences care about are the thrills involved in unraveling the story.

It isn't art; it isn't remotely good cinema; there is, in fact, almost nothing worthwhile about *Friday the 13th* except this: for most audiences, *it delivers the goods*. Audiences know the kind of movie it is; it's trash, but if it scares them for an hour and a half, that's all that matters. Some critics have called such gore operas pornographic. But the appeal of pornography is solitary in nature. You can be become as aroused by pornography all alone as you can with an audience; probably more readily. Seeing a film like *Friday the 13th* by yourself would be pointless; surrounded by an audience that is reacting strongly, the picture comes to a semblance of life.

Critics can and should shred films like this, but critics should never lose sight of the fact that movies like *Friday the 13th* are popular. Relentlessness is a com-

mercial virtue.

Son of the Beach

Jeffrey Bloom's *Blood Beach* is the best monster movie so far this year. It's witty, fast-paced, imaginative, and sometimes even scary. Bloom is not half as good as a director as he is a writer, and the picture suffers as a result, but he doesn't inflict any real damage.

Something is living under the sand at Santa Monica Beach. It pulls people down and they are never seen again. Sooner than is usual for films of this type, the police decide that the monster must exist. Unfortunately, the nasty critter is also highly elusive, and almost by chance, its lair is finally discovered. When we finally get a brief look at it, it's a huge slimy lump with a mouth on a stalk, like a fiendish tulip. There is absolutely no explanation for the monster, which suits me fine.

David Huffman is a beach patrol officer who begins to worry about all those people vanishing, and Mariana Hill is his lover who has come back to Santa Monica when her mother disappears. There's actual characterization between these two, and director-writer Bloom does give us a feeling that they have known each other a long while. The romance is not forced, and forms a believable, even attractive backdrop to the horror elements.

Burt Young and Otis Young (certainly not related) are two of the cops assigned to the case. Burt is Royko, a slob-like, ex-Chicago (of course) officer who always finds an opportunity to unfavorably compare Los Angeles police tactics with those back home. He's amusing but not likeable; it's too bad he wasn't fed to the monster.

The head cop is John Saxon, who has become a frequent star of low-budget SF and horror movies. *Blood Beach* has a substantially larger budget than some of Saxon's other pictures, and the script is much better. Saxon himself is excellent; he has the right combination of good looks and sour charm to suit an L.A. police lieutenant. And, out of a film with many good lines, he has the best: "Just when you thought it was safe to back in

the water, you can't get to it." One should always acknowledge one's sources.

In an interview in *Cinefantastique*, Jeffrey Bloom says you shouldn't get too tricky visually in a horror film, but unfortunately that's one of the main drawbacks of *Blood Beach*. There are far too many scenes with wide-angle lenses, prowling around under the pier. Are these supposed to be the monster's point of view? Naw, couldn't be. Then what are they? Intrusive is what they are.

But Bloom also manages to vary the intensity, frequency and type of monster attack so that they don't become stale. At one point, what looks like a setup for a monster attack turns into something quite different.

Blood Beach has several colorful characters, an interesting premise, a good cast and an amusing script. It's an ideal summer movie, and I recommend it.

The Return of De Palma

Brian De Palma gives so much to his audiences, his films are so stylish that it seems churlish to complain about anything. But his content is rarely up to the level of the expertise he demonstrates in assembling things. *Dressed to Kill* is his latest horror movie, a dazzling, intricate and witty study in Hitchcock thrills. The storyline is foolish; one suspects De Palma knows that--and, in fact, the weakness of the story is part of his fun. It isn't that he doesn't care; it's that he wants us to know the stories are mostly vehicles for moviemaking fun and thrills. Yet he still wants to snag his viewers.

This applies to the scripts that De Palma writes himself. With *Sisters*, De Palma wanted simultaneously to send up intricate Hitchcock type thrillers and make one himself. De Palma's only altogether serious psychiatric thriller, *Obsession*, had a cowriter and was also one of his least interesting movies. The style wasn't dazzling enough to override the glum subject. (*Sisters* is De Palma's *Rear Window*; *Obsession* was *Vertigo* revisited; and *Dressed to Kill* owes a good deal to *Psycho*. I wish he'd stop that.)

Dressed to Kill (the title is literal) may turn out to be De Palma's biggest financial success since *Carrie*, from which he rather shamefully lifted several elements. *Dressed to Kill* is his most elegant and controlled picture, more accessible to most audiences than his others. It's rich, sensual and sardonic, not too complicated and



Richard Jordan surveys the remains of the grand ballroom aboard the luxury liner *Titanic* in this scene from *Raise the Titanic*!

not a fantasy. Several sequences are fascinating to watch, though they don't advance the plot.

In particular, there's a teasing, tantalizing scene in an art museum involving Angie Dickinson, playing a sexually frustrated wife. She becomes attracted to another patron, and alternately pursues and retreats from him. The sequence is formed of smooth, luxurious tracking shots, and several small jokes (what is she writing in that little book?) add to the richness.

The acting is all good. Dickinson is excellent in all her scenes, but her wordless eloquence in the museum scene is especially fine. Michael Caine plays a psychiatrist who becomes involved in the story when one of his patients is murdered. Caine's careful, intelligent performance would be the highlight of the film, except that it is subordinate to De Palma's stylistic games. Nancy Allen (now Mrs. De Palma) is a cute, cuddly prostitute who is also involved in the murder story. (There is a bloody murder in an elevator.) Allen is amusingly avaricious, but her performance seems inauthentic. It's somewhat difficult to accept her as a high-priced hooker; she's too adorable. Keith Gordon plays Angie Dickinson's gadget-minded son, who becomes involved in trying to ferret out the killer. He is such an appealing character that it's almost a disappointment he doesn't go to bed with Allen.

The climax is unsatisfactory; it's another game by De Palma, but it's one he's played before. *Dressed to Kill* is ravishing and entertain-

ing, but it's slight. De Palma is just too good to fritter away his time on pseudo-Hitchcockery. But whatever he does next will certainly be worth seeing.

Sink the Movie

From the title, it would be reasonable to expect *Raise the Titanic* to be a glorious adventure, but the movie is instead a tedious espionage thriller with some interesting scenery. The *Titanic* is indeed raised, but this doesn't form the climax, though it is by far the best sequence. The movie was based on the best-seller, but why the producers would retain the hackneyed, unconvincing and uninvolved plot seems perverse.

According to this foolishness, there was something aboard the *Titanic* when it went down in 1912 which is now vital to a national defense scheme. The plot sags under its dopey plot ideas. There would have been no reason in 1912 for someone to consider the substance at all valuable, but that's an idea on which the story hinges. Under the circumstances presented, the man shipping it in 1912 would not have gone down with the ship. The idea that a substance found on only one isolated Siberian island would be "more powerful than uranium" is stupid. But the most annoying result of all this nonsense is that the *Titanic* is transformed into a secondary issue.

Jerry Jameson directed the picture in television style, with far too many closeups, a leaden pace and comic-book characteriza-



The scientific team investigating "the mysterious phenomenon of the skies" at the Devil's Tower in Wyoming gets more than it bargained for in this scene from the revised *Special Edition of Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

tion. Climaxes seem phony, and a big confrontation at the end is over in a moment. Granted, the script isn't any good, and the leading actors--David Selby and Richard Jordan--are boring television types who do not translate well to movies, but Jameson doesn't bring any excitement of his own to the telling of the story.

The superb special effects give the picture what quality it has. Some of them are especially good, such as the remarkable entrance of the *Titanic* into New York harbor, though this scene is hurt by unconvincing cutaways to throngs on the shore. Some of the effects don't work, and the *Titanic*, being all one color, tends to look somewhat like a miniature. But the surfacing scene is dramatic and even moving, especially for those who respond to the glamor and tragedy of the legend of the *Titanic*.

I don't think there has ever been a speculative fiction (the term really fits this story) movie on a theme like this before, and Lord Lew Grade deserves some credit for financing the idea. But it's a damned shame that he didn't insist a new storyline be drafted which emphasized the *Titanic* itself. In this movie, she's just a huge prop--and the grandest sunken ship on Earth deserved much more.

Yo Ho Ho And A Bottle of Blood

Peter Benchley has a depressingly trashy mind. His novel *Jaws* did result in a vivid, entertaining adventure horror comedy, but that

was because writer Carl Gottlieb and director Steven Spielberg threw out almost everything but the plot. Benchley had more control over *The Deep*, and it was a turgid, underplotted mess. He had the most control over *The Island*, and it is by far the worst of the three: it raises artificial paranoia to giddy, silly heights.

Out there in the Bermuda Triangle supposedly is an island full of pirates who have lived for generations, unchanged since the 17th century. This bilge is not subject even to the most cursory scrutiny, and ordinarily-fine director Michael Ritchie does nothing to help the believability. Once Michael Caine (again excellent) and his young son are captured by these supposedly scrofulous buccaneers, led by the healthy-looking David Warner, the film takes on an air of back-lot unbelievability, and never recovers even though the film's early realistic style recurs in the last half hour. Furthermore, *The Island* is pointlessly violent.

Horror movies like this should either convince us that such a thing could be so, and should be feared, or be so entertaining that we don't care that it's not believable. But *The Island* fails to convince or to entertain. It's aimless--it seems to take Caine half the film just to get to the island, and once there the plot finds little for him to do until the climax. It's erratic--the pirates are treated as slimy scum at first, but later while they board a schooner the music and direction try to persuade us that

they are jolly pirates of the Errol Flynn school. It's burdened with extraneous material--there's an airplane crash and resulting political blather that has absolutely nothing to do with the storyline. And it's morally incomprehensible--Caine's son goes over to the side of the pirates abruptly, and far too willingly shoots an innocent man dead. (We are supposed to be willing to forgive him for this little mistake.)

Most of Michael Ritchie's other films have been very good--*The Candidate*, *Smile*, *Downhill Race*, *The Bad News Bears*--but *The Island* looks for the most part as if anyone could have directed it. Ritchie tends to use a loose, improvisational seeming style, and employs it here for the first couple of reels. But the style isn't really realistic; it's suited for a kind of semi-comedy which *The Island* most emphatically isn't.

It's a silly, brutal picture on which a great deal of money and time was expended to no good end. It seems to be a boxoffice failure, and justifiably so.

CE3.5K

Perhaps Steven Spielberg pays too much attention to his critics, and maybe he's more involved with the ultimate fates of his creations than most movie directors. Whatever the cause, he seems to have unusually strong reactions to his movies, and is never quite satisfied. It's been long known around town that he felt *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* wasn't quite the film he envisioned, and was in fact working on it up until the moment of release. What's significant here is that was allowed to change a *hit* film. His motivation seems to have been to improve the movie; Columbia's motivation was to provide an intriguing gimmick for this summer's rerelease of CE3K.

Spielberg removed material, he restored a few scenes that had been shot and never used, and he filmed a new ending sequence. All this was very expensive. Was it worth it? Does the film work better?

That seems to be a matter of opinion. I thought that the original cut was very good, and I've never had the objections to some of the story logic that others had. Some saw the aliens' actions to be hostile until the moment they actually landed, while I felt that instead the aliens simply weren't considering the consequences of their actions. They had now decided that people were, after all, worth

(Continued on page 30.)

The Fan Press

Cover artists: "Space & Time" by Bruce Conklin; "Dark Fantasy" by Ken Raney; "More Ghosts & Scholars" by Martin Helsdon; "Fantasy Tales" by Jim Fitzpatrick; (overleaf) "Erbania" by Frank Reyes.



SPACE AND TIME

I suppose it's merely coincidence, but July seems to have been the month for fantasy fiction magazines. Leading off the pack is Gordon Linzner's 57th issue (!) of *Space and Time*, which recently won the 1980 Small Press Award for Best Magazine (under 1,000 circulation), awarded by the Semi-Pro Writers and Artists Organization (SPWA0). Stories in this issue are "Prisoners" by Susan Anne Santo, "From Hell" by John Taylor, "Side Effect" by D. M. Vosk, "Ghost Writer" by Lee Barwood, "The Growth of Harold J. Upton" by Joel Henry Sherman and "To Sacrifice A Dawn" by T. Christopher Kelly, in addition to poetry by Andrew J. Offutt, Michael Fantina, Steve Sneyd, Douglas Roome, Joey Froehlich, M. R. Little and Steve Rasnic Tem. Artists include Bruce Conklin, Dan Day, Gary Kato, James Hjort, Herb Bresky, Mark Gelotte, Rick McCollum and Allen Koszowski. The 60-page digest size issue is priced at \$2 and subscriptions are four issues for \$6. Gordon Linzner, 138 West 70th St., Apt. 4-B, New York, NY 10023.

ELDRITCH TALES

Eldritch Tales #7, published by Crispin Burnham, is another thick (144-page), perfect-bound, digest size issue that features the following stories: "The Quest for Unknown Amherst" (pt. 2) by Glenn A. and Philip J. Rahman, "The Last Supper" by Donald R. Burleson, "The Skull of Gur'la-ya" by Jerry Baker, "A Virtuous Vengeance" by Steve Eng,

"Enough Light" and "The Traveler" by John Tibbetts, "The Horror Below" by Kenneth Huff, "Forerunners of Doom" by W. Paul Gantey, "The Arctic Stone" by Ross F. Bagby, "The End of the Song" by Jim Pianfetti, "The Drabble Tails" by Stephen Gresham, "Temple of the Demon" by editor Burnham and "The Tomb of the Black Ape" by Leon L. Gammell.

Add to that a lot of poetry, some book reviews, and artwork by John Tibbetts, Arnold Fenner, Joe West, Hans-Peter Werner, Allen Koszowski, Lillian G. Burnham, Virginia Meserve and Harry Q. Morris, Jr. Single copies are priced at \$5 and subscriptions are 4 issues for \$15. Crispin Burnham, 1051 Wellington Road, Lawrence, KS 66044.

DARK FANTASY

Just out from Canadian publisher Gene Day is *Dark Fantasy* #22, now in an improved format with trimmed edges and a slick, two-color cover. Featured in this issue are three stories, "The Flat on Rue Chambord" by Galad Elflandsson, "The City at Night" by John Kelly and "The House of Origins" by Robert D. San Souci, in addition to poetry by Gene Phillips, Joseph Brower, M. McLaughlin and Joey Froehlich. Artists include Ken Raney, Larry Dickison, Dan Day, Bruce Conklin, Bruce Wright and editor Gene Day. *Dark Fantasy* also has a new price: \$1.50 per copy or four issues for \$6. Gene Day, Box 207, Gananoque, Ontario K7G 2T7, Canada.

GHOSTS & SCHOLARS

Just in from Rosemary Pardoe in Great Britain is *More Ghosts & Scholars*, a 48-page digest size companion volume to her earlier fantasy fiction anthology. Included are the following stories: "Figures in A Landscape" by A. F. Kidd, "Return to the Runes" by David Sutton, "The Fifteenth Evening" by David Rowlands, "The Catacomb" by Peter Shilston and "All That Flies" by George Hay. Additional features are an article on writer Adrian Ross by Richard Dalby, a continuation of Hugh Lamb's bibliography of writers in the M. R. James tradition, and books reviews. Artwork is by John Stewart, Stephen Jones, Martin Helsdon, A. F. Kidd, Russ Nicholson, David Lloyd, Dave Carson and Jim Pitts. \$3 per copy postpaid to the U.S. Rosemary Pardoe, 11B Cote Lea Square, Southgate, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 2SA.

FANTASY TALES

Also out from Great Britain is *Fantasy Tales* #6, edited by Stephen Jones and David A. Sutton. As I've noted here many times in the past, FT is the closest thing one will ever find to the *Weird Tales* of bygone days. Stories in this issue include: "Ever the Faith Endures" by Manly Wade Wellman, "Lair of the White Wolf" by J. R. Schifino, "Dreams May Come" by H. Warner Munn, "The Elementals" by Frances Garfield (Mrs. Manly Wade Wellman), "The Last Trick" by Dave Reeder, and "The Story of the Brown Man" by Darrell Schweitzer. Also included

CineFan 2

Outside U.S.A. \$1.00 \$2.00



SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY
& HORROR IN FILMS

is poetry by *Brian Lumley*, *Don Herron* and *Steve Eng*.

Artists this issue include *Jim Fitzpatrick*, *Stephen Fabian*, *David Lloyd*, *Andrew Smith*, *Jim Pitts* and *Randy Broecker*. The 48-page (6" by 8½") issue is priced at \$3, postpaid to the U.S. *Stephen Jones*, 33 Wren House, Tachbrook Estate, London, SW1V 3QD, England.

GOthic

Gothic #3, the scholarly journal devoted to Gothic fiction, recently appeared from Gothic Press and features three new stories, "The Voice of Blood" by *Jean Muno*, "The Lady in Darkness" by *Lee Weinstein* and "The Narrow House" by *Phillip C. Heath*. Also included are an article, "Beyond Mystery: Emergence from Delusion as a Pattern in Gothic Fiction" by *Paul Lewis*, and a number of book reviews. Single copies of the 32-page magazine are priced at \$3.25 and subscriptions to the twice-yearly publication are \$6. Gothic Press, 4998 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70808.

POTBOILER

Potboiler #1 is a new fantasy and SF fanzine from Canada about evenly divided between short stories and comic strips. Featured in this first issue are the following stories: "Flash Point" by *Alisa D. Rovind*, "Order of Business" by *Albert J. Manachino*, "By the Rules" by *Jeffrey Goddin*, "Move to Cleveland" by *Peter Cocking*, "The Number You Have Reached" by *William Relling, Jr.*, "Dialogue With A Televi-

ERBANIA



sion" by *Chester L. Cox* and *Doug J. Brown*, and "Poetic License" (verse) by *Doug Brown*. Artists include *Dale Hammel*, *Stephen Schwartz*, *Kim Jacobsen* and *Kurt Reichel*, among others. The 48-page issue is priced at \$2.75, postpaid. *Lari Davidson*, 8471 Bennett Road, Richmond, B.C., V6Y 1N6 Canada.

NIGHT VOYAGES

Over the past couple of years, *Night Voyages* has developed into a major semi-pro fantasy magazine from somewhat humble beginnings as a fanzine devoted principally to comic strips. The latest issue #6 features interviews with *Tim Kirk* and *Karl Edward Wagner*, an art portfolio by *Brad Foster*, "Mwanzo" (fiction) by *Charles R. Saunders*, coverage of Fool Con III and the Balrog Awards, and the text of a panel discussion from Fool Con III entitled "How We Write" by *Stephen R. Donaldson*, *Anne McCaffrey*, and *Patricia McKillip*. Comic strips this issue are down to a mere six pages of the 60-page magazine.

Artists in the issue include *Stephen Fabian*, *Jim Pitts*, *Tim Kirk*, *Charles Pitts*, *Don Secrease*, *Paul Daly*, and *David Tipton*. \$3 per copy, postpaid, from *Gerald J. Brown*, P. O. Box 175, Freeburg, IL 62243.

PARAGON

Chet Clingan recently published his first issue of *Paragon*, a new magazine that replaces his former *The Diversifier* (which ran 29 issues). The new #1 runs 48 digest size pages on enamel stock with an editorial approach nearly identical

with the old *Diversifier*. Contents include two short stories, "The Red Shift" by *William Scott Home* and "Interlude at the Bridge" by *Franklyn Searight*; three articles, "Poet of the Unconscious" by *Dirk Mosig*, "Hyborian Africa" by *Charles R. Saunders* and "The Clark Ashton Smith Boom" by *Robert Weinberg*; an interview with *John Varley*; and book reviews by *Don Herron*, a column on gaming by *Chet Hendrix*, and a market report ("Caveat") by *Ken Huff*. \$2.25 per copy from *Chet Clingan*, 1751 Oro Dam Blvd., #8, Oroville, CA 95965.

ERBANIA

Now in its 45th issue, *Erbania* is one of the few remaining magazines active in Edgar Rice Burroughs fandom. Featured in the current issue is a lengthy profile of artist *Frank Frazetta* by *Robert R. Barrett*, an article on *The Mucker* by *John F. Roy*, and a letters column. Artwork is by *Frank Reyes*, *Roy G. Krenkel*, *Frank Frazetta*, *Jim Cawthorn* and *Charles Moffitt*. \$1 per copy or 4 issues for \$4. *D. Peter Ogden*, 8001 Fernview Lane, Tampa, FL 33615.

CINEFAN

Following a six-year hiatus, *Randall Larson* has at long last published his second issue of *CineFan*, a magazine devoted to horror and science fiction in the movies. I won't begin to try to describe the contents of this thick issue, but it is loaded with articles and reviews of recent movies and contains several hundred stills. The 68-page issue is very reasonably priced at \$2 per copy (\$3 outside the U.S.) and well worth it if you are a film buff. *Randall D. Larson*, 774 Vista Grande Ave., Los Altos, CA 94022.

MAGICAL BLEND

Back in FN #24, I reviewed a new magazine, *Magical Blend*, which is a fantasy magazine of sorts, but a difficult one to describe. It features excellent graphics and some interesting artwork, articles on extremely diverse subjects, a few comic strips, some fiction, and quite a lot of poetry. The second issue recently appeared in a format virtually identical to the first and, again, the contents are far too long to list here. One article of interest might be "Facing the Future Fearlessly" by *Robert Anton Wilson*--beyond that, it's a matter of individual taste. The remainder can best be summed up as non-tradi-

flaring colors and illustrations and the pulp paper of the first science fiction magazines, there were many who looked down upon science fiction as something unworthy if not disgraceful. But these, I need hardly add, were all non-readers of science fiction.

Elliot: How did you first become interested in science fiction? What was it about the genre that intrigued you? Had you been an active reader of science fiction prior to taking a stab at writing it?

Coblentz: I first became interested in science fiction before I knew that such a thing existed. In a sense, my interest in the medium began one winter's day when I was ten and lay in bed recovering from the measles, while my mother sat at my bedside, fascinating me by reading Verne's *A Journey to the Center of the Earth*. Later, while in college, I wrote two stories, both of short book-length, on science fiction themes. Neither incidentally, has ever been published. But this did not deter me from writing others -- books such as *The Blue Barbarians*, *After 12,000 Years*, and *The Sunken World*. (The first two of these were satires on our civilization, and the third described a Utopia in a city under the sea, a remnant of

the "lost Atlantis.") I had hoped to find publishers for these stories, though I still did not know that such a thing as science fiction existed. And this was true, although I did read all the fantasies I could lay my hands on, from Conan Doyle to Samuel Butler to H. W. Hudson.

Elliot: On a number of occasions, Lord Dunsany, the world-renowned fantasy writer, has praised both you and your work. Did you know Lord Dunsany well? What kind of a person was he? How would you assess his contributions to the fantasy genre?

Coblentz: I had a considerable correspondence with Lord Dunsany, lasting over a period of years, but met him only once, when my wife and I had dinner with him during his last brief visit to California. He was an astonishing personality, an impressive man who struck me as big in every sense of the term, a brilliant conversationalist, an accomplished story-teller, who had in him something of the heroic that made passers-by pause to stare at him. I think that, in his stories and plays, he was among the leading writers of fantasy. But he should also be remembered for his poetry, and for the staunch stand which he

took against the perversion of literary values.

Elliot: What were your chief goals in the writing of science fiction? What qualities did you strive to attain? What were your primary concerns?

Coblentz: In undertaking my science fiction, as in my other writing, I did not set before myself a list of goals to be attained. I was, invariably, moved by a theme and engrossed in working it out, but I never said to myself, "This I shall accomplish," or "This I shall avoid." First of all, my impulse was to tell a good story; and if it reflected upon human beings, human life and human civilization, that was a fulfillment to be taken as a matter of course. In many cases, indeed, having hit upon a theme with satirical possibilities, I did delight in this aspect of the work, but I usually developed this as I proceeded rather than as an advance framework.

Elliot: You were among the early popular contributors to *Amazing Stories*. What was *Amazing* like in those days? Who were the major writers at the time? Was it difficult to crack that market? Who was your editor at *Amazing*? Was he easy

NEW FROM

TRISKELL PRESS

DRAGONFIELDS 3

DRAGONFIELDS (incorporating DRAGONBANE & BEYOND THE FIELDS WE KNOW) is the new fantasy magazine from Triskell Press, featuring David Madison, Tanith Lee, Michael Moorcock, Richard K. Lyon, Andrew J. Offutt, Galad Elflandsson, Karl Edward Wagner, Diana L. Paxson, and many more. Printed offset, from metal plates, and perfect bound, DRAGONFIELDS is 124 pages of fantasy at its finest, available for \$5 plus postage after August 1st, 1980.

STILL AVAILABLE:

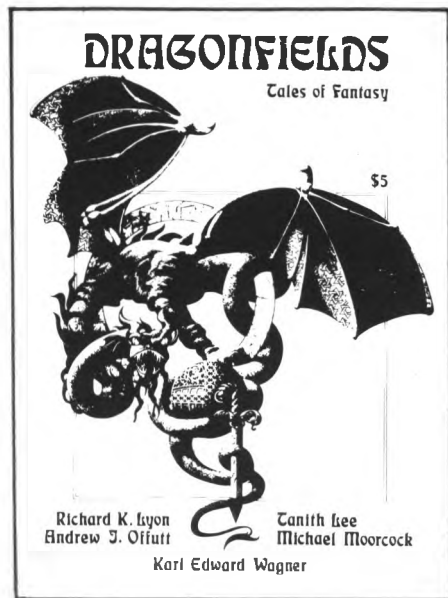
BEYOND THE FIELDS WE KNOW - 96pgs, offset; with Charles R. Saunders, Thomas Burnett Swann, Terry Brooks, Joy Chant, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Galad Elflandsson, Donna Gordon, Darrell Schweitzer, Robin Williamson, Gene Day - \$4.50.
SIX DRAWINGS FROM THE HARP OF THE GREY ROSE - offset; a mini-portfolio by Donna Gordon; six postcard-size prints in a decorative folder - \$3.

WOMAN OF THE ELF MOUNDS - 63pgs, offset; a chapbook by Paul Edwin Zimmer; introduction by Evangeline Walton; illustrated by Barry Blair, with Celtic designs by Sandra Garland - \$4.

ORDER FROM: TRISKELL PRESS

P.O. Box 9480, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1G 3V2

Postage is \$1 for the first item; 50¢ for each additional one. Dealers please inquire about applicable discounts.



Cover art copyright ©1980 by Donna Gordon.

Classified Advertising

Your advertisement here is read by more than 7,500 people (three per copy). Rates are 50¢ per column line, 34 characters to a line, including punctuation, spaces, etc. Four line minimum. All CAPS and *italics* at no extra charge.

COLORADO'S FINEST SF STORES! Stop in and see us. Open 10-6, M-Sat., 12-5, Sun. pb & hb. No mail order. *Mile High Comics*, 1717 Pearl St., Boulder--443-4500; 2901 E. Colfax, Denver--393-0478; 220 N. Tejon, Colo. Springs--635-2516.

Free catalogs. Specify mysteries, or sf/fantasy. 50,000 volumes in stock. Pandora's Books, Box FN-86 Neche, ND 58265. (204) 324-8548

"Worlds Lost...Time Forgotten" a science fiction magazine created by new writers and artists. Works for vol 3 being accepted. SASE for spec sheet. Copy of vol 1 or 2 \$3 each/both \$5. J Smith Rt 2 Box 234 Alhambra, Ill. 62001

WRITERS - New SF magazine needs quality fiction & non-fiction material; articles - 3,000 to 5,000 words. Fiction from 7,500. Payment 4¢ word upon pub. Details: SASE to Polaris, POB 109, Lindenwold, NJ 08021.

STAR TREADER BOOKS has re-located. Now at 370 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario, M5A 1T1. Telephone (416) 366-2375. Our Vancouver store has been permanently closed.

What would happen if Luke Skywalker met Darth Vader again? Speculate on the ultimate confrontation between father and son with *Polaris*. Also, C.J. Cherryh interviewed, work by Darrell Schweitzer, Jason Keehn & more! Summer issue. Send \$2 to: *Polaris Productions*, POB 109, Lindenwold, NJ 08021.

SIGNED FIRST EDITIONS w/dj of my fantasy novels. *Peace* \$12. *The Devil in a Forest* \$8. Both \$18. Postage included. Gene Wolfe, Box 69, Barrington, IL 60010.

Working Editors who have helped scores of new writers to publication are now willing to help you. Blue pencil edit, full critique, market evaluation, only \$3.00 per thousand words. Enclose SASE, please. RANKIN & MOORE LITERARY CONSULTANTS, Box 3416, Providence, RI 02909.

FANTASY FIGHTS OF SF heroines. Luscious Princesses and erotic Sorceresses. Jealousy, battle, and revenge between lush rivals. \$3 for sample story and lists. LM, Box 898, Hyannis, MA 02601.

from that viewpoint until rather late. Some of the aliens' actions are unexplained, others are inexplicable, which isn't the same thing. I find the business with the hand signals alarmingly dumb--we didn't even know if the aliens *had* hands. (However, there seems to be a slight hint in this that Lacombe--Fancois Truffaut--and the smiling alien had met before.)

I think that Spielberg might have included a shot of the red-clad volunteers entering the Mother Ship; as it is, they sort of vanish, and we have to presume they went in while Lacombe and the alien were greeting each other.

For the record, here are the changes I noticed. Removals: the scene in which Roy Neary (Richard Dreyfuss) goes to the power plant during the aliens' first visit to his home town. Also gone is the scene in which he rushes around in his bathrobe, tossing stuff in through the window to build his giant Devils' Tower.

Old things in for the first time: a scene in the Gobi Desert in which a ship is found lying in the sand. A quarrel between Neary and his wife (Teri Garr), in which she comes off very unsympathetically.

New footage: Roy Neary's view of the interior of the Mother Ship, which seems to have been designed by Ron Cobb. I won't try to describe it, except that it is about what you should have expected.

There also seem to have been minor changes in many places throughout, with, in a few shots, alternate takes being used (as when we first see the long-limbed alien leaving the Mother Ship). I wouldn't care to hazard a guess as to the percentage of never-shown material, but it isn't very high.

If you liked *CE3K* before, you will respond to it again; if you did not like it, there's little in the film that will change your opinion. And if you have never seen it, it is certainly worth a viewing. It's a good, almost majestic, movie. Almost all the flaws in it are the result of youthful enthusiasm, and it is a movie that only a young, relatively unsophisticated talent could have made.

-- Bill Warren



("Warren's News & Reviews"
continued from page 26.)

contacting. I don't think anything in the "Special Edition" changes any of this.

The overall emotions engendered in me by *CE3K* were joy and wonder. The UFOs always seemed gloriously mysterious, and are made real by the most perfect illusion of weightlessness in the history of movies. Those UFOs, as was the intent, seem almost alive.

Some writers, including Isaac Asimov, have attacked *CE3K* for poor logic and lack of scientific accuracy. Though the charges may indeed be quite true, it doesn't really matter to me; the picture wasn't intended to be scientifically accurate, merely convincing. The bizarre, almost illogical actions of the aliens to me were all either explicable or unimportantly inexplicable. Harlan Ellison deplores the film for suggesting that the aliens will come down and solve all our problems, and thinks that the message is that we should give up the struggle.

I didn't see that idea being even hinted at in the film. Sure, the aliens do come down in a scene intending to create a feeling of hope and joy, but that hope and joy are supposed to make us feel that we should want to go into space ourselves. It's a wonderland out there, Spielberg is saying, and we should join it. The film is, after all, not a documentary; it's an invitation.

Most other complaints about the picture I find stem from inadequate observation; people don't *watch* the film closely enough. Apparently some viewers can't grasp oblique films without the assistance of a narrator. (The same people have trouble with *2001*.) Spielberg tells us almost everything visually; he does, in this "edition," seem to have added a few shots which help to explain matters a little more clearly.

The picture is certainly not without faults. The early scenes are designed to be scary, even with Cary Guffey's beatific smiles at the antics of the unseen aliens; the picture doesn't quite recover

Work in Progress

Jack L. Chalker has begun work on a new tetralogy due to begin appearing from Del Rey Books next year, 'Four Lords of the Diamond.' "Like the 'Well World' books, it's neither SF nor fantasy, but a blend of both," he explains. "I simply don't recognize the distinction, since both SF and fantasy require ground rules and logic and magic is simply something a technological culture hasn't figured out how to do yet."

"Unlike 'Well,' though, the first three books can be read in any order (as all the action in them is happening simultaneously) and each has a beginning, middle and end. However, all three contribute pieces of a giant puzzle that will be solved in the fourth and final volume. It'll probably be late '82 or early '83 before people can read that solution, but I guarantee it won't be a letdown and I'll try very hard to knock the reader's socks off."

In addition to *Lilith*, the first volume in the series, Chalker is working on a time travel novel with the working title of *Downtime on the Night Side*. Planned beyond those two is what he describes as "a particularly weird novel," *The Messiah Choice*. His mainstream novel about the *USS Indianapolis* (the ship that delivered the A-bomb at the end of World War II) has

been sold to Doubleday under the title, *The Devil's Voyage*.

Les Daniels recently sold the third novel in his Don Sebastian series, *Citizen Vampire*, to Scribner's for winter publication. In this third volume, set during the French Revolution, Sebastian meets up with Dr. Guillotin and the Marquis de Sade. His first novel, *The Black Castle* was published by Scribner's in 1978 and paperbacked by Berkley, while the second, *The Silver Skull*, will soon be paperbacked by Berkley.

Andrew J. Offutt and Richard K. Lyon are currently working on the third volume of their Tiana Highrider trilogy, under contract to Pocket Books. The working title for the novel is now *Hair of Flame, Eyes of Fire*, which may yet be shortened to *Worldfires*. The novel will run to about 100,000 words.

Darrell Schweitzer reports that he has delivered his first volume of *Exploring Fantasy Worlds* to The Borgo Press; originally planned as a 70,000-word volume for the new defunct T-K Graphics, the series of fantasy essays will now appear as a series of 30,000-word volumes from Borgo. Included in volume one are: "The Fantasy of Johannes V. Jensen" by Poul Ander-

son, "Robert E. Howard's Fiction" by L. Sprague de Camp, "Dreams Within Dreams" by Sandra Miesel, "Aspects of Fantasy" by Michael Moorcock, and "Prithee Sirrah, What Dost thou Mean by Archaic Style in Fantasy?" by Schweitzer.

Due out shortly from Starblaze is a story collection, *We Are All Legends*. His fantasy novel, *The Shattered Goddess*, originally scheduled for November, has been pushed back to 1981 to make room for a new novel from Starblaze by John Myers Myers, *The Moon's Fire-eating Daughter*.

Terry Carr and Martin H. Greenberg have completed editing a new reprint anthology of fantasy for publication next spring by Avon, which Carr describes as the "definitive" anthology of fantasy from the so-called "genre" magazines. Entitled *A Treasury of Modern Fantasy*, the volume will contain 33 classic fantasy stories.

Also completed is Carr's *Fantasy Annual III*, to be published by Pocket Books in the spring, covering the year 1979. The first two volumes of this "Best of the Year" anthology series were published by Berkley as *The Year's Finest Fantasy*. Volume III will contain 14 stories plus an essay, "The Year in Fantasy," by Susan Wood. *

(Book Reviews

continued from page 7.)

stumbles into the lost city, thoroughly destroys the whole damned thing with his meddling, and then walks off with a luscious Indian babe and a pocketful of jewels for his trouble. *The Hidden Magic of Uxmal* may be a great many things, both good and bad, but it's not fantasy, as Fawcett claims.

Faustin Gomez is a hip, 30 year old Mexican lawyer out of Harvard, recently divorced and just sort of hanging loose...until an old school chum appears out of nowhere and tells him about this 80 or 500 year old lady who is possessed of all sorts of "magic" powers and cosmic wisdom. Intrigued, Faustin takes off into the wilds with his friend and eventually they reach the isolated village where Uxmal tends her flock of disciples like a benevolent Earth-mother. From there, the story degenerates into what seems an almost

continual narrative of home-grown psychology on the raising of children and excerpts from *The Secret Life of Plants*, with a dash of *The Teachings of Don Juan* and *Lost Horizons* thrown in for good measure. Sure, Faustin meets his Indian lover and he even helps defend the paradisiac village against the hired bravos of a rapacious Mexican land baron...but it's only the barest afterthought of a plot, and a poor vehicle for what should have been a simple volume of back-to-the-earth philosophy.

All of this is not to say that Lopez hasn't got the right ideas. At times, I found myself agreeing with his theories on nutrition, education and meditation, in spite of the fact that I wanted wild adventure, sex and blood-curdling suspense. But I suppose one can't have everything and I'll just have to shelve *The Hidden Magic of Uxmal* alongside all those Carlos Castaneda books I've never owned.

-- Galad Elflandsson

(Interview w/Stanton A. Coblentz continued from page 18.)

books as *The Answer of the Ages* (1931) and the anthology of poetry, *Unseen Wings* (1949). I am still writing on an active basis, though not experimenting with new genres, and though I do have a new work of science fiction which I expect to be able to finish before very long, writing still, as always, represents a challenge. But your question, "Does writing challenge you today the way it once did earlier in your career?," is hard to answer. There is a sense in which writing never challenged me in the same way it once did. Each book bears with it a challenge of its own, for the reason that it is something new and unique and has its own piquancy and calls to one with its own especial summons.

-- Dr. Jeffrey M. Elliot

**"A grand picaresque
tale...by one of the
great storytellers of the
century."***

*A false king who is really a magician...a true juggler who is
really a king...and a vast planet ruled by dreams...*

*"Rich, solid and satisfying...the sense of wonder never
fails...The world of Majipoor assumes a reality of its own sel-
dom seen in fantasy."*
—Dallas Morning News

*"Silverberg has done the rope trick with this one—pulled you
into a superbly constructed world-system-ecology-history."*
—Anne McCaffrey

*"A surefire pageturner...The giant planet Majipoor is a brilliant
concept of the imagination."*
—Algis Budrys, Chicago Sun-Times

With maps \$12.50 at bookstores now

LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE

ROBERT
SILVERBERG

illus: Ron Walotsky

*Roger Zelazny



Harper & Row
10 E. 53rd St., New York 10022

At your bookstore, or use coupon to order.

HARPER & ROW, Mail Order Dept.
10 E. 53rd St., New York, N.Y. 10022

Please send me LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE. My payment of \$12.50 plus \$1.25 for
shipping is enclosed. I reserve the right to return the book within 10 days of delivery for a
full refund.

☐ check ☐ money order Please charge my ☐ VISA ☐ Master Charge

#

Exp. Date

Signature

Name

Address

City

(please print)

State

Zip

FN 1080