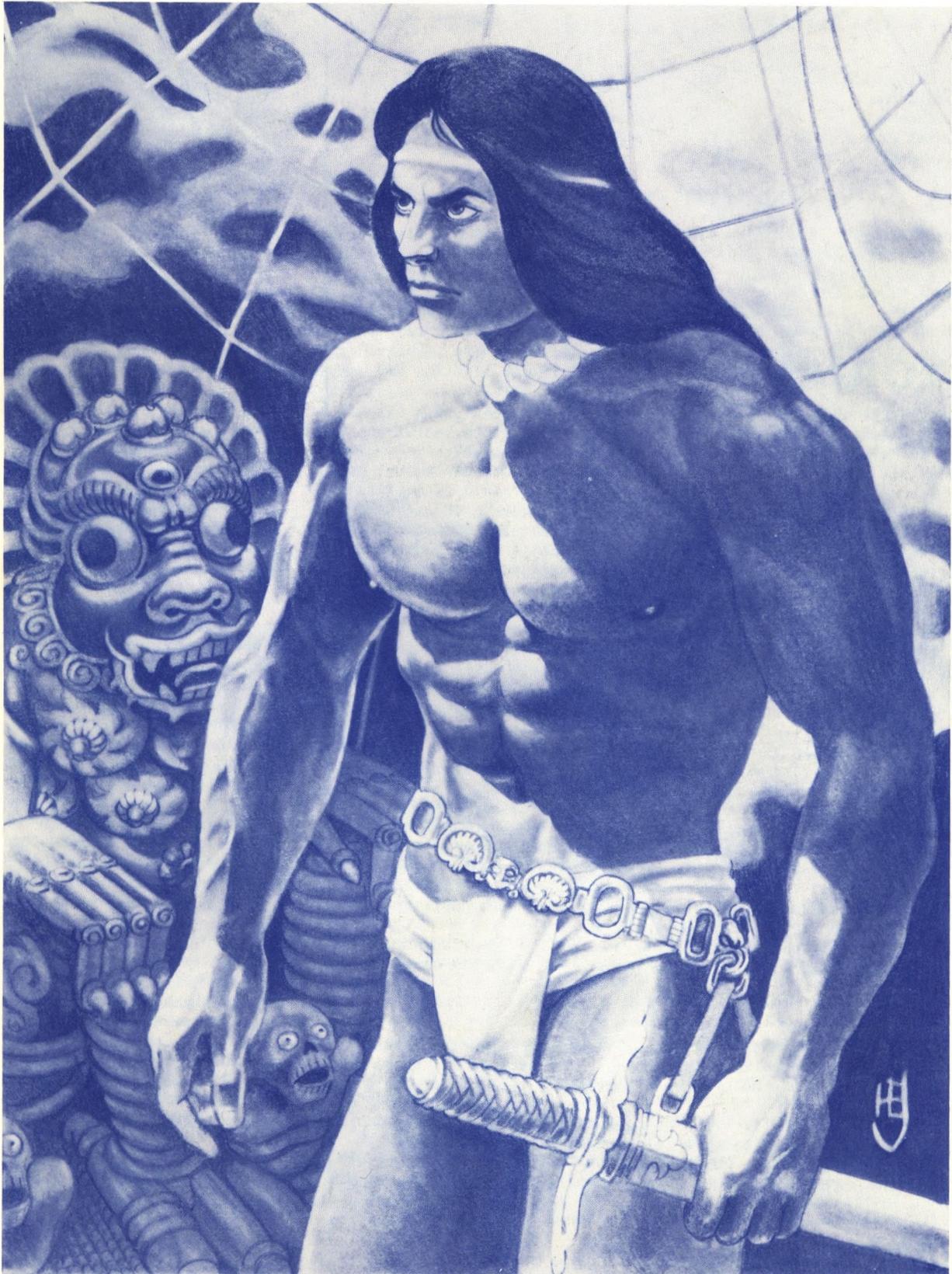


fantasy newsletter

#34 March 1981
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The
Science Fiction
& Fantasy
News Monthly



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Cover by Hank Jankus

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EDITORIAL

As this issue was going to press, Donald M. Grant called me with some very sad news: Harold Warner Munn died, of cancer, the morning of January 10, 1981. He was 77 years old. And unbeknownst to many of his friends, his last six months were spent in a considerable amount of pain.

I haven't known Harold long, only a couple of years. He was a subscriber to *FN*...in fact, recently renewed for another 12 issues. I first met him at the 4th World Fantasy Convention in Texas and enjoyed meeting him again at the next two. He almost didn't make the last one. He wrote me a month before and told me he was worried he wouldn't be able to make it; that he might have to go into the hospital before the con. He loved attending the World Fantasy cons. It was important to him and, despite his health, he made it to Baltimore. But he was in pain. He hid it well, but you could see it in a weak moment or two. I asked him how he was feeling and he explained it away--shrugged it off--as stomach problems and switched the subject to a more pleasant one. He was determined to enjoy the con and I'm sure he did. And only he knew it would be his last.

Harold was a very kind and gentle man, unassuming, soft-spoken, and very down-to-earth. Although never a prolific writer, his writing has touched many thousands of lives over an incredible 55-year writing career. I won't attempt to summarize his life or his work here--he did a much better job of that himself in the December issue with his essay, "To Saint Joan." It was an essay I requested early in 1980 and which I was finally able to publish in the December *FN*--barely in time to hand Harold a copy at the 6th WFC. I'm happy that I was able to publish it before he died.

Harold will be missed by many people who had the good fortune to know him personally and, I'm sure, by many more who knew him only through his writings.

I'm happy to welcome back this issue the talents of Hank Jankus, who contributed the Conan cover illustration. The work is a preliminary one for a Conan volume he will be illustrating for Donald M. Grant.

In addition, I decided it was high time *Fantasy Newsletter* had a "new" look since it ceased being merely a newsletter more than a year ago. I'm not ready for a name change yet--for one thing, I have too much time and sweat invested in *Fantasy Newsletter*--but a de-empha-

(Continued on page 27.)

fantasy newsletter

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ON FANTASY

by Karl Edward Wagner

Appearing Soon at A Newsstand Near You:

Being a New Year's review of some of the books I hope I won't see this year but probably will...

Good Lord, is it another new year already? A whole year into the decade of the eighties, and I'm still trying to break the habit of dating everything in the sixties. Was it that stuff Timothy Leary made me take? Or did the seventies ever exist at all? If so, should they have? Well, it doesn't really matter all that much, because some things never change. Take bad books, for example. Those same turkeys that roosted on the stands last year, and the year before, and the year before--you can be certain that they have been painstakingly cloned and that they will be waiting there for you again this year, too.

Why? Because once upon a time some distant ancestor of each of these was a Big Seller. Exactly why that happened does not concern us here. It might have had something to do with literary merit, but probably not, and this possible handicap should not be considered to be an automatic barrier to Successful Sales. It is enough for us that once long ago there was a book that made Big Bucks for its lucky publisher, and that thereupon a mighty cry arose from the throats of those less fortunate in publishingdom: "We want ten more just like that one, and we want them next week!"

As a noted critic whose opinions and pronouncements make and break careers daily and shape the future course of literature, I get review copies, thousands of them, and read each one carefully. In the public spirit, I thought I'd share with you a few of the familiar offerings awaiting publication in 1981.

Watch for them.

Vegetarian Slaves of Bore.

Chrystal Sidemeat, spoiled debutante and carnivore socialite, is

mysteriously transported to the primitive planet, Bore, where she is captured and enslaved by a savage race of vegetarian tribesmen. Sold at auction for three bushels of celery to the barbarian chieftain, Lentill, she is forced to become his personal slave. Haughty and rebellious at first, Chrystal is flogged with brown rice and seaweed and forced to wear an anti-choke collar. Given only lettuce leaves to wear and punished through the humiliating ordeal of the rhubarb ritual, she gradually grows to loathe the thought of eating flesh and to worship her master, Lentill. At last, rescued by an attack of carnivorous tribesmen from Bigmak, Chrystal longs for the green security of vegetable bondage, and returns to Lentill to serve him willingly as his salad maiden.

The Whining. An escaped Nazi war criminal has been living as a dog catcher in a small New England town, where for many years he has been pursuing secret experiments in an attempt to clone Hitler's dog. When he is trampled to death by an outraged dachshund, the pack of clones escape--terrorizing the townspeople as the goose-stepping strays overrun the countryside. In an orgy of unleashed destruction, garbage cans are overturned, lawns fouled, non-Aryan cats treed, joggers and mailmen bitten, children followed home from school. Authorities are powerless, until veteran Nazi fighter, Rin-Tin-Tin, is coaxed out of retirement to save the day. (Movie tie-in.)

My Sword is Thick. Richard Blade #43 by Jeffrey Lord. What more can I say?

St. Swithin's Day. In a small California town in the 1960s a young surfer overdoses on Beach Boys albums, and, on St. Swithin's Day, beats his girlfriend to death with

his surfboard. Now it is again St. Swithin's Day fifteen years later, and a group of teenagers return to the scene of the murder for an all night beach party. The stretch of beach is deserted now, shunned by local surfers since the killer was last seen paddling his surfboard off into the night. Disregarding all warnings, the teenagers wear bikinis, lay out in the sun, surf, play volleyball, dance and smoke cigarettes. Out of the night, the crazed surfer returns, riding the midnight curl. One by one the teenagers are stabbed, hacked, decapitated, impaled, disembowelled, skewered, mangled, cut in half, turned inside out, sunburned, mutilated, and subjected to other spattering demises--until the crazed surfer is at last exorcised by a cassette recording of a Frankie and Annette duet. Or is he? From the author of *The Arkansas Roto-Tiller Massacre*. (Movie tie-in.)

Sword of the Demon Queen.

Ringo the barbarian, from the barbarian northern realm of Rudolf, is wandering through the southern deserts of Frizbi, when he encounters a caravan being massacred by bat-winged warriors. Killing most of these with his magic sword, Thorkpucker, and putting the rest to flight, Ringo rescues a beautiful slave girl, Allura. Allura tells Ringo that her mistress, Princess Aleena, has been overthrown by an evil wizard and transformed into a vegetarian; further, that she is on a desperate mission to secure the only talisman that can save her mistress, the legendary Vegetable Brush of the Gods. The Rudolfian bravely agrees to assist the Frizbian wench in her quest, even though seven deadly perils await them before they can seek the sacred brush in the dreaded cave of Grimdoom. Ringo fearlessly faces all assorted

perils, carving them into chewy bits with his mighty sword, at the rate of about one peril every twenty-five pages, not counting minor swordfights. The evil wizard is vanquished, Allura turns out to be Princess Aleena in disguise, and the mighty Ringo rides away to seek new adventures.

My Axe is Red. Richard Blade #44 by Jeffrey Lord. I can say no more.

The Vibrator. Police in New York are baffled by a terrifying series of murders in which the bodies of young housewives are found literally shaken apart. Kindly, old-fashioned Father Weinstein is positive that this is the work of poorly consummated demonic possession, but the police only laugh at his superstitious ideas. Instead the authorities believe this to be the work of an escaped Nazi war criminal, secretly working on the ultimate secret weapon--a nuclear powered buzz-bomb that has been miniaturized and camouflaged to pass for a Ronco kitchen appliance. Pooling their knowledge, Father Weinstein and a young police detective (who had wanted to become a nun but flunked the physical), attempt an exorcism and discover that the terrifying force behind these horrifying murders is a possessed Nazi Roto-Rooter. Father Weinstein is blown apart in slow motion as the exorcism succeeds, leaving the young detective shaken and nauseated.

Sword Queen of the Demon. Beautiful barbarian swordswoman, Barbi, is riding her enchanted stallion across the frozen wastes of Northuria--clad, as is her wont, in a brass bra and wolf-skin g-string, the native costume of her barbarian homeland, Fredericksia. Encountering a caravan under attack from snow apes, she quickly hacks them into mitten-sized chunks with her nine-foot broadsword, Johnholmes, and rescues a handsome young thief, Ken. Ken tells Barbi that an evil sorceress has seized power in his native land, Volaria, forcing all who oppose her to flee or be fed to her flesh-eating plants. Only the legendary Vibrator of the Gods can break her power, and Ken, the greatest thief of Volaria, plans to steal this wand of power from its hiding place in the Tower of Doomdred. Glad for adventure, the Fredericksian boldly offers to aid Ken on his quest, even though they must first face seven dread dangers on the way. Barbi manages to chop her way through these seven dread dangers, at the rate of about one danger every twenty-five pages, and loses her clothes maybe every other

chapter. Vanquished by the talisman from the tower, the evil sorceress is forced to wear a frilly maid's costume and do housework. Barbi gives Ken a kiss on the cheek and rides away to seek new adventures.

Spatter! Police in Los Angeles are mystified by a horrifying wave of gruesome deaths in which the victims are blown into bits--instantly, silently, in slow motion in the midst of their daily affairs. They are victims of the terrifying telekinetic powers of Leeroy Fandango, a disturbed teenager, son of a Chicano tomato picker and an escaped Nazi war criminal. Leeroy has the power to blow people into bite-sized bits in slow motion, thanks to the sinister genetic experiments of his aunt, a Haitian corset maker. Once his secret is known, secret government agencies and terrorist groups the world over vie to recruit Leeroy for their organizations. Meanwhile Leeroy, his twisted mind constantly obsessed with the memory of his mother falling into the catsup mill, is storing his telekinetic powers to pop the whole planet into one big tomato surprise. Fortunately, while attempting to rob a vegetable market, Leeroy forgets the power-net pantyhose he has pulled over his head as a disguise, uses his telekinetic powers, and implodes.

My Spear is Sharp. Jeffrey Lord #46 by Richard Blade. The saga continues.

The Well of Wind's Wonder. Hawksflight Truefire, deposed elfin prince of the elfish kingdom, Fia'fia Arleha, rides upon his enchanted unicorn steed, Purehorn Windsong, through the weeping wastes of Dreeryon'n'yon, singing a sad elfin song as he plays upon his enchanted lute, Frostfire Goodvibes. He chances upon a caravan, all laden with silks and perfumed jewels, under attack from orcs and trolls. Singing a song of power, he draws his enchanted sword, Eversharp Truthbringer, causing the forces of evil to flee. Among those rescued is the fairy princess, Firewing Frostwind, who has loved him through a thousand tragic incarnations. They sing. She tells him of the dark horrors that shadow the lives of his former subjects under the dark rule of the dark sorcerer, Badbreth Trollspizzle. Also rescued is the white-bearded mage, Purefrost Windwisdom, who tells Hawksflight Truefire of the wondrous enchanted Chastity Belt of the Old Wise Ones, which can protect its wearer from all impure thoughts as well as Badbreth Trollspizzle's dark ensorcelments. Stay,

but to win this wondrous belt, the champion must first win through seven perilous challenges ere he lift it from the Lost Altar of the Frostflames. The elfin prince vows to face these perilous challenges. Purefrost Windwisdom and Firewing Frostwind join Hawksflight Truefire upon the noble back of Purehorn Windsong. All sing. The seven perilous challenges are each and every one faced and overcome, without a drop of blood spilled or a speck of dust raised, by the brave fairyland companions--thanks to the timely intercession of the enchanted owl, Nighteyes Breakwind; the magical goldfish, Clearstream Goldfin; the dryad princess, Deeproots Goodthroat; the wondrous woodsprite, Woody Woodpecker; the ensorcelled vegemetic, Fingerlickin Goodprunes; the endearing dragon, Fireaway Windreddy; the eccentric woodwitch, Broomhilda Everclear; and who can forget that loveable gnome, Treefrog Bierfart--at the steady clip of maybe one challenge every hundred pages or so, depending upon songs and footnotes. At last, Hawksflight Truefire dons the Chastity Belt of the Old Wise Ones. As his companions kneel at his feet, the transfigured elfin prince proclaims that it is time to return to Fia'fia Arleha, despite the seven awful horrors that stand between them and their homeland. (This is Volume I of the trilogy, *The Wondrous Comrades of Wind's Well*.)

The Wetting. Horror stalks a small New England town. One by one, slowly and inexorably, the children of the town of Pruefrock's Peachpit, are growing older. Bifurcated protuberances sprout from the chests of young girls, horrid hairy growths disfigure the smooth cheeks of the young lads--until the terrified townspeople can ignore the facts no longer. Is it demonic possession? Is it an invasion by extraterrestrial beings? Is it *them*? And time is running out--the children are growing taller! Only prayer and understanding can save them now. (Reissue. Original title: *Facts of Life and Love for Teenagers*.)

My Blade is Lord. Richard Jeffrey #47 by Jeffrey Richards. Good lord.

Kiss Time's Blood Anew. Felicia Starsong, sophisticated Manhattanite and career vegetarian, moves into a posh regentified Bronx condo. Concerned over inexplicable vibrations that penetrate her mattress on nights of the full moon, she seeks companionship in the caped embrace of her across-the-hall neighbor, the romantic cen-

(Continued on page 30, Col. 1.)

Specialty Publishers

ODYSSEY PUBLICATIONS

A recent release from Odyssey Publications is *Doc Savage, Supreme Adventurer* by John L. Nanovic, with an introduction by Will Murray. This is the first publication of a preliminary Doc Savage story written by Nanovic in late 1932 to serve as a blueprint for the creation of what eventually became one of the biggest selling pulps of the Depression era. The 32-page digest size booklet features the original Paul Orban illustrations to *The Man of Bronze*, as well as new artwork by Frank Hamilton. Price is \$2.50, including postage.

Still available from Odyssey is *Doc Savage: Reflections in Bronze* by Will Murray, a 26-page illustrated booklet published in 1978 that contains two early articles about Doc Savage, written by Murray and published only in small circulation, mimeographed fanzines. Price is \$1.25 (plus 50¢ postage, I suspect). Odyssey Publications, P. O. Box G-148, Greenwood, MA 01880.

RICHARD E. GEIS

Just out from Richard E. Geis, publisher of *Science Fiction Review*, is his third self-published erotic SF novel, *The Corporation*

Strikes Back. The 92-page mimeographed novel is a sequel to his earlier *Star Whores*, published a year ago and now out of print. The price is \$4 per copy.

Also available are copies of his first self-published erotic SF novel, *Canned Meat*. This was published in 1978 and is priced at \$5. Richard E. Geis, P. O. Box 11408, Portland, OR 97211.

PANDORA'S BOOKS LTD

J. Grant Thiessen, publisher of *The SF Collector* (now *Megavore*) has announced the publication of two new books. Due out very shortly is *The Tanelorn Archives*, a comprehensive bibliography of the works of Michael Moorcock, compiled by Richard Bilyeu. The volume will contain more than 1,200 bibliographic entries covering Moorcock's short fiction and nonfiction in addition to his books; and it will cover virtually all media, including records, posters and comics. At this writing, I have seen carbons from the manuscript and the entries appear to be very comprehensive and very complete.

Scheduled for spring publication is *Golden Age*, edited by J. Grant Thiessen, an original anthology of new stories in the old

pulp tradition. Included are stories by L. Ron Hubbard, H. L. Gold and Robert W. Krepps, Jayge Carr, Melvin Sturgis, John Russell Fearn, Theodore Cogswell, Steve Rasnic Tem (the only reprint in the volume), Arthur Jean Cox, Daniel Gilbert, Ronald Anthony Cross, John Onoda, David J. Schow, Joseph Willis, Seth McEvoy, Richard Grant and Sephriam P. McCutney. The volume will sport a cover illustration in the old pulp tradition by Tim Hammell.

Both books will be available in three editions. A 250-copy signed and numbered hardcover edition will be priced at \$20; a 350-copy (unsigned) hardcover edition at \$15; and a trade paperback edition at \$7.95. Pandora's Books Ltd., Box 86, Neche, ND 58265.

SCIENCE FICTION BOOK CLUB

March selections from the SF Book Club are *The Wounded Land* by Stephen R. Donaldson, member priced at \$4.50, and *The Seven Deadly Sins of Science Fiction* edited by Isaac Asimov, Charles G. Waugh and Martin H. Greenberg, in a first hardcover edition member priced at \$2.98. The former was a Del Rey hardcover at \$12.95 last June and the latter was a November paperback original from Fawcett Crest. *

THE TANELORN ARCHIVES by Richard Bilyeu.

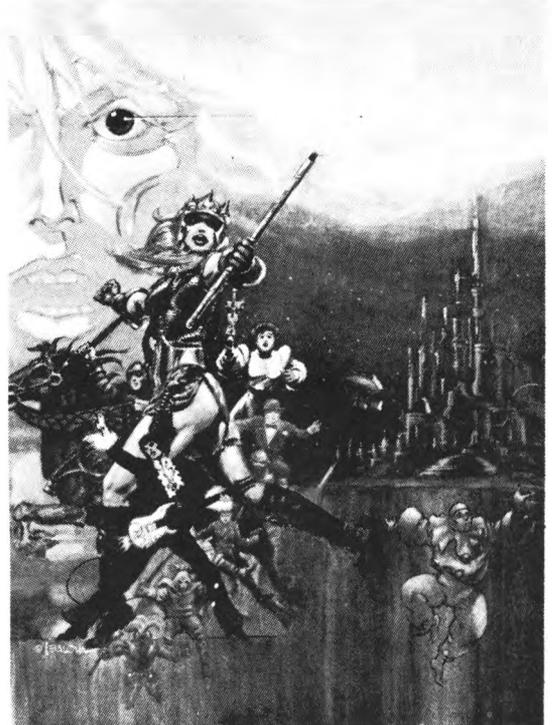
A comprehensive, exhaustive bibliography (there are over 1200 entries) of every edition of all material by Michael Moorcock is the aim of this bibliographic work. Included are books, stories, fanzines, posters, records, manuscripts, comics, etc. Cover is by Steve Leialoha. There will be three variations--a signed, numbered, 250-copy edition in hardcover at \$20.00, an unsigned, 350-copy edition at \$15.00, and a trade paperback edition at \$7.95. Publication December 1, 1980.

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(Dealer's rates on request.)



Trade Books

BERKLEY/PUTNAM

Scheduled for March release from Berkley/Putnam is *Dream Dancer* by Janet E. Morris, the first volume in a new SF/fantasy trilogy by the author of the Silistra series. The novel is about an Earth woman, a member of a family that is a corporation empire, who is abducted to the slums where slaves drug themselves with powerful sorcery known as Dream Dancing; there she becomes the Dream Dancer. The book will feature a wraparound jacket illustration by Don Panchantz and is tentatively priced at \$12.95. Volume two in the trilogy will be *Cruiser Dreams*.

Berkley recently bought the reprint rights to Stephen King's nonfiction volume about the supernatural and horror fiction, *Danse Macabre*. Berkley Pub. Corp., 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016.

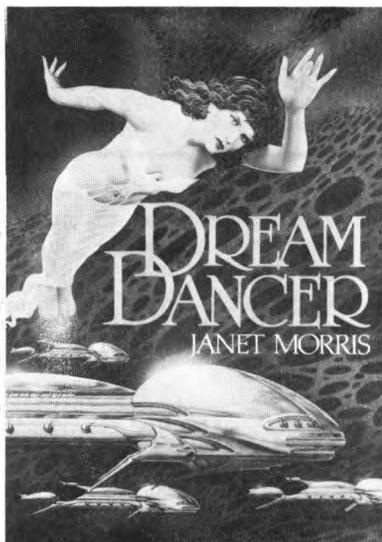
DEL REY BOOKS

A hardcover original novel due out from Del Rey Books in March is *Project Pope* by Clifford D. Simak. From Del Rey's description, it sounds like a wild science fiction novel--involving the discovery of heaven and the creation of a robot Papacy. Price will be \$10.95.

Also in March, Del Rey will inaugurate a new series of trade paperback reprints of classic SF novels. Leading off the series are two titles, each priced at \$5.95: *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and *Childhood's End* by Arthur C. Clarke. Del Rey Books, 201 East 50th St., New York, NY 10022.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN

Although originally announced for November (see FN #30), the official release date turned out to be December 19th for *Shatterday* by Harlan Ellison. Included in the 332-page collection are the following stories, each separately introduced by the author: "Jeffy is Five," "How's the Night Life on Cissalda?" "Flop Sweat," "Would You Do It for A Penny?" (with Haskell Barkin), "The Man Who Was Heavily Into Revenge," "Shoppe Keeper," "All the Lies That Are My Life" (expanded from the F&SF version), "Django," "Count the Clock That Tells the Time," "In the Fourth Year of the War," "Alive and Well



Artist: Don Panchantz

and On A Friendless Voyage," "All the Birds Come Home to Roost," "Opium," "The Other Eye of Polyphemus," "The Executioner of the Malformed Children," and "Shatterday." Price is \$12.95.

A juvenile SF release for December is *Unbuilding*, written and illustrated by David McCaulay. The 80-page, large format hardcover describes the meticulous and precise "unbuilding" (dismantling) of the Empire State Building for the establishment of a park in 1993. An unusual and humorous title, to say the least. Price is \$9.95. Houghton Mifflin Co., Two Park St., Boston, MA 02107.

ST. MARTIN'S PRESS

Due out from St. Martin's Press in late January is *The Stairway to Heaven* by Zecharia Sitchin, a thick, 327-page volume proposing the existence of a tenth planet in our solar system from which ancient astronauts visited Earth, thus becoming part of various ancient sacred texts discussing the appearances of gods, etc. If you like von Daniken, you'll probably love this one. Although the publisher does not call it "nonfiction"--nowhere in the book is it labelled such, even in the Library of Congress data--the dust jacket is emblazoned with the disclaimer: "This is not science fiction!" Price is \$17.95. St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10010.

WORKMAN PUBLISHING

Just out from Workman Publishing Company as this issue is distributed is *DiFate's Catalog of Science Fiction Hardware* by Vincent DiFate and Ian Summers. The 160-page, large format trade paperback is described as "a showcase

Artist: Leo & Diane Dillon

HARLAN ELLISON SHATTERDAY



of fabulous technology" ranging from Verne's "Nautilus" to urban monads. In fact, the volume is a showcase for DiFate's artwork and an excellent one at that, containing more than 50 full color illustrations from a variety of magazine and paperback covers and numerous black and white drawings and diagrams. The text by Beth Meacham provides descriptions of the technological achievements, citing the authors and works that conceived them. Price is \$8.95. A cloth edition is also available at \$17.95. Workman Pub. Co., 1 West 39 St., New York, NY 10018.

DOUBLEDAY & CO.

December releases that appeared on schedule from Doubleday (as previewed in FN #31) are *After Dark* by Manly Wade Wellman and *Chrysalis 8* edited by Roy Torgeson. The Wellman title is his second Silver John novel, a supernatural novel set in the southern Appalachians that has a ring of authenticity unique to Wellman. Price is \$8.95.

Chrysalis 8 is the latest in Torgeson's original anthology series (the earlier volumes were paperback originals from Zebra Books) and features the following stories: "You Are My Sunshine" by Tanith Lee, "Beachcomer" by Mike Resnick, "Emily Dickinson--Saved from Drowning" by Barry N. Malzberg, "The King is Dead! Long Live--" by Jaye Carr, "Hart's Hope" by Orson Scott Card, "Wryneck, Draw Me" by Margaret St. Clair, "The Cathedral in Dying Time" by Sharon Webb, "Proteus" by Paul H. Cook, "Angels' Wings" by Sontow Sucharitul, "Filmmaker" by Steve Rasnic Tem, "Crocodile" by R. A. Lafferty, and "Barrier" by Leanne Frahm. Price is \$9.95.

Due out in mid-January is a

new collection of fantasy and speculative fiction stories by *Walter Tevis* entitled *Far From Home*. The 181-page volume will contain stories reprinted from the SF magazines as well as original stories written especially for the collection. Price will be \$9.95. Doubleday & Co., Inc., 245 Park Ave., New York, NY 10017.

ACE BOOKS

A January release from Ace Books (as previewed in FN #26, 27, and 32) is *Science Fiction Studies in Film* by *Frederik Pohl* and *Frederik Pohl IV*. The 346-page trade paperback presents a history of SF in the movies from the perspective of one (okay...two) well versed in science fiction as a literature and explores the difference between the two. Included are about 50 stills and photographs. Price is \$6.95. Ace Books, 51 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10010.

G. K. HALL & CO.

As noted briefly in FN #31, G. K. Hall & Co. added three new volumes to its "Masters of SF and Fantasy" series in December. *Roger Zelazny: A Primary and Secondary Bibliography* by *Joseph L. Sanders* is 154 pages in length and includes complete, detailed bibliographies of Zelazny's published fiction, poetry and nonfiction, as well as a lengthy bibliography of critical works. Appendices include awards he has won, foreign language editions, and manuscripts.

Samuel R. Delany: A Primary and Secondary Bibliography by *Michael W. Peplow* and *Robert S. Bravard* runs 178 pages and features a lengthy (61 pages) introduction to Delany and his work. Bibliographies (again, highly detailed) include fiction, miscellaneous media, non-fiction, and critical studies. Appendices feature information about his juvenile material, unpublished nonfiction and collections. The Delany and Zelazny volumes are priced at \$15 each.

The third volume and the largest in the series to date is *Jules Verne: A Primary and Secondary Bibliography* by *Edward J. Gallagher*. The 408-page volume is larger in format than previous volumes (6" by 9½" vs. 5½" by 8¼"). Included are highly detailed bibliographies of Verne's fiction, non-fiction, appearances in miscellaneous media, and critical studies in both English and French. Price is \$30 due to the larger size. All three volumes are indexed by primary and secondary works. The

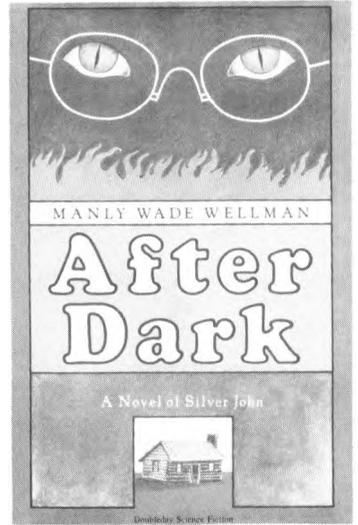
series editor for these bibliographies is *Lloyd W. Currey*. For additional information about the previous three volumes in this series, see FN #24. Recommended for serious collectors and highly recommended for libraries.

Also released in December are two new volumes in the Gregg Press reprint series of the works of *Philip Jose Farmer: Inside Outside* is a facsimile reprint of the 1964 first edition (Ballantine) with a new introduction by *Lou Stathis*, and *Dare* is a facsimile reprint of the 1965 first edition (Ballantine) with a new introduction by *Moshe Feder* and *David G. Hartwell*. The volumes are priced at \$11.95 each.

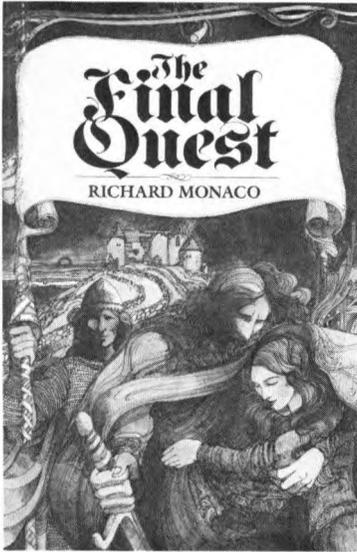
A new title from G. K. Hall under the Twayne Publishers imprint is *J. R. R. Tolkien* by *Deborah Webster Rogers* and *Ivor A. Rogers*. This is a 164-page volume about the life and writings of Tolkien, including a selected bibliography of

his fiction and critical works. The book is part of Twayne's English Authors Series of criticism and interpretation. Price is \$8.95. G. K. Hall & Co., 70 Lincoln St. Boston, MA 02111. *

Artist: Michael Flanagan



Book Reviews



Artist: David McCall Johnston

THE FINAL QUEST by Richard Monaco. Berkley/Putnam: New York, January 1981, 341pp. \$13.95

Reviewed by Roger C. Schlobin

This is the final volume in a trilogy; it has been preceded by *Parsival, or A Knight's Tale* (Macmillan, 1977) and *The Grail War* (Simon & Schuster; Wallaby, 1979). The series focuses on Parsival and a number of other characters--notably Lancelot and Gawain--and their activities after the first quest for the Holy Grail and their confrontations with the evil wizard Clinschor. That Monaco would select an Arthurian subject is hardly a surprise. Since the first mention of Arthur in the sixth century, the tales surrounding his legendary reign have been legion, the most recent being the final volume in Mary Stewart's trilogy, *The Last Enchantment* (Morrow, 1980), and Gillian Bradshaw's *Hawk of May* (Simon & Schuster, 1980).

However, readers coming to Monaco's work should not expect to find the dignity, chivalry, nobility, and epic emotions traditionally associated with Arthurian fiction. If they do, they will be stunned because Monaco presents dark, tormented tales filled with images of blood, viscera, excrement, and lust. Unlike Robert Nye's witty and humorous pornography in *Merlin* (Hamish Hamilton, 1980), the tone of *The Final Quest* is agonizing cruelty, creating a cynical world, void of ideals, whose characters are crucified on despair and confusion. Using a form of narrative similar to stream-of-consciousness, Monaco matches his form to

his meaning and regularly forces the reader to leap back-and-forth between the psychological agonies of his numerous characters and a setting that has all the dread and barrenness of Tolkien's Mordor and none of the glory of heroic victory. Make no mistake: *The Final Quest* and its two predecessors are not for the weak-hearted, the easily offended, or the easily confused. As Monaco explores the rubble that follows the Grail quest within a context of unredeemed existence, the reader can easily be lost as the numerous characters moan their ways amid a magic none of them want and amid relationships that prove to be unhealthy and capricious.

Clinschor, the evil, Grail-seeking necromancer, is the heart of most of the confusion. Supposedly destroyed at the end of *The Grail War* and certainly the most repugnant antagonist in modern fantasy (for example, he travels in a wagon filled with his own excrement at one point), he reappears in *The Final Quest* as a victim of Monaco's version of the Black Death. He is mistakenly sustained by one of the novel's more admirable characters and quickly gains new followers, a group of sanctimonious, evangelistic cannibals. However, Clinschor's noxious life style and his quest to resurrect a race of evil horrors whose slimy vagueness recalls Lovecraft's Elder Gods are only two of the elements that create the novel's studied depravity. He is ably aided by the deeply confused and tormented Parsival; the bestial, dim-witted, and savagely efficient Lancelot; the sardonic, haunted, and tormented Gawain, half his face cut away, teeth gleaming through missing cheek; the patricidal Lohengrin, Gawain's treacherous son, once Clinschor's right hand, now an amnesiac; and the frequently alcoholic and/or nymphomaniacal variety of wives, sisters, daughters, and mistresses. All of these characters are gathered together to create a fictional happening that may have its seeds in a noble past, but here is a conflict for the sake of conflict, a struggle without ideals, and Parsival's final understanding of the Grail and Lohengrin's redemption do little to redeem or elevate the weight of darkness and repulsiveness that has occurred throughout the trilogy.

A number of reviewers have called Monaco's earlier efforts masterpieces. It would be better

The reader who expects traditional sword-and-sorcery fantasy should pass *The Final Quest* by. However, for the reader who finds the bizarre attractive, who is intrigued by chaos and the slime of the id, the impact of this novel will be well worth the time. to call them effectively deviant.

PLAYERS AT THE GAME OF PEOPLE by John Brunner. Del Rey: New York, December 1980, 219pp. \$2.25

Reviewed by William Glass

Slowly it grows on you that John Brunner's *Players at the Game of People* is a horror novel. Before that you are too busy actively working to figure out what is going on.

The story moves from temporally disorienting scenes of the panic in London at the start of the Battle of Britain to a near-future London, where doors open from streets wretched with urban decay and social disintegration into flats hiding realities as unsettlingly surreal as any of Philip K. Dick's.

In this near-future London, Godwin Harpinshield has recent memories of having saved a ten-year-old girl from the fires of the Blitz. He also has it all: the clothes, the sports car, the fine dinners, works of art and companionships that need never be paid for--gifts, like his extended youth and his ability to blank details from the minds of the too-curious, that come from those he thinks of as his owners.

On an impulse, which he recognizes as a nudge from his invisible owners, Harpinshield picks up a young prostitute named Gorse. He understands from all the times before that he is to comfort her and take her around to meet others like him, his friends, whose private realities are even more opulently, more disturbingly unreal than his own. He is to recruit her.

But this time something about the familiar pattern is disquieting. And tracking him is a pale-haired woman who haunts Harpinshield with her distracting resemblance to that girl-child from the Blitz.

Revelation as to what lies behind all this slippery reality is withheld as Harpinshield tells first what he is allowed to (to Gorse), then what he knows (to the pale-haired woman), and finds himself growing ever more uneasy about that in his life which is still a mystery to him.

Understanding gestalts, both for Harpinshield and for the read-

er, with chilling mythic inevitability and a sudden final *snap*. Recommended.

GARDENS OF DELIGHT by Ian Watson.
Gollancz: London, 1980, 176pp.
£6.95

Reviewed by Melissa Mia Hall

How would you like to fall into the world of Hieronymous Bosch, especially the world of The Garden of Earthly Delights, complete with walking fish, flying sharks, devils and copulation upside down? Ian Watson's reply happens to be his first fantasy. It's a bestial, beautiful, sensual place flagrant with all the lush colours and insanity alive on the canvas of that incredible work fantasists have brooded over for years. Alchemy! Transformation by magic, all the symbols Bosch used, Watson uses, quite literally, to frame this intriguing new book.

The Starship Schiaparelli is sent on a mission to find out what happened to the colony ship Copernicus. It discovers the planet the ship was to colonize has been turned into an almost carbon copy of the Bosch painting. Headed by crew member Sean Athlone, a group sets out with a guide by the name of Jeremy who turns up inexplicably. He's apparently the captain of the Copernicus though, by all rights, he should be dead. Stifling their credulity, Sean and crew members Denise and Muthoni follow Jeremy as they try to find the mysterious Knossos, who's supposed to have the answers they are seeking about the creation of this odd paradise.

On their journey, Sean and company taste the delights of the Gardens, die and go to Hell, are eaten by the Devil and farted into heaven where they are met by God. Their adventures along the way are funny, satisfying and are the best thing about the novel. Witness this comic bit from Hell:

"A winged demon seized Denise's hair as another capered down the slope with a selection of shears, small and large. 'Too many appendages!' it shrieked. 'Off with the hair, then the fingers, then the toes, then the tongue and the tits! Shear the ears, nip the lip! Then a bit of grafting, and bind up a nice rolled ham. Perfection is a sphere.'"

Quests are used by many fantasy writers. In Watson's, the points he makes include: "Alien

Artist: John Cayea

FIRELORD

Parke Godwin



worlds would make alien beings." "Survival spells change." And "Man must alter." But the quest ends for the reader when it's discovered the Bosch world was drawn from the mind of Knossos, a Copernicus crewmember, by the Beautystars, elements of the alien Mind Horde.

This is where a piece of nice fantasy falls prey to scientificatation, a blunder of Watson's that may have been the fault of his SF training. It would have worked better if he could have flowed with the alchemy of ideas and emotions. Knowing that the world is being controlled by a bunch of bored aliens who want some humans to play with seems so unnecessary after that delightful Dante-esque quest.

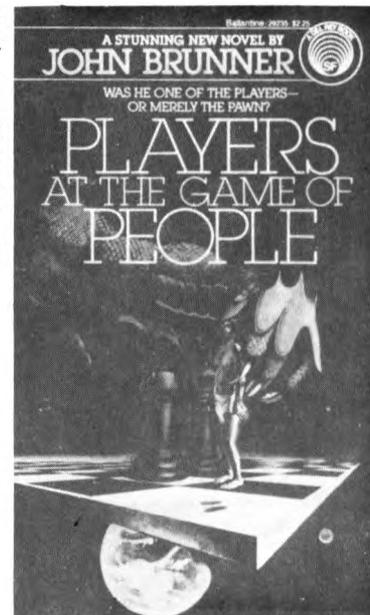
The Gardens of Delight is an important book and even its faults cannot alter that. I hope Watson will continue to work more fully in the fantasy medium, cut loose from his SF tendency to over-justify and allow his excellent gift for imagery and emotion full play.

FIRELORD by Parke Godwin. Double-day: New York, October 1980, 396pp. \$12.95

Reviewed by Rick Parks

Firelord is about King Arthur, and for those jaded souls who think they've read quite enough about *him*, I'm here to suggest a little-known truth: you've probably read very little about King Arthur. The entire Arthurian-romantic cycle has been reduced to a literary bowling alley--Tennyson, Mallory, and the romantics setting up ten-pin ideals of chivalry and courtly love while cynical Cervantes and lovable Mark Twain warm up in the pit. The legend had become a banner for romantics and a target for realists, with reality lost in the clatter of breaking icons.

Artist: Bill Schmidt



All of which has nothing to do with what Arthur was or wasn't. Arthur himself says it best in *Firelord*:

"It's an insult to freeze men like Bedivere and Trystan, Geraint and Lancelot into a legend... We were never that still or complete, always moving between the end of one thing and the beginning of another. Guenevere wouldn't sit still while Time painted her in serenity, and God *knows*--Morgana? Catch the lightning, friend, chain the wind.

No legend then. I give them their world as they found it and let them stride."

Still, the bones of the legend *are* there: Trystan and Yseult. Arthur, Guenevere, and Lancelot. Fiery, passionate Morgana. Merlin. All there, all neither more nor less than they should be. Godwin doesn't 'explain away' Merlin and his Magic, only tells his true name, something that should have been obvious from the legend's beginning but somehow never was. Arthur indeed draws the imperial sword from a rock cairn, but the 'magic' that allows him to do so is the simple reality that he is the only one capable of doing what must be done.

Sometimes that reality isn't very noble: the method Arthur uses to clear the midlands of Saxons is not something the bards would sing about if confined to the truth. As the Emperor Ambrosius tells him: "...You have the instinct to be noble and the ambition to be great. You won't be both together, not bloody likely." In the end we're

left with a very honest book, a picture of Arthur and his time that doesn't sugar-coat or condemn. That's the easy way, flopping from simplistic extreme to the other, and Godwin doesn't take the easy way.

I've been a fan of Parke Godwin's ever since discovering "The Lady of Finnegan's Hearth" in *Fantastic*. That quality of humanity and caring I found there comes across with epic scale in *Firelord*, perhaps shown best in the ending, as Arthur peels through the layers of his life to get at what really mattered all along.

It's not that there have been no previous attempts to restore Arthur's humanity, just that few have succeeded so well, and if finding the human reality hidden in legend isn't worth the loss of one more nice, safe cubbyhole... Well, that's all in your point of view. Read *Firelord* and make your own judgment.

SHADOW LAND by Peter Straub. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan: New York, October 1980, 417pp. \$12.95

Reviewed by Galad Elflandsson

At a Sixth World Fantasy Con panel on supernatural horror in the '80s, Charles L. Grant called *Shadow Land* one of the most "poetic" tales of terror he had read in a long time. It is a curious statement--stark realism seems to be the watchword in horror nowadays--unless one is acquainted with Peter Straub's personal brand of macabre story-telling. *Shadow Land* is a careful crafting of elements from each of his previous novels, a culminating effort of conceptual rather than actual horror, on a level of style that does, in fact, attain to poetry.

It is the story of Tom Flanagan and Del Nightingale, two Arizona prep-school boys whose common interest in stage magic brings disaster upon their school and eventually leads them into a world of nightmarish dream and illusion. That world is contained within the walls of Shadow Land, the Vermont mountain retreat of Nightingale's magician-uncle; and it is there that they find their innocent childhood ambitions for fame and fortune shattered by the uncompromising will of a man who is something infinitely greater (and more deadly) than a mere performer of stage magic. In *Shadow Land*, Tom and Del learn the nature of Power that transcends the bounds of Good and Evil, Power stripped of concern for anything save the whims and wishes of its wielder.

What is most interesting about *Shadow Land* is Straub's continued expertise in the use of dream sequences to convey psychological and physical disorientation in his characters; indeed, it is unlikely that anyone has managed these sequences so effectively since John Franklin Bardin wrote his masterpiece of uneasy mystery in the middle and late forties. Straub relies on them to give his tale an air of unreality, unfolding a drama that seems to enact itself as if through a haze. The players are like mimes upon a darkened stage and the horror is implied--glimpsed rather than experienced on a tactile level--in order to build tension. Adding further to this air of detachment is Straub's use of a nameless schoolmate of his protagonists to relate events as they were related to him by Tom Flanagan twenty years after the fact.

Whether or not Straub's style works within the context of this novel of horror is a matter of personal taste. Plot-wise, *Shadow Land* is his most impeccable work, an intricate construction of European legendry, magic and evil that resembles a series of Oriental Boxes--the larger tale opening upon a group of lesser tales until the core of violence and fear is exposed. It is possible that *Shadow Land's* very real conclusion suffers from the dream-like quality of the body of the tale; yet one suspects Straub is concerned not so much with knocking us off our seats as he is with driving us into ourselves--to the quiet borders of nightmare where evil often masquerades as goodness and our deepest fears are waiting to drag us down in a silent scream of madness. *Shadow Land* is like a lover awakening you from sleep...with fangs in your throat.

MY EXPERIENCES IN THE THIRD WORLD WAR by Michael Moorcock. Savoy: Manchester, U.K. 1980 156pp. £1.50

Reviewed by Douglas E. Winter

A character in this book suggests that the Fourth World War was fought in the country of the soul. When asked who won, he replies: "No one. It merely prepared us for this."

If only we were prepared for Michael Moorcock. He is a writer of genius, beholden only to an intensely personal vision that is arresting and original, sometimes enigmatic and often elusive. His name appears on novels that were years in the making--*Gloriana* and the forthcoming *Byzantium Endures*--

and those that were written over the space of a week, such as *The Great Rock and Roll Swindle*. In America, he is revered for quickly-written fantasy novels (several of which he despises), while his serious fiction remains misunderstood and undersold. In England, he is gaining recognition as a novelist of major literary importance. His work transcends fantasy and science fiction, and may best be classified as "unclassifiable."

My Experiences in The Third World War is a potpourri of Moorcock's experimentation, spanning the more than twenty years of his writing career. The title refers to an opening trilogy of short stories written in 1978-79: "Going Into Canada," "Leaving Pasadena," and "Crossing Into Cambodia." They are the compelling eschatological memoirs of a Russian political officer as he experiences an "alternative apocalypse" in which America and Russia are allied in a rather ambiguous Armageddon. Moorcock's focus in these stories, however, is not the "Third World War," but the nature of his narrator. The experiment is one of narrative subjectivity, in which the narrator "is revealed not so much by what he says as by what he selects to say to the reader."

The remaining two-thirds of the collection represents vintage Moorcockiana. A previously uncollected Jerry Cornelius story, "The Dodgem Division," is paired with the rare Cornelius comic strip from *International Times* (co-authored by Moorcock and M. John Harrison, with graphics by Mal Dean and R. Glyn Jones). "Peace On Earth" is described by Moorcock as his "first adult SF story," originally published in 1958 in a form expanded by Barrington Bayley. It concerns the quest of two spacefarers for an answer to the fathomless ennui caused by their immortality. "The Lovebeast," written in 1957, is an ironic allegory that bears reading in juxtaposition with Harlan Ellison's "The Beast That Shouted Love at the Heart of the World." The collection concludes with the 1965 novella, "The Real Life of Mr. Newman (Adventures of the Dead Astronaut)," in which a dead or dying English astronaut returns to an Earth whose cities are changed to reflect the moral subconsciousness of their inhabitants.

All of the stories invoke the moral concern and allegoric intent that has characterized Moorcock's recent novels. To be sure, the earliest works are rough-edged and imbued with a certain naivete, but

(Continued on page 31, Col. 3.)

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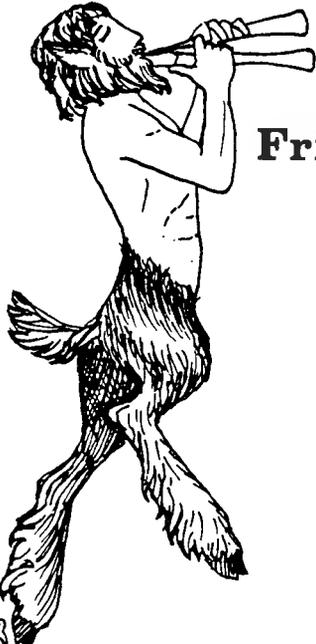
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SHADOWINGS

by Douglas E. Winter

If a catalog of fear were to be compiled, eminent among its pages would be the many aspects of fear in the city. One need look no further than the daily newspaper to sample both the real and the realistically imaginable dangers of the urban environment. Paradoxically, the city's man-made environment is an obvious symbol of humanity's social and technological development, whose goal was to supplant the chaos of nature with an ordered society. The urban sprawl has been likened to the very jungle that it sought to replace; and it is seemingly personified by aged structures and streets, as overcrowded, dirty, chaotic and crime-ridden, the city struggles to adapt to modern needs while under cancerous seige from within. Indeed, recent novels such as *Brooks Stanswood's The Glow* (Fawcett, \$2.75) and *Ken Eulo's The Brownstone* (Pocket, \$2.75), both highly derivative of *Rosemary's Baby*, blatantly endow the city with a parasitic quality. The theme is identical in each book: a young, virile couple is lured by the prospect of an "ideal" Manhattan apartment, only to be used by elderly tenants seeking to regain their youth. (*The Glow* is appreciably more successful, and is recommended as passable entertainment.)

Fear in the city has long been echoed in popular entertainment. Consider the xenophobic commentary of H.P. Lovecraft's "The Horror at Red Hook"; the continued efficacy of the "true life mythology" of Jack the Ripper; the powerful motion pictures of directors as early as Fritz Lang and as recent as Martin Scorsese; and the urban horror story masterpieces of Ramsey Campbell. These examples hold as a common thread the role of the city not simply as a setting, but as an active ingredient of the drama.

Gilded Needles by Michael McDowell (Avon, \$2.50) is a psychological horror novel constructed precisely around the theme of fear in the city. Set in the New York City of 1882, it concerns the Black Triangle, a district literally overwhelming with corruption and vice, from backroom abortions to opium dens to gambling-oriented female boxing to murder for profit.

A famous Republican judge enlists his ambitious sons in a campaign to expose the Black Triangle as a product of Tammany Hall's reign; and their ultimate target is a family of female thieves. A blood feud ensues, revisiting the time-honored theme of the judge judged, as McDowell probes the evils not only of chaos and crime, but of authority, aptly demonstrating the paradoxical nature of the city. Stephen King has called McDowell "the finest writer of paperback originals in America"; yet this may be premature. One of the novel's virtues--the constant shifting of the reader's sympathies--also is a drawback, and the narrative occasionally lapses into the flavor of a historical tract. Nevertheless, McDowell is a novelist to watch; and *Gilded Needles* is highly recommended.

The Lure by Felice Picano (Dell, \$2.75) and *Darker Places* by Parke Godwin (Playboy, \$2.50) address the dark sexual undercurrents of the city, with differing success. In *The Lure*, a witness to a brutal murder tied to machinations for control over businesses in Manhattan's gay community is recruited by the police to act as an undercover agent in the bars of Christopher Street. Although reminiscent of the book/film *Cruising*, *The Lure* lacks the hateful portrayal of homosexuals for which *Cruising* was criticized; indeed, Picano's portrayal of gay life is a sociological manifesto. The true strength of *The Lure*, however, is Picano's use of perspective and human instinct, rather than plot devices, to enhance his suspenseful mystery. His tale is twisted and tangled, loose ends and false leads intertwined with important revelations, skillfully maintaining in the reader's mind much of the confusion that besets the protagonist.

Darker Places, on the other hand, lacks Picano's sensitivity and conscience, and fails to rise above the level of exploitation. It is a spurious revenge tale, in which a young actor plays amateur detective (and ultimately executioner) following the murder of his former lover. Godwin's purport is shock--murder via a wooden phallus,

throats ripped out by Doberman Pinschers, the burning of a rosary into human flesh--but his effect is a bemused disgust, particularly because his protagonist implicitly condones the cruelty that he avenges. Not recommended.

Such evocations of the frightening nature of the city stand in stark distinction to our belief in the peaceful, rustic charm of rural communities--smiling landscapes unshadowed by the daily crime and claustrophobic fears of urban areas. Fostered by sources as diverse as Thornton Wilder and cereal commercials, we view these one-stoplight towns as exuding an air of innocence, a picturesque setting against which to juxtapose the monolithic greed and guilt of the American city. Even wild nature has come to be considered as a source of inspiration rather than as a minacious presence.

This sentimental antithesis between country and city serves as the horrifying premise underlying novels such as James Dickey's *Deliverance* and Stephen King's *Salem's Lot*. That *Our Town* can be rendered into Jerusalem's Lot or Oxrun Station is a jackhammer blow at the psychological firmament of the pastoral myth. For this reason, some of the best recent horror novels have utilized the formula edified by *Salem's Lot*: the tiny, isolated rural community under siege by the forces of evil.

Night Things by Thomas F. Monteleone (Popular Library, \$2.25) poised the issue at the outset. The principal protagonist has inherited a newspaper in a tiny New Mexico town; he hopes therein to escape urban horrors that he confronted as a night desk journalist, and that culminated in the death of his wife. Yet the small town proves no solace. Construction (perhaps a symbol of creeping urbanization) uncovers an ancient Indian burial ground, unleashing its protectors--supernatural bird-like creatures best described as a cross between roadrunner and piranha. Monteleone is particularly fond of themes of investigation--the strange tapping outside the front door; the moist sounds in the cellar; the lone dog barking in the alleyway; the sojourn through darkened burial grounds--and he plays the possibilities to the hilt, producing perhaps the strongest non-stop creepshow since Peter Straub's *Ghost Story*.

The Totem by David Morrell (Fawcett, \$2.50) is an equally powerful use of the *Our Town* formula. Its chief characters are a policeman who has retreated to a tiny

Wyoming town after experiencing the violence of duty in Detroit, and a burnt-out alcoholic reporter who returns to the town seeking to recover his lost self-image. They must confront a rabies-like virus that renders its victims, human and animal, into hunting monsters. Yet Morrell also instills a new twist, a subtle subplot that weaves yet ultimately refuses to know enigmatic threads involving a Jonestown-like cult that once prospered near the tiny town. Definitely recommended.

The Wanting Factor by Gene DeWeese (Playboy, \$2.50) and *Black Sun* by James Tarabilda (Leisure, \$2.25) are less successful but nevertheless enjoyable invocations of the *Our Town* formula. In *The Wanting Factor*, a different type of vampire stalks a small Indiana college town, thirsting for souls rather than simply blood. DeWeese conjures some stunning scenes; yet his narrative is erratic and weakened significantly by reliance upon no less than three principal characters with psychic abilities. *Black Sun* is an explicitly Lovecraftian tale that begins in a tiny suburb of Chicago, then shifts for its climax to "Inswich", Massachusetts. Underlying a bevy of bizarre occurrences is a sorcerer who seeks to invoke a cosmic horror through the body of a young woman. Although an interesting attempt to mix Lovecraft and King, *Black Sun* lacks the strong writing necessary to fulfill its ambition. Both *The Wanting Factor* and *Black Sun* are worthy reading matter, however, in the context of a paperback horror market literally flooded with weak material.

Less effective--and not recommended--are *Moon-Death* by Rick Hautala (Zebra, \$2.75) and *Dead & Buried* by Chelsea Quinn Yarbro (Warner, \$2.50). *Moon-Death* adapts the *Our Town* context to the traditional werewolf tale, without sufficient originality or stylistic flair to render it remarkable. A young woman's magical experiments change an outcast high school student into a werewolf, and he kills off most of the deserving townspeople. All of the traditional ritualistic elements are present: influence of the full moon and aversion to silver, to name the most obvious; and the principal innovation introduced by Hautala suffices only to provide a twist ending that leaves the conscientious reader quite undeservedly cheated. Most damning, however, is that one is left with the feeling of having seen or read it all before.

Dead & Buried is particularly disappointing because it bears the Yarbro name, normally the hallmark of quality work. It is a novelization of the still-unreleased film of the same name, which should provide at least part of the explanation. *Dead & Buried* is yet another rehash of the classic *Night of the Living Dead*; this time a small town is besieged by reanimated corpses produced via the experiments of the local demented mortician. The ordinariness of the premise and plot, coupled with a writing style on par with

what one would expect from a novelization, renders this book quite forgettable. Search your newsstands instead for Yarbro's relatively unheralded *Sins of Omission*, published last summer by Signet.

-- Douglas E. Winter



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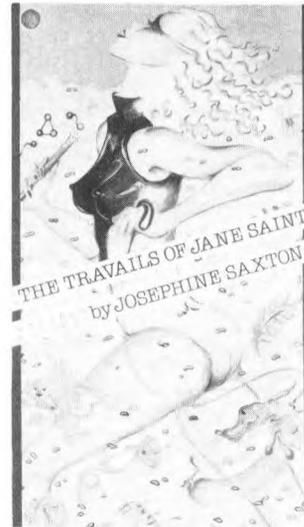
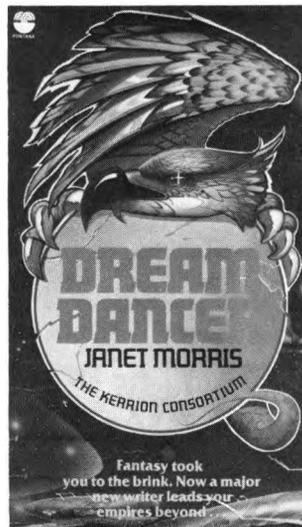
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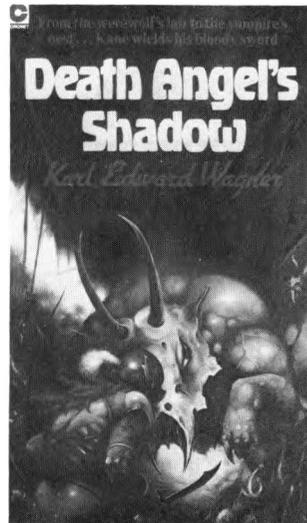
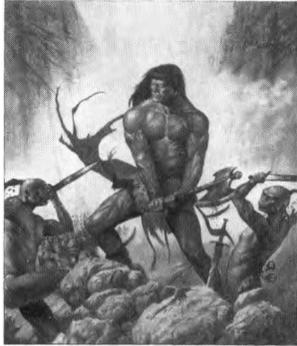
Following on from last month's listings, here are most of the new paperbacks published in Britain from August to December 1980. It doesn't pretend to be complete. I've not listed reprintings of easily available books, only where they are either originals or new editions. Publication dates and cover prices have been taken from a variety of sources and may well have been subject to change; in fact, the book might not even have appeared. But at least the list serves as a guide.

- Douglas Adams: *The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy No. 2: The Inn at the End of the Universe*, Pan, Nov. £1.25--the full enjoyment of these very funny books can only be appreciated if you've heard the radio programme, and especially Marvin, the paranoid robot.
- Richard Adams: *Girl in A Swing*, Penguin, Dec. £1.25--first pb. edition of the erotic supernatural novel whose first UK hardcover was delayed until October.
- Brian W. Aldiss: *Brothers of the Head*, Panther, Aug. 85p.--new edition of one of Aldiss's most unconventional books.
- Robert Alexander: *The Soul Eater*, Corgi, Nov. 95p.
- Poul Anderson: *Satan's World*, Corgi, Aug. 95p.
- Poul Anderson: *Tau Zero*, Coronet, Aug. 95p.
- Poul Anderson: *Trader to the Stars*, Panther, Sept. 95p.
- Poul Anderson: *The Earth Book of Stormgate*, NEL, Nov. £1.00
- Alan Arnold: *Once Upon A Galaxy*, Sphere, Oct. £1.25--film tie-in.
- Isaac Asimov, et. al.: *100 Great SF Short Stories*, Pan, Sept. £1.75
- Richard Bachman: *The Long Walk*, NEL, Sept. £1.25--a horror novel set in the near future during a marathon walk.
- J. G. Ballard: *The Venus Hunters*, Panther, Oct. 95p.--new collection of his more traditional stories.
- Greg Benford: *The Stars in Shroud*, Sphere, Aug. £1.50
- Greg Benford & William Rotsler: *Shiva Descending*, Sphere, Oct. £1.95
- James Blish: *Mission to the Heart Stars*, Granada, Nov. 95p.
- James Blish: *Galactic Cluster*, Granada, Nov. £1.25
- Ben Bova: *The Starcrossed*, Magnum, Nov. £1.25
- Marion Zimmer Bradley: *Ruins of Isis*, Arrow, July £1.35
- Ramsey Campbell: *The Far Reaches of Fear*, Star, Aug. £1.25--first pb edition of the anthology first published in hardback by W. H. Allen in 1976 as *Super-horror* (and by St. Martin's Press in the U.S.).
- Ramsey Campbell: *New Terrors 1*, Pan, July, £1.50, and *New Terrors 2*, Pan, Oct. £1.75--two bulky volumes of new horror fiction. See FN #21 for full listing.
- Ramsey Campbell: *Demons By Daylight*, Star, Oct. £1.25 --reissue of his second story collection.
- Ramsey Campbell: *To Wake the Dead*, Fontana, Dec. £1.50 --first pb edition of Ramsey's best novel to date, published in the U.S. as *The Parasite* with a variant ending.
- Jeffrey A. Carver: *Star Rigger's Way*, Arrow, Sept. £1.25--first UK pb of a novel published by Dell in '78.
- Emma Cave: *The Blood Bond*, Pan, Sept. £1.00--horror nov.
- C. J. Cherryh: *Hunter of Worlds*, Futura, Sept. £1.50
- R. Chetwynd-Hayes: *The Awakening*, Magnum, Nov. £1.10--film tie-in, loosely based on Stoker's *Jewel of the Seven Stars*.
- R. Chetwynd-Hayes: *The 16th Fontana Book of Great*

- Ghost Stories*, Fontana, Dec. £1.00--see FN #30.
- Terry Cline: *Cross Current*, NEL, Nov. £1.25
- Basil Copper: *The Great White Space*, Sphere, Oct. £1.10
- Basil Copper: *Here Be Demons*, Sphere, Nov. £1.10
- Richard Cowper: *Profundis*, Pan, Oct. £1.25
- Jere Cunningham: *The Visitor*, Coronet, Dec. £1.50--about a young mother's attempts to save her children from a supernatural horror. The author's *The Legacy* is also being reissued by Sphere (Nov. £1.10).
- Mary Danby: *The 12th Armada Ghost Book*, Armada, Oct. 75p.--anthology for young readers.
- Stephen Donaldson: *The Wounded Land*, Fontana, Oct. £1.50--first world pb edition.
- Jonathan Fast: *Prisoner of the Planets*, Granada, Aug. 95p.
- Jonathan Fast: *Mortal Gods*, Granada, Sept. 95p.--fairly conventional SF novels from the son of Howard Fast.
- Nicholas Fisk: *Starstormers*, Knight, Oct. 75p.
- Nicholas Fisk: *Sunburst*, Knight, Oct. 75p.--two SF novels for young readers by one of Britain's best writers in that field.
- Ron Goulart: *Flux and The Tin Angel*, Fontana, Oct. £1.35--first UK pb of this coll. of 2 short novels.
- Peter Haining: *The Monster Makers*, Knight, Nov. 85p.--anth. of true stories for young readers.
- William H. Hallahan: *Keeper of the Children*, Sphere, Dec. £1.00
- W. A. Harbinson: *Genesis*, Corgi, Oct. £1.75--receiving major promotion by Corgi, this long novel (612 pages) seeks to find the truth behind the UFO sightings and gives some fascinating facts on the development of 'flying saucers' by the Germans toward the end of and after WW II. Tends to read more as nonfiction than fiction, which might be why I liked it.
- Robin Hardy & Anthony Schaffer: *The Wicker Man*, Hamlyn, Nov. £1.25--the novel of the much acclaimed cult film.
- Harry Harrison: *Homeworld*, Panther, Aug. £1.25--first edition of a new novel and the start of a new trilogy.
- M. John Harrison: *A Storm of Wings*, Sphere, Dec. £1.35 --his long-awaited new fantasy and part-sequel to *The Pastel City*, also being reissued by Sphere (Nov. 85p.)
- Robert Hollis: *I'll Walk Beside You*, Sphere, Sept. 95p.



Andrew J. Offutt 
The fantastic new adventures of
CONAN
THE SWORD OF SKELOS



- Walter Hopper: *Past Watchful Dragons*, Fontana, Sept. 95p.--Hopper was C. S. Lewis's secretary and this book is an account of the background of the chronicles of Narnia.
- Frank King: *Night Vision*, Sphere, Dec. £1.25
- Stephen King: *The Dead Zone*, Futura, Aug. £1.60
- Dean R. Koontz: *The Vision*, Corgi, Aug. £1.25
- Hugh Lamb: *New Tales of Terror*, Magnum, Nov. £1.10--anth. of 12 new stories. See FN #20 for listing.
- Hugh Lamb: *Tales From a Gaslit Graveyard*, Coronet, Nov. £1.25--first pb edition of reprint anth. first published by W. H. Allen in 1979. 17 stories.
- Hugh Lamb: *Victorian Nightmares*, Coronet, Nov. £1.25 --first pb edition of a reprint anth. first published by W. H. Allen in 1977. 21 stories.
- Andrew Laurence: *The Embryo*, Star, Oct. £1.25--the third novel in his psycho/horror trilogy which includes *The Link* and *Premonitions of an Inherited Mind*.
- Ursula K. Le Guin: *Planet of Exile*, Star, Aug. £1.00
- Ursula K. Le Guin: *Rocannon's World*, Star, Aug. £1.00
- C. S. Lewis: *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Armada, Sept. 85p each--entirely new editions of Lewis's fantasy now under Fontana's Lion imprint; attractive covers.
- Robert R. McGammon: *Bethany's Sin*, Sphere, Oct. £1.40 --'By the light of the full moon an unspeakable evil stalks the shadowy streets,' so sayeth the blurb.
- Gordon McGill: *Omen III*, Futura, Nov. £1.10
- Graham Masterton: *The Sweetman Curve*, Sphere, Oct. £1.50--A thriller of murder and mayhem on the American freeway. Ironically Masterton, who has been churning out horror novels like suages lately, was recently on the bestsellers list for the first in his family saga *Rich*.
- Graham Masterton: *The Wells of Hell*, Sphere, Jan. '81, £1.50--'the story of a satanic visitation in the form of prehistoric reptilian creatures who attempt to take over a little village in Connecticut.'
- Michael Moorcock: *The Transformation of Miss Mavis Ming*, Star, Aug. 95p.
- Michael Moorcock: *The Russian Intelligence*, Savoy, Aug. £1.25
- Michael Moorcock: *My Experiences in the Third World War*, Savoy, Aug. £1.50--coll. of 8 stories: "Going to Canada," "Leaving Pasadena," "Crossing Into Cambodia," "The Dodgem Division," "The English Assassin," "Peace On Earth," "The Lovebeast," "The Real Life Mr. Newman."
- Michael Moorcock: *England Invaded*, Star, Sept. £1.35 --anth. of turn-of-the-century future war stories. First published by W. H. Allen in 1977, over half of it is made up of H. H. Munro's long-overlooked novel, *When William Came*, first published in 1914.
- Janet Morris: *Dream Dancer*, Fontana, Aug. £1.50
- William Morris: *The Wood Beyond the World*, Oxford Univ. Press, Oct. £2.95--new attractive edition.
- Larry Niven: *Tales of Known Space*, Futura, Aug. £1.35
- Larry Niven: *The Long Arm of Gil Hamilton*, Futura, Oct. £1.10
- Andrew J. Offutt: *Conan: The Sword of Skelos*, Sphere, Aug. £1.00
- Neil Oram: *The Warp 1: The Storm's Howling Through Tiflis*, Sphere, Sept. £1.75--the first in a new fantasy trilogy in the wake of *Illuminatus*.
- Douglas Orgill & John Gribbin: *The Sixth Winter*, Futura, Nov. £1.50--a disaster novel of a new Ice Age given considerable realism through Gribbin's expert knowledge as a climatologist.
- Alexei & Cory Panshin: *Earth Magic*, Magnum, Aug. £1.40
- Jerry Pournelle: *High Justice*, Orbit, Sept. £1.25
- Sean Richards: *The Elephant Man and Other Freaks*, Futura, Oct. £1.25--anth. of stories about freaks to capitalize on the film about John Merrick.
- Rudy Rucker: *White Light*, Virgin, Oct. £1.95--Virgin Books' first novel and the first world edition of a surreal fantasy extravaganza about the hereafter.
- Ray Russell: *The Devil's Mirror*, Sphere, Nov. £1.10--reissue of another horror collection.
- Ray Russell: *The Book of Hell*, Sphere, Aug. £1.10--reissue of a collection.
- Justin Scott: *The Turning*, Granada, Aug. £1.25
- Robert Sheckley: *After the Fall*, Sphere, Dec. £1.30--humorous SF anthology.
- Clifford D. Simak: *Catface*, Magnum, Aug. £1.25--UK retitling of *Mastodonia*.
- Guy N. Smith: *Satan's Snowdrop*, Hamlyn, Sept. 95p.
- Brooks Stanwood: *The Glow*, Futura, Dec. £1.25--I was expecting this to be inspired by *The Shining*, but instead it's derived from "glowing with health." Now a horror novel based on being healthy--that's new!
- Mary Stewart: *The Last Enchantment*, Coronet, Sept. £1.50--final novel in her King Arthur trilogy.
- Gerald Suster: *The Elect*, Sphere, Nov. £1.35--a novel of "occult power and awesome conspiracy."
- Rosemary Sutcliffe: *The Light Beyond the Forest*, Knight, Sept. 85p.--fantasy about the search for the Holy Grail, for young readers. Beautiful cover.
- Peter Tremayne: *The Fires of Lan-Kern*, Magnum, Sept. £1.40--first in the Lan-Kern trilogy with all the printing errors of the hardcover editions corrected.
- Peter Tremayne: *Dracula, My Love*, Magnum, Dec. £1.25 --a quick pb edition two months after the hardcover.
- E. C. Tubb: *Prison of Night*, Arrow, Oct. £1.25
- Herbert Van Thal: *The 21st Pan Book of Horror Stories*, Pan, Oct. 90p.--14 stories, all but two new ("Graveyard Shift" and "The Mangler" by Stephen King).
- Jack Vance: *The Five Gold Bands*, Mayflower, Aug. 95p.
- Jack Vance: *Wyst: Alastor 1716*, Coronet, Oct. £1.10
- Jack Vance: *Emphyrio*, Coronet, Oct. £1.10
- Charles Veley: *Children of the Dark*, Granada, Nov. £1.25--another novel about menacing children.
- Joan Vinge: *The Outcasts of Heaven Belt*, Futura, Dec. £1.25
- Karl Edward Wagner: *Death Angel's Shadow*, Coronet, Sept. 95p.
- Karl Edward Wagner: *Conan: The Road of Kings*, Sphere, Nov. £1.00
- Chelsea Quinn Yarbro: *Dead and Buried*, Wyndham, Nov. £1.50--horror novel receiving major promotion.
- Roger Zelazny: *My Name is Legion*, Sphere, Sept. £1.50

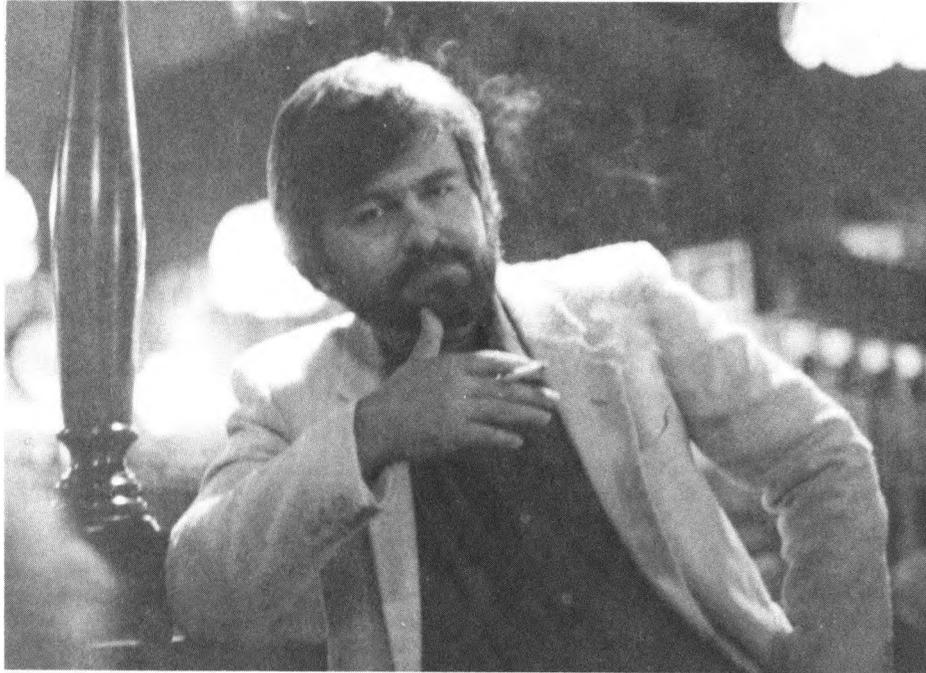
Next month I'll catch up on what current work there is in progress.

-- Mike Ashley

INTERVIEW

Dennis Etchison

by Darrell Schweitzer



Dennis Etchison has been selling science fiction since 1960 and has been published in many fields since. He is certainly best known to Fantasy Newsletter readers for his extremely high quality horror fiction, which has appeared in most of the better anthologies and magazines over the past few years: Frights, Shadows, The Year's Best Horror Stories, Dark Forces, Whispers, Weirdbook, etc. The essence of his stories is that they are thoroughly the products of today, rather than Victorian hold-overs. He deals in present-day myths, as in "It Will Be Here Soon" (in Weirdbook 14), which is based on one of mankind's newest superstitions: the idea that you can hear spirits talking in the white noise of a blank tape cassette. For all that we honor Lovecraft, the Weird Tales tradition, and the like, we must keep in mind that for any field of literature to be alive, it has to evolve. And Dennis Etchison is at the forefront of that evolution.

Schweitzer: Could you give us some background? How long have you been writing and what were you doing before then?

Etchison: I've always been writing, since the time I was about ten or eleven. I had a teacher in the sixth grade who required a composition of some sort every week, and there were a couple of other boys in the class along with me who were budding writers, and we would turn in a short story every week. That was the training that started me. When I was twelve I was fortunate enough to win \$250 in an Americanism essay contest that the Elks Lodge sponsored. That taught me that you could get money for writ-

ing, which spoiled me. I made my first story sale, professionally, when I was seventeen, in 1960, and I've been doing it ever since, only fairly recently making a decent living at it.

Schweitzer: In the '60s you seemed to appear rather infrequently. Did you write little or were you unable to sell all you wrote?

Etchison: There's probably more than most people are aware of, but if you're going strictly from a science fiction index you get the idea there were only a few. There were more, in men's magazines and little magazines, that most people don't know about. A few of those

have been reprinted now, but not many. As a matter of fact, I've never been very prolific, but there aren't quite as many big gaps in the chronology as you would guess.

Schweitzer: Do you want these early stories reprinted, or are you being selective?

Etchison: There are a couple, I suppose, that should be buried. The problem arises, when you come to reprint stories, that times have changed so and your own awareness of language has changed so that there are some lines that you simply can't let go through in a new reprint. I can remember a line in a story that I wrote when I was 19. It said of a girl something like "she felt suddenly gay." Now you can't get away with that now, but in 1962 or whenever that was, that word didn't have as much currency as it has now. So when that story came to be reprinted I had to make a few changes. It's a great temptation to go back and rewrite those stories. I would prefer not to. I would like to leave them essentially as they were, as representations of what I did, which was the best that I could do at that particular time, but it's hard to do it. You have to grit your teeth. Bradbury of course spent a lot of time rewriting the stories from *Dark Carnival* for *The October Country*, and other stories like "King of the Grey Spaces." And in some cases I find the original published versions to be more moving and more intense because they had a certain naivete and emotional rush to them that you don't get in the very polished and metered prose of his later years.

Schweitzer: During this period were you somewhat discouraged from writing horror fiction for want of a market?

Etchison: I don't want to sound pompous, but I honestly have never considered the market when I wrote. I've never written a story on order, and I've never written a story that was slanted to a particular publication. Many times I've been asked for stories over the years, and if

I had a story that I had finished or that I was working on which would be appropriate to the magazine or anthology in question, I would send it along, but I have never been able to sit down and write one to order. Frequently when I've started stories I did not know whether they were going to be fantasy, science fiction, horror or contemporary stories. I wrote what I felt I most wanted to write at that moment, and then I began the marketing process. They were two distinct processes. They weren't related at all. Fifty percent of me was trying to be the pure artist at the typewriter, and once it was finished it became the product to be marketed. I handled it in quite a different way. So, to answer your question, I never really thought about the markets, which is one of the reasons, I suppose, why it took me so long to make a living.

Schweitzer: Is the reason you can't write to order that the whole spontaneity of the creative process is gone when you try to?

Etchison: It just seems that writing is the one area of life that should be pure and free. Every other job is essentially doing what someone else wants you to do in order to get money, and writing to order is really no different from working in a gas station or washing dishes. I would rather that that one area of my life be as pure as possible. There have been a few compromises in order to survive, but I hope there won't be any more.

Schweitzer: What if the editor says, "Our readers don't like downbeat endings. Change the ending and I'll buy it"? What do you do?

Etchison: Many times I've received recommendations from editors. In one case I remember an editor wanted me to take out the first twelve pages of the story, which was about 24 pages in length, and I didn't do it, and sold it elsewhere, and it was later reprinted four or five times. Many times I get suggestions, sometimes very detailed suggestions. I read them over; I think about them; I take out my carbon of the story and read it, and then I sleep on it. If I agree with the suggestion--and sometimes they are right--I go ahead and do it, but if I really don't think it is an improvement I don't do it. I think Alfred Bester once said "The book is king," which is a way of saying that your only commitment is to the quality of your work. If a

suggestion is good for the story, then I'll change it. If it's not, I won't. Sometimes they buy it anyway. Sometimes I have to peddle it somewhere else.

Schweitzer: Certainly you are best known now for your horror fiction. What is the attraction of this field for you? Were you trying to write in it from the beginning?

Etchison: I don't know. I've always sold my things to whomever would buy them, and it's just been coincidental in the last four or five years that so many pieces have appeared in horror collections and magazines. I hope I'm not slanting them in that direction unconsciously. In the 60's I used to try to do a mainstream story followed by a science fiction story followed by a fantasy, in order to keep things balanced out, so I would not fall into one camp or the other. The disadvantage of that is that you don't build up a following among the audience because your work is spread thinly over a wide area, but the advantage is that you don't find yourself making unconscious adjustments to suit the market. For example, the people who think of themselves only as science fiction writers tend to take their original inspirational impulses, and in some cases, I think, bend them or shift them unconsciously in order to make them into science fiction stories. A lot of science fiction stories have no reason to be set in the future or on another planet, but the author does it because that's what he does. I want to use science fiction or fantasy or horror or whatever the genre is only so far as it's appropriate to the particular inspiration. If a story did not call for a supernatural element I would not put it in. I would write it as mainstream.

Schweitzer: Were you originally turned on to horror fiction by the comic books of the 1950's? I suspect they've had an influence on your whole generation, directly and indirectly.

Etchison: My mother would never let me buy E.C. comics, back before Dr. Wertham. I can remember sneaking a peek at a few of them at friends' homes, but I was never permitted to have horror comics in the house. It was only a few years later that I discovered them and devoured them and loved them. So I guess, yeah, I was influenced by Feldstein and Wood and Davis and all those wonderful artists of E.C. comics in the early 50's. Also

by movies. A lot by movies. My earliest recollections of the horror genre would be not from E.C. comics, but from films. I can remember, for example, a scene from a picture that I later found out was *Hurricane Island* with Jon Hall, made in the 40's, in which a young woman suddenly aged horribly, a la *Lost Horizon*, and I've never forgotten that. I can see it as vividly now as if it had happened a month or two ago. Visual imagery is where it's coming from. I'm not coming from a background of Lovecraft. That's the point. I'm not coming from a background of the older genre books, but more from the visual media, and also from Bradbury. Think of the Bradbury stories from the 40's, the *Dark Carnival* stories, the *Illustrated Man* stories, the *October Country* stories. That was really the strongest influence on me. Bradbury was the strongest influence, and I'm sure still is. It took me many years to break away from that.

Schweitzer: Where do the visual images you use come from, except from movies?

Etchison: The visual aspect, I guess, would make me an imagist in terms of schools of poetry, and I've always felt much closer to poetry than I have to the novel, which may be why I write short stories, not novels, and may be why I find myself working in the screenplay form in the last year. The screenplay after all is just a description of visual images. Someone once said that science fiction is closer to poetry and surrealism than other forms of literature, and I think that's true. Science fiction at its very best is visionary and at the cutting edge of the surrealist movement.

Schweitzer: Do you see horror fiction as visionary in any sense, perhaps in some inward-looking one?

Etchison: It seems to me that horror fiction, good horror fiction, is an attempt to come to terms, to say what's *really* there. It doesn't skirt the issue. It doesn't place it in the future. It doesn't romanticize it. A story such as my "Dead Line" is an attempt to really come to grips with some serious issues, and not to pull any punches, to describe the consequences as accurately as possible. Good horror fiction, I think, is the opposite of escapist fiction. It is an attempt to bring you closer to reality. As a result I

find that I don't like elfinland/fairyland books at all, and I don't like Lovecraft at all, who always pulls back a bit at the end and gets vague and mysterious about the nameless, shapeless form that was too hideous to describe. That seems to me a retreat into a safe copout. What I'm trying to do is to see what's really there and to say what's really there. What William Burroughs means when, in *Naked Lunch*, he referred to "that moment when everyone sees what is at the end of every fork."

Schweitzer: The nameless hideous thing is a copout, but what Lovecraft was doing, or at least what he thought he was doing was depicting mankind against a larger framework. Do you think it is detrimental to the effectiveness of the story to get beyond the individual, to, so to speak, pull the camera back till you see the crowd?

Etchison: I just don't see the necessity for it. If your eyes and ears are really open during the day, you're going to confront the consequences of reality, and what you see and hear is going to be so distressing that to invent the Ancient Ones is essentially irrelevant. There is evil in the world, but in beginning to deal with it, we have to begin with the evil that's closest at hand and move on from there. Pulling back and digging deeper, I realize that this position about Lovecraft is a very dangerous one to take in this field at this moment. A writer like Ramsey Campbell, for example, comes very much from a Lovecraftian tradition. He's surpassed it, transcended it, and he is in fact my favorite writer in this field. But you'll notice that all of Ramsey's mature work is concerned with that which lurks beneath the surface of everyday life. That seems to me to be so much more disturbing than an abstract concept of an ancient evil from the bowels of the Earth.

Schweitzer: What about Poe?

Etchison: Poe's short stories were very fine. They were obsessive-compulsive works, and I think his various problems are very easily discernable in the symbols he uses: incest, drinking, drug addiction, and so forth. I don't find that same sort of veiled avoidance as I do in Lovecraft and in the Lovecraft followers. The Lovecraft school has done more to hold back the development of modern Dark Fantasy than any other group or individual

writer, just as Pound and Eliot have probably done more to hold back advancements in poetry than any other poets.

Schweitzer: You mentioned earlier that you write stories from images. Do you ever get these from dreams? Do you write stories based on dreams?

Etchison: I'm glad you asked that. Not only do I write from dreams, I have dreamed entire stories and seen them typed out before my eyes. Two or three times I woke myself up in the middle of the night, grabbed pencil and paper, and copied down as many lines as I could remember, sometimes skipping pages and filling in the shape of paragraphs, and filling in an occasional word whenever I could remember it, sometimes entire lines and paragraphs. But I dream the entire story typed out in manuscript form. This happened to me three or four times over the years. I would see the pages turning. I've sold those stories. Many times I dream experientially, and these events are described in short stories, but what really fascinates me is the dreamed manuscript, and I would like to know if other writers have encountered this phenomenon. If so, it might be productive to put together an anthology of such stories. Have you ever heard of anything like this?

Schweitzer: I've heard that David H. Keller used to dream them one page at a time. (Note: See introduction to *Tales From Underwood*.-- D.S.)

Etchison: It's much more convenient that way because you have more time to get it down.

Schweitzer: When you are writing such a story, is it as if you are transcribing the work of someone else, and it's in ink which fades as you go along?

Etchison: Some writers seem to work almost entirely visually. Phil Dick has said that when he types he sees a small stage a few feet in front of his typewriter, like a window, and he sees small puppet-sized characters walking in and out of the room, and what he's doing is essentially describing the action like a playwright, what he sees transpiring on the miniature stage. It's not that neat and compact for me. I see it all around me, like Cinerama. A lot of times you get involved with the language itself, and it will lead you onto a trip in and of itself, one word suggest-

ing another, rather in the way a poet would work. Other times you're writing fast and attempting to get down the action that you see. Colors are also very important, sounds, all the senses. I think it was Poul Anderson who said a few years ago that he used to include all the five senses in at least key passages of his books, so the reader could taste and smell and see, etc. what was happening and it would seem more real. The most obvious expression of this would be Ray Bradbury, who is the most sensory writer I can think of. This can be carried to excess. It is sometimes interesting to do something perverse and work in the opposite direction. I've done stories in which there are very deliberately no colors at all until the very end, and you suddenly have a mention of color for the first time. The idea is that it will be like a burst of color footage at the end of a black and white movie. The reader ideally would not know *why* the ending was effective, but it would seem extraordinarily vivid to him. This is all shop-talk and it doesn't really matter. It's like the preparations that a magician makes behind the scenes. It doesn't really matter what he does to produce the effect. The only thing that counts is the illusion that the audience sees.

Schweitzer: How do you think this mechanism works? Are they whole stories coming out of the unconscious, or are you getting parts which you consciously string together into a story?

Etchison: When the going gets tough I go through my notebooks and pull out lines and images collected over the years that seem to relate to each other in some way and build a story around them. Usually that doesn't happen. The explanation is probably that the good stories are coming almost directly out of the unconscious. But it may not be the unconscious. It may be some sort of super or hyper-consciousness because you're really cooking at the machine. It's as if some force is moving your hands and you're not really aware of having decided what's going to happen next. It's as if you're merely the conduit for a story that is already carefully formed and exists on another plane. It's passing through you and you're just the instrument for recording it. It's a very strange feeling indeed, but it happens. Sometimes the characters come alive and write their own stories. As you know, Sturgeon killed off Zena in

The Dreaming Jewels only to find that he loved her so much he couldn't leave her dead. So he brought her back to life later on in the book. Many times characters will write their own stories because they become so real to you that they take on autonomy. Many times stories of mine turn out quite differently than I'd imagined they would, because the characters have certain needs that I couldn't have anticipated. Bradbury once described plot as the footprints that are left in the snow after the characters have run past on their way to whatever it is they're after. The writer is simply the person who comes along and records the footprints.

Schweitzer: Can you prime this unconscious pump to work whenever you want it to?

Etchison: Those are the tricks of the trade. That's what you spend years trying to get yourself to do. There are all sorts of little tricks that wouldn't make sense to anyone else. I'm sure every writer has his own ritual he goes through. For myself, I try to trick myself into believing that I'm doing something else. And before I know it, there are three or four pages by the typewriter. I say that I'm going to do a certain number of hours at the typewriter tomorrow because I've been putting it off for weeks, it won't get done, because my unconscious will throw up all sorts of excuses, other jobs that have to be done that I hadn't thought of. The only way to do it is to pretend that you're going to do something else and make sure you have the right number of hours available. Then you go through these warmup exercises and tricks of the trade. Learning to prime the pump and to get this flow going is what being a professional writer is all about, and a productive professional is someone who is able to do this during the hours available to him. If you sit around and wait for inspiration to strike, you'll produce almost nothing. That's the difference between being an amateur and a professional.

Schweitzer: You mean it has nothing to do with quality, just the ability to get the job done?

Etchison: No, it is a question of quality. What separates the talented amateur from the professional is the ability to produce good work on a regular basis when the time is available, not just when inspiration

strikes. If you work only from inspiration, you'll always be an amateur, no matter how good your work is.

Schweitzer: Lovecraft was an amateur then. He even said so.

Etchison: It's like an actor who has to go out and do a performance every night. He has to get himself up for the performance when the audience is there, whether or not his dinner was good, and regardless of any personal problems he may have. That's what they mean by "The show must go on." And that's being a professional artist.

Schweitzer: Do you write a regular number of hours a day?

Etchison: As Mickey Spillane said, "When I write." He brags of turning out ten or twenty single spaced pages on the typewriter a day. But that's *when* he writes. When I'm working on a story, I try to do four or five pages a day until it's finished. Sometimes the whole story gets finished in a day or two. Of course it's different if I'm working under a deadline, like I did with *The Fog*. I had exactly six weeks to the day to do that book, and I wanted to do two drafts of it; the manuscript was about 285 pages. Because I type with one finger, that required a lot of work. So I found myself sitting at the typewriter twelve to fourteen hours a day, seven days a week, for six weeks. I remember getting on the train to come to the World Fantasy Convention in Providence last year. I met someone and told her that I was a writer. She said, "Oh, that must be such interesting work." And I said, "Quite honestly it's awful. I haven't seen the sun for six weeks." And it was true.



Dennis Etchison (center) accepts the British Fantasy Award for Fritz Leiber at Fantasycon VI in Birmingham, in October, 1980. Seated at left is GoH Ramsey Campbell and, at right, Artist GoH Jim Fitzpatrick.

Schweitzer: Could you imagine yourself as something other than a writer?

Etchison: I don't particularly like writing. I never have. It's always been my third or fourth choice in life. When I was ten I decided that I wanted to direct movies more than anything else in the world, and I've never changed that opinion. A great many people of my generation feel the same way. I went to U.C.L.A. Film School in the 1960's, and I have pursued the field obsessively over the years, but very little has come of it. I'm also much more interested in photography than I am in writing, but writing is the only one of these areas to present me with any outlet so far. What I'd like to do ideally, and the only reason I'm working in screenplays at the moment--it's a kind of ersatz writing, very unsatisfying--is to write a couple of successful low budget horror screenplays, and then tell them they can have the next one for free if I can direct it. That's essentially what I want to do. I love literature; I love books; but writing really doesn't satisfy me. It just happens to be the only thing I have an outlet for.

Schweitzer: Are you satisfied with *having written*, when you look at your own work afterwards?

Etchison: I'm sure every writer who looks back at his old work is embarrassed. I look at the early stories as if they were written by someone else. It's very hard to imagine that I wrote them. They seem to me to be very interesting, eccentric, intuitive works by someone with talent by very little technique. Some of the more recent

(Continued on page 30, Col. 3.)

WARREN'S NEWS & REVIEWS

film news by Bill Warren



Writing this in the last days of December, I suppose it's an appropriate time for me to list what I thought were the best fantastic films of 1980. It wasn't a very good year for movies of any sort, so the relatively low level of quality of fantastic movies shouldn't be too surprising.

In any event, in the order in which I saw them, here are my choices for the best fantasy films of 1980 (all were reviewed here):

The Fog: Despite some drawbacks, John Carpenter's gothic thriller contained enough excitement to be worth noting.

Demon Pond: This elegant, amusing Japanese epic was shown at Filmex, and deserved wider release.

Death Watch: The same is true of this, which is, overall, the best SF film of the year. It's flawed but extremely good.

The Empire Strikes Back: Although inferior to *Star Wars*, this first sequel is still exciting and entertaining.

The Shining: As usual, Stanley Kubrick's brilliance was misunderstood by critics. Ten years from now this will be the film of 1980.

Alligator: Small-scale (no pun intended) but brisk, this amusing and well-directed little picture failed because of poor ads.

Popeye: Incredibly underrated (and reviewed below), this sweet and gentle picture pleased only those who went to see it.

Altered States: Despite a deficient script, Ken Russell's rapid-pace psychedelia made this an engrossing and entertaining dazzler.

Robin the Sailor Man

The first thing I should point out about *Popeye* is that the movie

is *not*, repeat *NOT*, based on the Fleischer or Paramount animated cartoons, but rather on the original E.C. Segar comic strip of the 1930s. If you're aware of that distinction, which is very important, you'll be more in a mood to appreciate this near-miraculous movie. It misses being a masterpiece because the opening and closing portions are a little slack, and there isn't a very strong narrative drive. But overall *Popeye* is absolutely wonderful. Everyone involved with the film should be very proud.

The reason I carefully point out that the movie comes from the comic strip is to prevent you from expecting slamitybang, sallopywhop action. There's little of that. Instead, this movie is sweet, gentle and quiet. Just as Popeye himself is before he "is stood no more." Harry Nilsson's songs are a little repetitious--one sounds pretty much like the next, but in the context of the film they work very well. I bought the album before I saw the picture, and the songs worked their way into my unconscious, so that I found myself whistling the tunes without quite realizing where they were coming from. The songs are clever and insidious that way.

Robert Altman seems like a very choice to direct a movie about this particular comic strip character. His best films--*M*A*S*H*, *Nashville*, *California Split*, *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*--are rooted in a kind of free-floating naturalism that would seem alien to the rigidly-composed and artificial world of Segar's comic strip. But the decision by producer Robert Evans to use Altman has paid dividends that could not have been delivered by a more conventional director. Altman has made the entire town of Sweethaven, where Olive Oyl lives and where Popeye finds safe harbor, into a living, bustling and screwy community. It still seems like a comic strip, for the people in it (and their costumes) match the strange little town.

As *Popeye* and Olive Oyl, Robin Williams and Shelley Duvall are nothing less than absolute perfection. Williams has all of

Popeye's familiar mannerisms down perfectly; there's not the slightest trace of Mork from Ork, or of Williams himself. Instead, there is, Popeye the Sailor Man, in the tough, rough but gentle-hearted flesh. Duvall's exasperating, cantankerous but kindly Olive is equally perfect. They seem made for each other as well--and even in the context of the fantasy world, there's real attraction between the characters.

The plotline is almost the "secret origin of Popeye." He acquires the corncob pipe, Olive Oyl, Poopdeck Pappy, Swee'pea (his little boy child), and spinach itself during the course of the picture. It's like a jigsaw puzzle being put into place around Popeye, or like a breathless storyteller saying, "and then, *and then*, *AND THEN---*" The script by Jules Feiffer takes some liberties with Segar's plot, but remains within that unsung master's overall parameters and worldview. Feiffer even invents a character of whom Segar would have been proud: an avaricious tax man.

One of the most appealing aspects of the film is little Wesley Ivan Hurt (Altman's grandson), the baby who plays Swee'pea. He is a little angel, one of the sweetest babies ever on screen. If a sequel is made (not likely), they'll have a hell of a time casting the part. Hurt is already too old; in fact, in one scene, sharp-eyed viewers can spot him aging eight months (when Bluto sees red).

The other characters are not as successfully done. Although Paul Dooley is just right as Wimpy, he's not given enough to do. Paul Smith's Bluto (the bad guy) is much too one-note.

Popeye is leisurely-paced but never slow. Altman dreamily drifts through this town, and the climaxes are upon us before we really know they are coming, not unlike the musical numbers. This is ingratiating, but it also makes the climax much less exciting than it should have been. He pauses occasionally to let actors putter around in their roles, which slows

up the picture. But then we're much more interested in things like this for the characters than the story. *Popeye* is less flawed than *Superman*, but that film was much more what people were expecting; still, they meet some of the same challenges in similiar fashion.

Some have complained that the musical numbers are not sufficiently emphasized, but that ignores the intent of the film. Sweethaven is becoming Popeye's home as we watch, and he fits into it gradually, literally knocking off the rough places. (A fight in a restaurant is dazzling and lively.) Since it's a process of assimilation, it would be dramatically incorrect for the townspeople to fall into choreographed groups behind Popeye. His central song, "I Yam What I Yam," is begun by Williams without the other cast members seemingly aware of it; by the middle, however, they have stood back respectfully to give this muttering one-eyed sailor plenty of room.

The musical numbers start before we are aware we're in them, and end the same way. They grow out of what is going on, and fade back in. The movie is of a piece; it's just as likely that these characters would start singing in the middle of other activity as it is that they are silent (mostly) as Bluto knocks down a building while singing.

The big fight between Popeye and Bluto should have been the highlight of the picture, but it isn't. It's over in a moment, and only then does Williams sing the most famous Popeye song (but without the "toot toot!"). This is a serious defect, because people leave movies thinking about the last thing they saw, and in this case, that's the least thing. But the other virtues far outweigh this.

Many people are going to dislike *Popeye* because it doesn't match their expectations. But that is not the same thing as saying that the picture is not good. It is, in fact, one of the best movies of (an admittedly lean) year, and I have to almost physically restrain myself from babbling on about it. Please see it, and please be aware that it is a gentle picture about honesty, loyalty and love.

Our Furry Friends

There hasn't been a good werewolf movie in years and years. And years. Over in Spain, Paul Naschy made a flock of them, but none of his movies are any good. Over here, we had "The Werewolf of Woodstock" on TV, and *The Werewolf*



Robin Williams stars as Popeye in the Paramount Pictures and Walt Disney Productions film based on the E. C. Segar strip.

of *Washington* in theatres, but the locales indicate the kind of movies those were. There were a couple of TV movies, and *The Legend of the Werewolf* in England (never shown here). As well as the half-way decent *The Beast Must Die*. But all these were stories that played with the idea of werewolves, or duplicated past successes.

Gary Bradner's awful novel *The Howling* was purchased by Steven Lane and Jack Conrad for filming, but eventually they sold their interest in it to Daniel H. Blatt and Avco-Embassy Pictures (their names appear in the credits, but that was part of the settlement). John Sayles wrote the final script, and Joe Dante directed *The Howling*.

Despite some infelicities, primarily a tendency to joke rather too often and a storyline that tends to fall apart on close examination, *The Howling* is a breezy, scary and exciting movie, the best werewolf movie at least since *Curse of the Werewolf* in the early 60s, and perhaps even since *The Wolf Man* (1941).

This time, werewolves are not the tortured innocents they have been depicted as ever since *The Werewolf of London* in 1935. Nor do they have all the restrictions placed upon them by Curt Siodmak in his *Wolf Man* script. The werewolves in Dante & Sayles' movie are gleeful fiends who only want to eat you up, my dear. They can will transformations at any time, though they are still vulnerable to silver bullets and, apparently, fire. They don't look like overstuffed pekineses, like Lon Chaney Jr., or like hairy-faced but hardly lupine horror like Michael Landon. These

werewolves look like they walked out of a Dore engraving: they are gigantic wolves that walk on their hind legs, and which have powerful, clawed arms rather than forelegs. We don't see them too often, and sometimes the suits (or whatever they are) don't really work, but they are vivid and very different.

Rob Bottin devised the suits and created the elaborate hydraulic makeups used for the astonishing transformation scene. In the early stages, the transformation doesn't look like the actor is turning into a wolf; he looks like his skin is throbbing. But shortly thereafter (the scene is much too long), his face elongates, fangs drift down out of his mouth, and claws sprout from his fingertips--in real time, on camera, on set, no lap dissolves, no camera tricks. It's awe-inspiring and the central scene in the movie. That the werewolf who is going through this change is also a psychotic killer is just frosting on the cake.

The Howling is structured as a mystery. Dee Wallace plays Karen (and extremely well), a TV reporter trying to track down Eddie the Slasher, a crazy Los Angeles murderer. She finally meets him in a porno shop, but he does something terrible, so terrible that she blots out all memory of it. Her worried husband Bill (Christopher Stone, married to Wallace in real life) and Karen visit pop psychiatrist George Waggner (Patrick Macnee), who suggests she visit The Colony, his chic and trendy resort-cum-sanitarium in northern California.

Karen hears the howling in the woods one night; Bill is attracted



Michael Ironside (left), head of a radical Scanner underground, is locked in combat with a fellow Scanner in this scene from *Scanners*, an SF thriller about extra-sensory powers.

to the exotic Marsha (Elisabeth Brooks). And eventually Karen's friend Terry Fisher (Belinda Balaski) learns the awful secret of The Colony.

Dante directs the picture at a breakneck pace, even though there is little speedy stuff on screen. Usually pictures give the illusion of being fast-paced by having lots of fast action, but Dante gives the film an authentically swift pace. Events proceed rapidly one after the other; we are given just enough information; the camera doesn't dwell on anything, yet it never becomes confusing. In fact, if the picture wasn't so fast-paced it would be confusing: why does Waggner want Karen to go to The Colony? What is that strange strip of cloth Karen finds outside? What is Marsha's interest in Bill? These and other questions will not occur to most audiences, who will be jumping with excitement and pleasure.

The film was photographed by John Hora, his first "mainstream" picture. He brings to it an expansive and moody quality that successfully works against the (too) many jokes that Dante has put into the film. Even though there are shots of wolfskin rugs, Wolf Chili, *Howl*, Big Bad Wolf-like cartoons, and so forth, Hora's sensitive and evocative photography maintains the eerie mood. And *The Howling* looks like a movie, not like a goddamned TV show. There are plenty of long shots, dark scenes, and other filmic devices eschewed by most TV cameramen. Hora doesn't have it

all down pat, but he soon will.

Dante also falters here and there. As I said, there are just too many jokes; most of them work just fine, but a few go too far, such as a cutaway to a dogfood commercial at a crucial spot. This invalidates a sacrifice on the part of a major character.

Christopher Stone is rather lackluster as the hero, but his part is underwritten anyway. Dennis Dugan and Belinda Balaski are good in their second-string hero roles. Kevin McCarthy, Patrick Mcnee, John Carradine and Slim Pickens are all their reliable selves.

Dee Wallace is much more than that. The only other film I can recall seeing her in is *10*, in which she played the aging blonde that Dudley Moore picks up in a Mexican hotel. There, as in *The Howling*, she projects a self-aware vulnerability that is quite unusual. Wallace is an attractive but not beautiful woman, and she uses this almost-but-not-quite quality effectively. Her best scenes in *The Howling* are those in which she is insecure and frightened, especially two with her husband regarding sex. She's a very impressive actress, and I hope to see her more often.

Dante co-edited *The Howling* as well as directing. He shows a major talent in both departments. If *The Howling* isn't quite as good as *Piranha*, it's probably because the structure is off; although everything really important happens near the end, it's all squashed together (people get places *very* fast), and character-

ization is somewhat dropped in favor of horror.

The Howling, however, is overall a very impressive and entertaining movie. If you see it with a large crowd, be prepared to miss most of the dialogue because of the shrieks and screams. It's going to make a ton of money.

Scanners Live In Vein

The generous among you will forgive the pun; those of you who have seen David Cronenberg's vivid, exciting shocker *Scanners* will understand it.

Cronenberg is a Canadian writer-director who seems obsessed with medical anomalies as subjects for horror stories. In *They Came From Within*, the menace was turd-sized parasites passed from person to person by sexual activity--and the parasites caused rabid sexual desire. His next picture was, in fact, *Rabid*, a ghastly, entertaining thing about a woman who, unknown to herself, now has a new organ in her armpit that she uses (in a trance) to drain blood from victims. The victims, in turn, come down with a frothy insanity which causes them to attack other people--and the survivors also catch this rabies-like plague. *The Brood*, which Cronenberg considers his "most mature" film (perhaps because it is his only dull movie) deals with a psychiatric treatment that causes physical changes in people. Really big physical changes: Samantha Eggar generates sexless murderous dwarves from hugh blood clots on her body.

Cronenberg really does try to shatter taboos, to make horror films on subjects that are genuinely disturbing. He knows his films are laden with repulsive details, but he also tries to seek the beauty in horror: in *They Came From Within*, a parasite leaves a rosy trail on a transparent umbrella; in *The Brood*, Eggar is at her most beautiful as she laps the blood off her rage-generated "children." Cronenberg is the first genuinely intellectual horror movie maker since Val Lewton, and there the comparison ends. Lewton's films were gentle and lyrical; Cronenberg's are vicious and modern. He is a major talent, but it's a talent to disturb.

Scanners resembles a kind of SF novel popular in the 1950s in terms of the storyline. "Scanners" are artificially-created telepaths. Dr. Ruth (Patrick McGoohan) heads the Scanner division of a quasi-governmental agency. He is trying to keep track of all the

nearly 250 Scanners, but working against him is the evil Revok (Mike Ironside), a Scanner himself. There is an underground Scanner society, who are hunted by both Ruth and Revok, so Ruth turns to Vale (Stephen Lack), a derelict who, unknown to himself, is a powerful Scanner. *Scanners* follows the adventures of Vale as he tries to find out just what is really going on.

Unlike Cronenberg's previous films, *Scanners* is full of action: gun fights, car wrecks, Scanner battles, and so forth. He handles this with his usual skill, although somehow in these scenes his heart doesn't seem to be in his work.

He worked on the script of *Scanners* daily as the film was being shot, and some of this shows in the picture. There are many unanswered questions regarding the parentage of Vale and Revok, and Cronenberg attempts to answer many of these in a long voice-over scene with Dr. Ruth. As it is the only such scene in the entire film it's jarringly apparent as exposition, and strongly damages the flow of the picture at this point. What we are doing in Ruth's head is never made clear.

Vale eventually learns that Revok is behind a plan to create thousands more Scanners, then to set himself up as the absolute dictator of the world when he has enough Scanners to control the normals. (Scanners can do a great deal more than merely read minds: they can cause people to burst into flames, to shoot themselves, to forget things and, in one absolutely stunning scene, a man's head explodes very, very realistically.)

The conflict between Vale and Revok finally reaches its climax in a whammy duel between these two, the most powerful of all Scanners. Veins literally stand out on their heads and arms; sores open in heads; eyes explode. This is one of the most grueling scenes I have ever witnessed. Unlike most horror films, in which the effects might be gory but you know they are so far out they can't be real, the effects in *Scanners* seem all too plausible. It's really an astonishing scene, most effective, but is very hard on audiences. The wrap-up is also quite confusing, much more literary than filmic in what it tries to do.

Stephen Lack's performance varies greatly. In some scenes, he

is superb; in others, he is so amateurish as to be embarrassing. Unfortunately, he is the central character. Jennifer O'Neill is largely wasted as the Woman In The Case, but she's a good actress so there's still a character there. McGoohan is much like McGoohan always is: tight, almost controlled, clipped and arrogant. He's got a style down pat, and I love it. Michael Ironside as the villain is excellent, and his introduction is a masterful piece of sleight-of-hand.

Cronenberg is, despite his stylish ghoulishness, one of the best directors working in horror and science fiction today. His pictures always contain more than you'd think could be possible. The situations are agonizingly real (even a Scanner mind-meld with a computer seems real) and the subject matter is unique, to say the least. I think *Scanners* is, overall, his best film so far--but I think far better films lie in the future. David Cronenberg is far from finished with us.

-- Bill Warren

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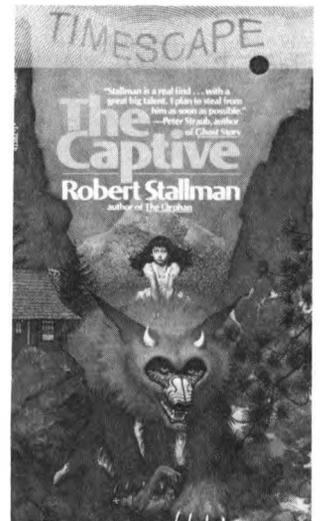
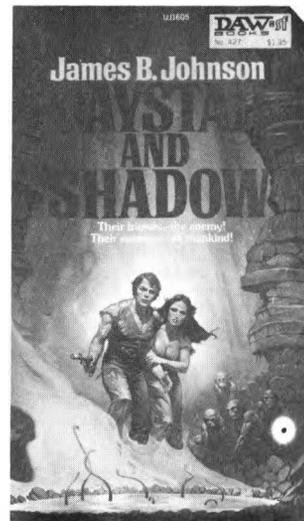
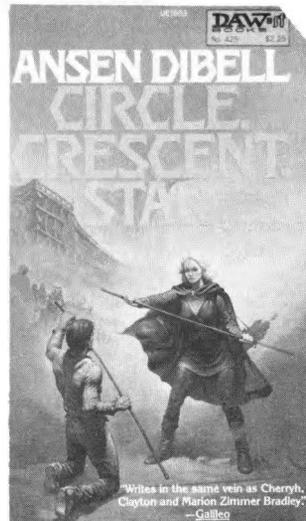
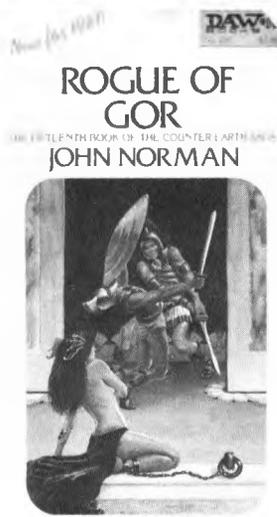
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BOOK
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Paperbacks

Cover artists: "Rogue of Gor" by Richard Hescox; "Circle, Crescent, Star" and "Daystar and Shadow" by Ken Kelly; "The Captive" by Don Maitz; "No Earthly Shore" by Rowena Morrill.



DAW BOOKS

Leading off DAW releases this month is the 15th Gor novel, *Rogue of Gor* by John Norman, at \$2.50. According to New American Library, some 2½ million copies of DAW editions of the Gor novels have been sold.

Circle, Crescent, Star by Ansen Dibell is the fantasy sequel to his earlier DAW title, *Pursuit of the Screamer*. Price is \$2.25. Another DAW original for March is *Daystar and Shadow* by James B. Johnson, a science fantasy about two wanderers in a desertland that was once America. Price is \$1.95.

Also scheduled is Isaac Asimov *Presents the Great SF Stories 5*, edited with Martin H. Greenberg.



This is the 5th volume in the series, covering the year 1943 and including such stories as "The Halfing" by Leigh Brackett, "Daymare" by Fredric Brown, "Symbiotica" by Eric Frank Russell, "Mimsey Were the Borogroves" by Henry Kuttner, and "Doorway Into Time" by C. L. Moore, among others. Price is \$2.50. The reissue this month is *The Star-Crowned Kings* by Robert Chilson, at \$1.95.

SIGNET

Two titles scheduled to make their first paperback appearances from Signet in March are *The Girl in A Swing* by Richard Adams (\$3.50), a bestseller in hardcover last year, and *Dmitri* by Jamey Cohen (\$2.75), a horror-suspense novel about hypnotic possession. A Signet original for March is *Panther!* by Alan Ryan (\$2.25), a novel about a pack of twenty panthers who terrorize Manhattan residents.

A fantasy reissue for March is *Approaching Oblivion* by Harlan Ellison (\$1.95), a collection of 11 stories.

AVON BOOKS

Due out from Avon in March is the third novel in Francine Mezo's 'The Fall of Worlds' trilogy, *No Earthly Shore*, continuing the galactic adventures of Captain Areia Darenga. Price is \$2.50.

A reprint for March is *Neanderthal Planet* by Brian W. Aldiss, a collection of four stories. Included are the title story, "Danger Religion," "Intangibles, Inc.," and

"Since the Assassination." Price is \$2.25.

A juvenile release under the Camelot imprint is *Space Cats* by Steven Kroll, at \$1.95. The illustrated book is aimed at ages 6-9.

POCKET BOOKS

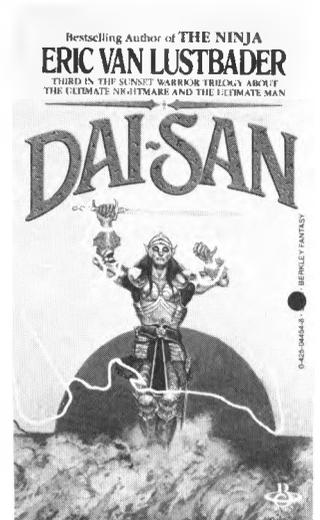
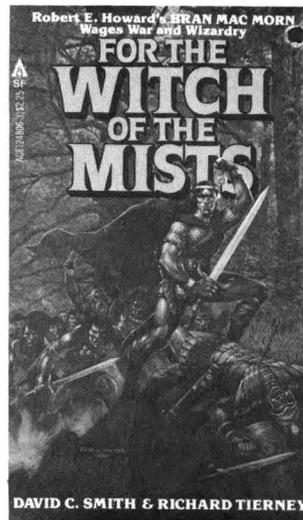
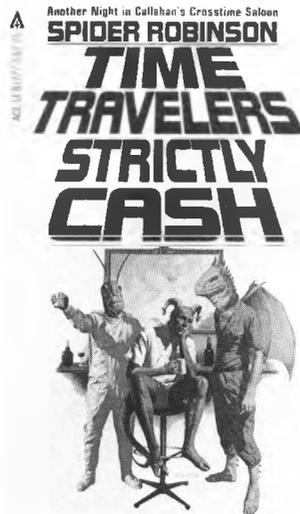
In March, Pocket Books introduces a new imprint to the fantasy and science fiction field: Timescape. The word "Timescape" against a screened background will appear at the tops of all F&SF paperback covers.

Two Pocket Books originals for March are *The Captive* by Robert Stallman and *A Fond Farewell to Dying* by Syd Logsdon, both priced at \$2.25. *The Captive* is the second volume in 'The Book of the Beast' and a sequel to Stallman's earlier *The Orphan*. *Fond Farewell* is an SF novel set in India concerning the development of human cloning to prevent death.

Two titles that will see their first paperback appearances this month are *Golem 100* by Alfred Bester and *Fireflood and Other Stories* by Vonda N. McIntyre, each priced at \$2.50. The Bester novel was published last summer by Simon & Schuster while the McIntyre collection was a hardcover release from Houghton Mifflin. A reissue for March is *The Mind Cage* by A. E. Van Vogt, at \$2.25.

Two mainstream releases of possible interest here are *Helix* by Desmond Ryan and Joel Shurkin, and *Blood Island* by James Farber, both priced at \$2.75. The former was published in hardcover by W. W.

Cover artists: "Time Travelers Strictly Cash" by Vincent DiFate; "For the Witch of the Mists" by Ezra N. Tucker; "Dai-San" by Don Maitz; "The Ringworld Engineers" by Dale Gustafson.



Norton and concerns the unleashing of a powerful new virus. The latter is an original novel billed as an occult thriller about weird doings at a plush island resort.

ACE BOOKS

An Ace original due out in March is *Time Travelers Strictly Cash* by Spider Robinson, a new collection of Callahan's Crosstime Saloon stories that includes both new and reprinted material. Price is \$2.25.

Another original is *Analog Yearbook II* edited by Stanley Schmidt, at \$2.25. This is the second annual original anthology of new fiction and nonfiction that serves as a 13th (now 14th) issue of *Analog* each year.

Reprints and reissues for March include: *For the Witch of the Mists* by David C. Smith and Richard Tierney, *Specimens* by Fred Saberhagen, *Ice Crown* by Andre Norton, and *The Time Bender* by Keith Lawner, all priced at \$2.25 each. *The Time Bender* was originally announced for February, and will be followed up in April and May with the remaining two volumes in that series.

DEL REY/BALLANTINE

Del Rey's leader for March is the first paperback edition of *The Ringworld Engineers* by Larry Niven, his sequel to *Ringworld*, published in hardcover in 1980 by Phantasia Press and Holt, Rinehart & Winston. Along with it, Del Rey is reprinting *Ringworld*. Both are priced at

\$2.50.

Paperback originals for March are *Deadly Silents* by Lee Killough and *The Revolution from Rosinante* by Alexis A. Gilliland, both at \$2.25. The Killough title is an SF novel about the introduction of crime and violence to an otherwise peaceful society by Terran colonists. ("A police procedural set against an SF background," according to Del Rey.) *Revolution* is a "fastpaced" political satire involving corruption and high technology.

Reprints from Del Rey include *Protector* by Larry Niven and *Glinde of Oz* by L. Frank Baum, both priced at \$2.25.

Also of interest here (possibly...I'm not sure) is *The Sixth Winter* by Douglas Orgill and John Gribbin, a disaster novel about the coming of a new Ice Age. It will appear under the Ballantine imprint at \$2.75.

PLAYBOY PRESS

On tap from Playboy Press for March is *Savage Empire* by Jean Lora. Sorry, but I don't have any information on this one.

BANTAM BOOKS

A Bantam original novel for March is *Wheelworld* by Harry Harrison, the second novel in his "To the Stars" trilogy that began with *Homeworld*, published last November, and concludes with *Starworld*, scheduled for July 1981 publication. Price is \$1.95.

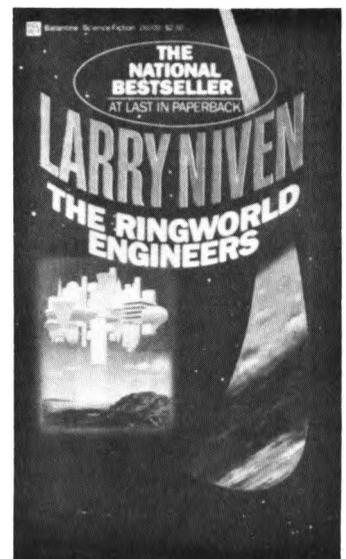
Also slated for March is a re-

issue of *The Golden Sword* by Janet E. Morris, the second novel in her Silistra series, at \$1.95.

BERKLEY BOOKS

Two novels that will see their first paperback publications in March are *Dai-San* by Eric Van Lustbader (\$2.50) and *Magic Time* by Kit Reed (\$2.25). *Dai-San* is the third volume in the original 'Sunset Warrior' trilogy published in hardcover by Doubleday in 1978. *Magic Time* was a Berkley/Putnam hardcover just a year ago and is a fantasy about the ultimate amusement park for the rich and privileged.

A Berkley original (inherited from amongst their Jove acquisitions in 1979) is *Khai of Ancient Khem*



The Pocket Books F & SF Page

For the first time, every book this month is by an author previously published in our Fantasy and Science Fiction program--new titles by old friends will become a hallmark of our line as we take on a new name next month: Timescape Books. ---D.G.H.

What If? Vol. 2

Richard A. Lupoff, Editor

Following the success of What If? Volume 1, Richard Lupoff continues to choose stories that might have won the Hugo. This time, the stories date from the era of space exploration, 1959-1965, when many non-fans predicted the death of science fiction. Instead, sf discovered whole new areas to explore, and just as the space age blossomed, so did science fiction once again. Herein, stories by Bester, Davidson, Dick, Disch and others, that typify the excellence of the first great age of space.

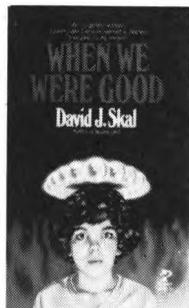
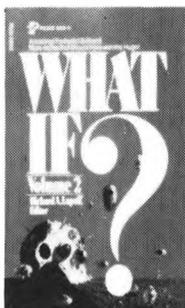
A POCKET BOOKS ORIGINAL
83190-9/\$2.50

When We Were Good

David J. Skal

In a world where pollution has deformed genes, a child is beyond price...almost beyond hope. Having a baby of their own is only a dream to Kevin and Linda, until Little Tyke is delivered. Then it becomes a nightmare. WHEN WE WERE GOOD is an apocalyptic vision of the near future from the author of Scavengers, whom Damon Knight describes as "one of the best new writers to appear in a decade."

A POCKET BOOKS ORIGINAL
83015-5/\$2.25



The Sable Moon

Nancy Springer

Trevyn's birthright is the throne of Welas...but it lies at the far end of a dark gauntlet of slavery and danger, a path that echoes with the nightmare howling of wolves summoned by a necromancer's sorcery. Third volume in the Book of Isle, THE SABLE MOON is the tale of an angry young prince whose spirit is tempered by adventure, peril and comradeship, a quest leading from impetuous, unformed boyhood to a regal manhood worthy of his forefathers. Andre Norton calls Nancy Springer's epic fantasy, which began with The White Hart and continued in The Silver Sun, "Outstanding."

A POCKET BOOKS ORIGINAL
83157-7/\$2.50

TIMESCAPE
by Gregory Benford
Coming in July

"An altogether admirable aesthetic triumph...With it Gregory Benford establishes himself as one of the best storytellers and stylists working in America at novel-length." --Michael Bishop

POCKET BOOKS

David G. Hartwell, Director of Science Fiction

Profundis

Richard Cowper

Out of the depths comes PROFUNDIS, a city-sized submarine that is the only survivor of the final war... and the home of Proteus, a highly intelligent computer with some funny ideas, and its 45,000 charges, including Horatio Prood, the mad Lord Admiral, and Tom Jones, dolphin interpreter and sometime Messiah. An undersea passion play with a touch of divine madness, PROFUNDIS is Richard Cowper's funniest and best novel yet. "Thoroughly recommended." --SF Commentary

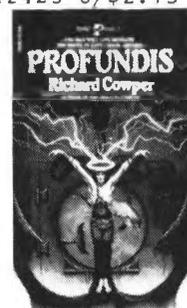
A POCKET BOOKS ORIGINAL
83502-5/\$2.25

Some Summer Lands

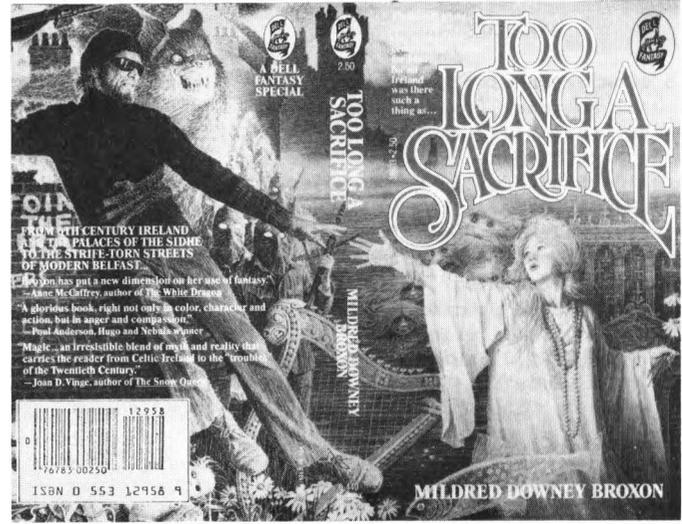
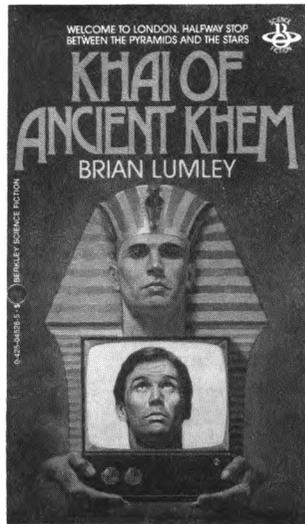
Jane Gaskell

For the sensuous Cija and her mute daughter Seka, child of her love for the dragon general Zerd, the shimmering road promised adventure and danger. The fifth and final volume of the Atlan saga finds them making an arduous journey through mysterious and magic lands, struggling to escape the sinister people of Soursere, and finally setting out upon the Floating Isles for the enchanted shores of Atlan, where destiny and fulfillment await them both.

42423-8/\$2.75



Cover artists: "Magic Time" by John Rush; "Too Long A Sacrifice" by Huens.



by Brian Lumley (\$2.25), a novel about a man who pursues his lover through forty lifetimes...from ancient Khem to modern London.

DELL BOOKS

Coming from Dell in March is a new Celtic fantasy, *Too Long A Sacrifice* by Mildred Downey Broxon. Billed as an epic fantasy that begins in the 6th century and ends up in modern-day Northern Ireland,

the novel will receive extra promotion as Dell's first "Fantasy Special." Price is \$2.50. A reissue for March is *The Champion of Garathorm* by Michael Moorcock, at \$2.25.

MANOR BOOKS

Two recent releases from Manor Books are *The Reluctant Wizard* by Neil K. Newell and *After the Apocalypse* by W. Randolph Fox, both priced at \$1.95. *Wizard* is a her-

oic fantasy novel about a staid tax consultant who is catapulted into a Tolkien-like fantasy world where he becomes the Great New Wizard in a land of dwarfs and sorcerers. The Fox novel is a post-holocaust story about a group of survivors who establish a primitive community at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. I'm not sure if these are new or reprints, but they have copyright dates of 1979.

(Editorial.....continued from page 2.)

sis on the "newsletter" seems appropriate. In addition, this logo design will give me more flexibility in cover design...assuming I ever find the time to exercise any creativity in throwing the issue together each month.

Some notes regarding subscriptions and other details: I can no longer accept personal checks or bank checks from sources outside the U.S. It has become just about impossible to cash any kind of foreign check or bank draft without incurring exchange losses in the process. Consequently, I must insist that all foreign orders be remitted in U.S. funds via an International Postal Money Order. Canadians may remit Canadian Postal Money Orders, but only in U.S. funds.

All subscriptions begin with the *next* published issue...not the current issue and not a back issue. The complexity of second class mailing combined with *FN's* growth in circulation simply do not permit me to begin subscriptions with any issue other than the next regularly scheduled issue. The same applies to subscription renewals--this means that if your renewal comes in late, you may miss an issue and have to pick it up later as a back issue. The only exceptions to this are first class subscriptions and back issue orders at the \$2 price. The latter should be obvious; first class subscriptions may begin with the current issue--the reason for this, very simply, is that I do not have to file nine yards of paperwork every time I mail out a first class copy. (Yes, one *does* have to file nine

yards of paperwork--signed in blood, no less--to use second class mailing privileges, but it's worth it.)

Many new subscribers have asked if I send out renewal notices when subscriptions expire. As a matter of fact, I send out two of them. One warns you that your subscription is about to expire; the other one advises you that your subscription has expired. Now that the move is completed, I've just had two new forms printed up and will begin using them with this issue. (Prior to this issue, I was limping along on some old forms and actually ran out of them last month.)

Many of you have been renewing early and it helps. It's not that I need the money sooner. By renewing early, you help cut down on my paperwork. It's a simple matter for me to record the renewal and insert a new number after your name on the mailing label. Once your subscription has expired, your name is removed from the mailing list (the master, that is, from which the labels are printed each month), and when you renew I must go back and add your name to the mailing list.

When you move, please send me your change of address as soon as you know your new address. Don't wait until you actually move. And please send in both your old and new address, including zip codes. The only way I can find you is by your zip code. If you miss an issue because it was sent to your old address because I didn't receive your new address in time, I cannot replace the issue that was lost.

I'm out of room again... See you next month!

-- Paul C. Allen

The Fan Press

THE ARGONAUT

The Argonaut #7, published by Michael Ambrose, features the following stories: "Chu Tang and the Puppeteer" by Gene Phillips, "The Puzzling Return of Jake McBrewster" by Gordon Linsner, "The Blue House" by Albert J. Manachino, "The Last King of Landomir" by Irvin L. Wagner, "Blue Brain" by Dewi McS, "In Deepest Slumber" by Philip C. Heath, "The Island That Forgot Time" by Daniel R. Betz, "Saviors" by B. F. Watkinson, and "Yog-Sothoth A Go-Go" by G. N. Gabbard. Also included is a lot of poetry and artwork by Dan Day, Larry Dickison, Gary Kato and Allen Koszowski, among others.

The 60-page, digest size issue is Ambrose's largest to date, priced at \$1.50 or 4 issues for \$5.50. Michael Ambrose, P. O. Box 7985, Austin, TX 78712.

EERIE COUNTRY

Eerie Country is the title of an occasional fiction magazine published by W. Paul Ganley in between issues of his more elegant-appearing *Weirdbook*. Issue #4, just out, includes: "Deep Calls to Deep" by John Taylor, "Candles in Kaldesh" by Gene Phillips, "The Cohorts of the Damned" by John Wysocki, "When Wakes A God" by Clifford Blair, "Elise Beckoning" by Patrice Schroeder, "The Statue" by Dana Vagovsky, "At the Foot of the Oak" by Frederick Adams, and "The Clock" by Iola Ford. Poetry is by William Scott Home and Joseph Payne Brennan, among numerous others, and artists include Bruce Conklin and Frank Hamilton.

The 32-page issue is priced at \$2 and 4 issue subscriptions are \$6. W. Paul Ganley, Box 35, Amherst Branch, Buffalo, NY 14226.

PROCRASTINATION

When he's not out interviewing authors or writing columns, Darrell Schweitzer publishes an occasional (very occasional) fan magazine entitled, appropriately, *Procrastination*. His latest issue, #15, contains articles by John and Sandra Miesel, Poul Anderson, Robert Whitaker, Lee Weinstein, Dan Joy and Michael Collings, as well as poetry by John Sevcik and Peter Dickinson. I should note

that *Procrastination* is a true fanzine (a dying breed) that includes lengthy editorial comments by the editor, numerous LoC's, and a prologue to the editor's novel, *The White Isle*, that did not appear in the magazine version in *Fantastic*. The 68-page mimeographed issue is loaded with funny cartoons, including a portfolio ("The Platypi") by Alexis Gilliland. Price is \$2 per copy, or a trade, an article, or a published LoC. I told you it was a fanzine... Darrell Schweitzer, 113 Deepdale Road, Strafford, PA 19087.

B. F. S. BULLETIN

The British Fantasy Society Bulletin appears to be expanding its coverage in the absence of *Fantasy Media*. The latest issue (Vol. 8, #4/5) is a 32-page, digest size double issue that now resembles *FM* in layout and editorial approach. Included in the issue is an article on Jack Vance by Adrian Cole, film and TV coverage by Steve Jones, movie reviews, an interview with artist Alan Hunter, and extensive coverage of both Fantasycon VI and the 6th World Fantasy Con, in addition to the news and book reviews readers have been accustomed to in the bulletin. The issue features a lot of artwork and cover reproductions, as well as photos. All in all, it is a significant improvement for the bulletin and a welcome sight since the demise of *Fantasy Media*.

Annual memberships in the British Fantasy Society are \$15 in the U.S. and £5.00 in the U.K. (although the U.K. rate may increase). Included with your membership is the bimonthly bulletin and the society's fiction magazine, *Dark Horizons*; the latter has been very infrequent of late, but a new issue is due out in February. U.S. orders should be addressed to Paul Ritz, P. O. Box 6485, Cleveland, OH 44101. U.K. orders go to Rob Butterworth, 79 Rochdale Road, Milnrow, Rochdale, Lancs., OL16 4DT, U.K.

MAGICAL BLEND

Once again, I'm stuck for a way to accurately describe this unusual, but attractive, non-traditional fantasy magazine entitled: *Magical Blend*. The third issue of this typeset, beautifully printed

magazine is devoted exclusively to whales and dolphins, featuring a number of articles, stories, poems and even comic strips about them. Along with a heckuva lot of nice artwork and a message from Jacques Cousteau himself. Stories include "Leavetaking" by Len James, "Saying Goodbye to Marie" by Jerry Snider, "Water Spirits" by Wendy Eleana, "Life Forms on Earth" by Renny Christopher and Richard Bench, and "Sedna: An Eskimo Goddess" by Amber Faith. The 84-page issue is priced at \$3 and subscriptions are \$10 for 4 quarterly issues. *Magical Blend*, P. O. Box 11303, San Francisco, CA 94101.

JUST PULP

Featured in the latest issue of *Just Pulp* (#12) are the following stories: "The Man Who Made Ale" by J. R. Schifino, "Next Window Please" by Stephen Slavin, "A Worthy Family" by David Penhale, "The Macalester Business" (Part 2) by G. W. Kennedy, "Two Fables" by Joe Smith, "The Case of the San-guinary Fecundation" by M. David Pohlman, "Eiger" by Robert Dries, and "The Fall of Ica" by Francis J. Mabozzo.

Just Pulp is a quarterly digest size journal of general fiction and poetry, perfect-bound, and usually running about 120 pages, that is not genre-oriented. It includes fantasy, suspense and mystery fiction, in addition to general fiction. However, this issue is just about 100% devoted to fantasy in one form or another and I have a sneaking suspicion the magazine is heading in that direction. \$1.95 per copy or 4 issues for \$6. *Just Pulp*, P. O. Box 243, Narragansett, RI 02882.

PAPERBACK QUARTERLY

Paperback Quarterly is another magazine taking on a new look--now completely typeset. Issue #11 features an interview with John Jakes and a bibliography of his work, "Collecting Original Paperback Cover Art" by Robert Weinberg, an article on reprints of Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, a profile of artist James Aavati, and an article on Louis L'Amour. The 60-page, digest size issue is priced at \$2.50 and subscriptions are \$8 for four quarterly issues. Pecan Valley Press, 1710 Vincent St., Brownwood, TX 76801.

As always, all fan press items mentioned here are offset printed and 8½" by 11" in format, unless otherwise noted. *

Magazines



Featured in the February issue of *Playboy* is a mystery story by Donald E. Westlake, "Ask A Silly Question."

Gardner F. Fox has another of his "Niall of the Far Travels" heroic fantasy novelettes in the December issue of *The Dragon* (#44). This is the first issue of that monthly fantasy gaming magazine to feature fiction in some months. Single copies are \$3 from Dragon Publishing, TSR Hobbies, Inc., P. O. Box 110, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

Another fantasy gaming magazine that more regularly features fiction is *Sorcerer's Apprentice*. Included in the Fall 1980 issue (#8) is a reprint of "The Bells of Shoredan" by Roger Zelazny, illustrated by Stephan Peregrine. Published quarterly, SA is cover priced at \$2.25 and subscriptions are \$10 for 6 issues. Flying Buffalo, Inc., P. O. Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252.

THE TWILIGHT ZONE

Due to go on sale in February is the first issue of *Rod Serling's The Twilight Zone Magazine*, for April. Edited by T. E. D. Klein, the magazine will feature "all-new tales of suspense, horror and the supernatural in the tradition of the classic television series."

In a recent phone call, Harlan Ellison describes it as the first new fantasy magazine since *Beyond* in the early 1950s. Leading off the first issue is a new 10,000-word novelette by Ellison, "Grail." Also included in the issue are stories by George R. R. Martin, Ray Russell and Ron Goulart, in addition to an interview with Stephen King conducted by Charles L. Grant, "The Rose Wall" by Joyce Carol Oates, book reviews by Theodore Sturgeon, film reviews by Gahan Wilson, an original TV script from the *Twilight Zone* TV series and a complete index to the show's first season.

Published monthly, *The Twilight Zone* will have a cover price of \$2. Subscriptions are 6 issues for \$10 and 12 issues for \$18. TZ Publications, Inc., Subscription Dept., P. O. Box 254, Mount Morris, IL 61054.

MAGAZINE OF F&SF

Upcoming in the March Magazine of F&SF is a novella by Phyllis Eisenstein, "In the Western Tradi-

tion," and two novelettes: "Of Cabbages and Queens" by Davis Grubb and "The Splice" by Theodore L. Thomas. Short stories include: "Right of Passage" by Terry Brykczynski, "A Day at the Fair" by Neal Barrett, Jr., "Last Song of the Voiceless Man" by Warren Brown, "Go On, Pick A Universe!" by Bob Shaw, and "A Peculiar Man" by Ken Wisman. In addition to the usual departments, "Books" are by Algis Budrys, there is a new F&SF Competition, and the cover is by Paul Chadwick for the novella.

ASIMOV'S SF MAGAZINE

Scheduled for the March 16th issue of *Isaac Asimov's SF Magazine* are the following stories: "I Have A Winter Reason" by Melisa Michaels, "Chess by Ray and Smull" by Martin Gardner, "New People" by R. A. Lafferty, "Bluewater Dreams" by Sydney J. Van Scyoc, "Sand" by Sharon Webb, "The Wind from the Seven Suns" by Jack Gaughan, and "Through All Your Houses Wandering" by Ted Reynolds. Articles include "On Near Future SF Films" by FN's own Bill Warren, "Artist Profile: Wayne Barlowe" by Shawna McCarthy, and "On SF Writing Workshops" by Darrell Schweitzer. The cover illustration is by Wayne Barlowe for "Through All Yours Houses..."

ANALOG

Watch for two issues of *Analog* for March: the first will be dated March 2nd and the second, March 30th. Contents for the March 30th issue are as follow: "The Venetian Court," a novella by Charles L. Harness, "Hollow Victory," a novelette by Timothy Zahn, "Schrodinger's Cat," a novelette by Rudy Rucker, "Xenobiology," an article by Dr. Robert A. Freitas, and three short stories: "Incredibility Gap" by Ian Stewart, "Seek Not Prome-

theus" by Edward A. Byers, and "Security Blanket" by Paul J. Nahin. Departments include "The Alternate View" by G. Harry Stine and book reviews by Tom Easton. Wayne Barlowe is the cover artist.

AMAZING SF STORIES

Featured in the March issue of *Amazing SF Stories* (combined with *Fantastic*) are the following stories: "The Bluenose Limit" by John Steakley, "The Cold Green Eye" by Jack Williamson (a "Hall of Fame" reprint), "In the Ball of Frosted Glass: With the Big Pink-Lavender Load" by David R. Bunch, "The Semi-Happy Life of Gorman Rimly" by Wayne Wightman, "Copycat" by Shari Prange, "The Energy Crisis of 2215" by Timothy Zahn, "Stellar Trek" by Kendall
(Continued on page 31, Col. 3.)



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The Fantasy Artistry of ALICIA AUSTIN now in black & white prints. SASE for brochure. J. Beers, Box 2023, Culver City, CA 90230.

WORLDS LOST...TIME FORGOTTEN, a science fiction magazine. Original stories and art by fans. 2 volumes only \$5. Check or MO to J. Smith. P. O. Box 51, Alhambra, IL 62001.

FANTASY T-SHIRTS: Silk-screen art originals. Women's (french-cut) or men's sizes S,M,L,XL. "Pegacorn", dark on light blue. "Dragon", gold & red on navy. \$11.95 + 0.75 post. Check or M.O. to XENOPHON, W. 1400 Ironhorse Dr. #11, Post Falls, ID. 83854 or send S.A.S.E. for picture brochure.

("On Fantasy" by Karl E. Wagner continued from page 4.)

tral European refugee, Count Brut-- little realizing that he is in reality Count Dracula. Concerned over Felicia--and for purposes of his own--is her downstairs neighbor, the dashing Englishman, Roderick Blade--who is in reality Jack the Ripper, kept alive through the years through a secret elixir of female navels dissolved in absinthe (shaken and not stirred). While Roderick keeps his doomed romance with Felicia, little does he realize that her upstairs neighbor, kindly Rabbi O'Hallahan, is none other than the famed detective, Sherlock Holmes, who has made use of H. G. Wells' time machine to come to 1981 New York in order to pursue Professor Moriarty, who is masquerading as the super, while in the basement Moriarty carries on his depraved rejuvenation experiments under the supervision of Dr. Fu Manchu, while Doc Savage and Dr. Watson work feverishly to destroy the Way-Back Machine before any more cloned public domain characters confuse things.

Queen of the Demon Sword.

Third Level Samurai Adept, Kris Stihl, is riding her mutated flame-horse through the faintly glowing ruins of Chikgo. Male screams turn her attention from brooding upon

P*S*F*Q: MOST EXCELLENT FANZINE. Serious about science fiction; non-pretentious (it says here) in attitude. Issue #5: Robert Silverberg interview, Robert Frazier, John Shirley, Paul Moslander, &! Photo-offset. \$1.50. Back issues: typeset; \$2 for \$1.50, double issue 3-4 is \$3. Or subscribe @ 4 issues for \$5. Send all this money to Michael Ward, Box 1496, Cupertino, CA 95015.

SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY BOUGHT AND SOLD. Send \$1 for 1981 catalog; want lists, special orders, inquiries and lists of books for sale always welcome. ZIESING BROS 768 MAIN ST. WILLIMANTIC CT 06226 (203) 423-5836.

WEIRD TALES. WANTED: April and May, 1923. OFFERED: In trade, needed issues from my scores of duplicates, dating from 1923 thru 1950. Frederick Shroyer, 362 Coral View, Monterey Park, CA 91754.

the quarrel that drove her from her home--krall and splashed new blood upon the ritual scars emblazoned upon her black cheeks. A slave-caravan of trembling males, attacked by mutated frat-rats. Stihl set her enchanted vibrator on annihilate and thumbed the slime into glowing cinder. One survivor, a lean-breasted male tattooed Allura, grovelled at her boots. Stihl deftly affixed his slave collar to her stirrup; now that she was out-cast, she would need someone to lick the radioactive mud from her boots. "My home city has been taken over by the Flame Witch Supreme, Ruby Dykes," simpered the boy. "Watch your mouth about my sister," quipped Stihl, testing the edge of her gelding knife. It should be duller, but this was no time for niceties...

Well, I don't want to give away the plots on too many of these. Just enough to whet your appetites, that's the way it's done. Besides, I've got to get back to work on my own latest, *Lord Blade: The Chronicles of Richard Jeffreys #1*.

Happy reading!

-- Karl Edward Wagner

(Next issue: "On Fantasy" will be written by Fritz Leiber.)

(Interview with Dennis Etchison continued from page 19.)

stories I've read when they come out--this may be a year or two later--and I still have that feeling that someone else wrote them, but I think to myself, "Yeah, that's a pretty fair country story." And then it's pleasing to see my name on them. Once the story is finished, once the final draft is typed, Xeroxed, and filed, a great dissociation or detachment sets in, and I find that I no longer view them subjectively. As I say, it's as if someone else wrote them.

Schweitzer: Will you regard your present work this way in a couple years?

Etchison: I hope that as I go on each story will be less and less disappointing, that I'll be getting closer and closer to the mark. But I suppose, now that you mention it, that what I think is a good story now will probably be revealed to be a very inadequate story five years from now. I hope that's not the case, but I suppose it's inevitable.

Schweitzer: What are you working on now, and what have you got coming out in the near future?

Etchison: I'm finishing a screenplay based on my story in *Dark Forces*, "The Late Shift," and as soon as that's done I have a long story called "Not From Around Here" that I've been thinking about for more than five years. Whether it will be a short story or a novelet or a novella or even a short novel, I don't know. I also have two or three very strong short story ideas, one of which occurred to me in Providence last year, that I haven't yet had time to write. As soon as this screenplay is finished, I look forward to doing them. My main concern at the moment is to get a collection or two of short stories out. I've never submitted a collection to any publisher, because I assumed no one would be interested because I haven't had success with novels. But let's hope that 1981 will change that. In the words of Kenneth Patchen, "I am the world-crier, and this is my dangerous career.... I am the one to call your bluff, and this is my climate."

-- Dennis Etchison
& Darrell Schweitzer

Feedback



HARRY O. FISCHER
CLARKSBURG, WV

Here be a photo of Fritz and me-- August, 1978, in his apartment. I hope in time for your deadline-- better this than mug observing mug!

Thank you, Harry, and I'm sorry I couldn't run it a couple of issues back. As for the mug...see the photo of Fritz Leiber and Harry in FN #31.

LLOYD ARTHUR ESHBACH
MYERSTOWN, PA

I enjoyed reading Robert Weinberg's article on Fantasy Press (in FN #33), but it contains a number of errors, one of which has been perpetuated for quite some time.

While it is true that Martin Greenberg bought a few hundred copies of unbound FP books and issued them in various cheap bindings, the vast bulk of the FP stock, most of it unbound, went to Don Grant, of Providence, R.I. He bought almost 19,000 unbound books (folded and gathered, but not sewn and cased-in) spread over 25 titles. Of four of these titles there were less than 50 copies each; these were bound by the bindery which had done my work in any cloth available, this at Don's request, and of course charged to him. He also bought about 4,500 bound books in jackets, almost half of these being copies of *Legion of Time* by Jack Williamson. Within the past few years, Grant has been releasing the unbound books a title at a time,

mainly through Dick Witter, bound in format almost indistinguishable from the original binding, and with the original FP jacket. He bought all of these books, obviously, at remainder prices, and has been warehousing them ever since. Greenberg secured a negligible number of FP books. (Since typing the above I rechecked my correspondence and see that the books bound for Grant by the local bindery were to be bound without any stamping.)

Weinberg lists *Book of Ptath* as the first FP book. Actually it was the fifth title. The first four books in order were: *Space-hounds of I.P.C.* by E. E. Smith, *The Legion of Space* by Jack Williamson, *The Forbidden Garden* by John Taine, and *Of Worlds Beyond* edited by L. A. Eshbach.

The History of Civilization by Smith sold for \$35.00 per set, not \$15.00. There were 112 copies of *Invaders from the Infinite* by Campbell, as Weinberg states, but there were really 341 copies of *The Vortex Blaster*, not 102. So far as I can recall, all of these carried the jacket using the Cartier drawing from *The Cometeers* endpapers.

The scarcest of the FP books? These would have to be the special leather bound copies of each title except the last three. There were two copies of each of these, with a specially printed insert sheet saying, "This special edition is limited to two copies, numbered, autographed, and bound in leather." Number 1 was signed by me as a presentation copy for the author and Number 2 was inscribed by the author to me. There was one exception--*Genus Homo* by de Camp and Miller--where there were three copies. Actually there is only one autographed set--mine. Obviously, this is not a "collectable" since it's impossible for anyone to acquire these. One of these leather bound copies went on the market. Since Weinbaum was dead and I had no contact with Mrs. Weinbaum I gave the #1 copy to the Convention to be sold at auction toward convention expenses. I believe it went for \$25.00.

You may be interested to know that I've finally completed the writing of a book I've called *Over My Shoulder: Reflections On a Science Fiction Era*, an informal and trivia-laden history of the '30s, '40s and '50s, with emphasis on Fantasy Press, Arkham, Gnome, Prime, Shasta, FPCI and the others who brought out SF and fantasy books during that period. It's my own reminiscences plus added information and memories gained by direct contact with such people as

Dave Kyle, Marty Greenberg, Mel Korshak, Ted Dikty, Ozzie Train, Bill Crawford, Sam Moskowitz and so on. These people have checked and approved their own sections for accuracy. And there will be a more accurate copy count of published books than has ever been published before. A couple of the modern specialist publishers are interested in the book.

JAMES VAN HISE
SAN DIEGO, CA

You made a couple errors in recounting my letter in the latest FN. The Ellison story is titled "Footsteps" (no "The"), and somehow you gave the year as 1979 instead of 1980 for the November and December issues of *Gallery*.

One way of getting direct access to this information, since the magazines themselves aren't that cooperative, is to try the authors themselves. Most authors have secretaries capable of sending out notices of magazine appearances.

I suggest you get the latest issue of *Cinefantastique* (Vol. 10, #4) as it has a complete update on Stephen King's film and story projects.

Thanks for the correction--I got my "last year" perspective confused, I guess. I'm not sure it's lack of cooperation; it's probably more like lack of time--and that's a problem as common to writers (and their secretaries) as it is to editors. I'll be happy to accept this kind of news from anyone who wants to send it in.

(Magazines

continued from page 29.)

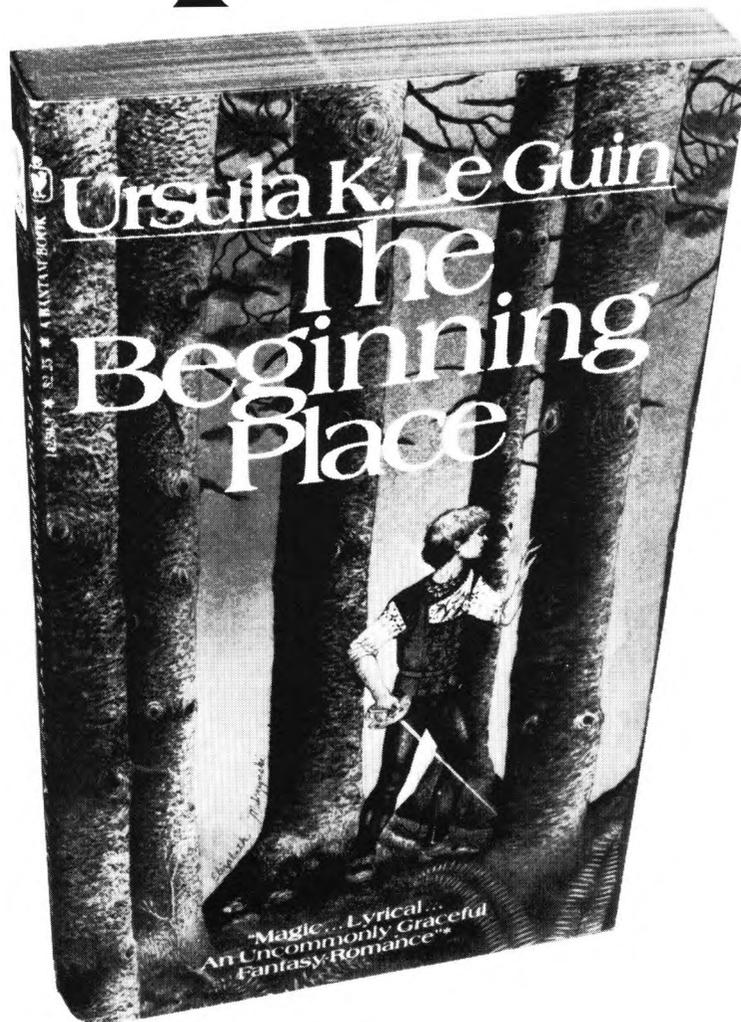
Evans, "Addressee Unknown" by Michael Kube-McDowell, "Grumblefritz" by Marvin Kaye, "The Containment of Calpel V" by Barry N. Malzberg, "The Barrier" by Cynthia Wagner-Emmons, and "Never Fired A Shot" by Robert Brown. Features include an interview with Manly Wade Wellman and articles by Steven Dimeo, Walter B. Hendrickson, Jr., and Park Godwin and Howard Roller, in addition to the usual departments. *

(Book Reviews

continued from page 10.)

the collection confirms that time has dimmed neither Moorcock's raging, iconoclastic humanism, nor the continually growing ambition and polish of his prose. Highly recommended.

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