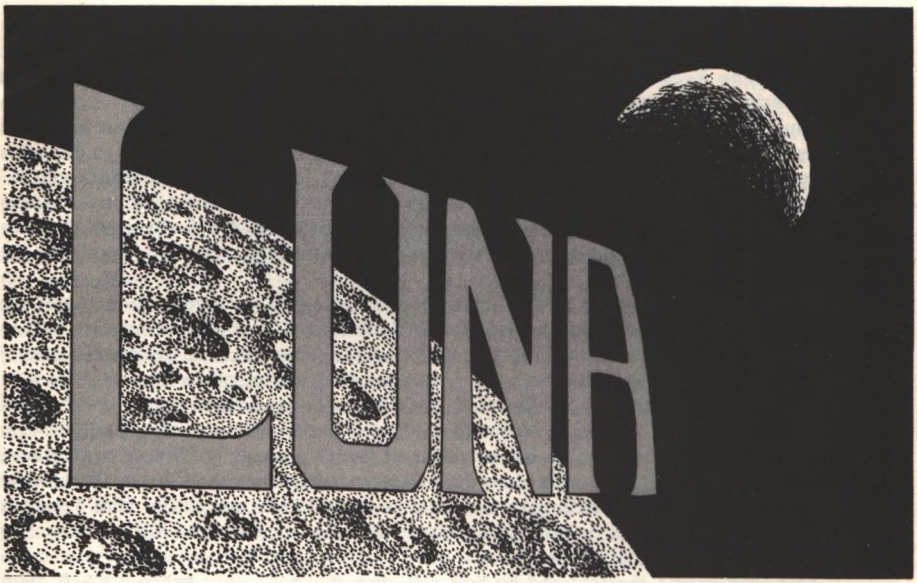

No. 64 **Summer 1976**

Terry Carr

An Interview Conducted by Paul Walker*

Including "The Ace Science Fiction Specials" by Terry Carr†

It's difficult to say just how the Ace Specials started. How far back do you go? I've wanted to be an editor ever since my earliest days as a fan, when my pro idols were not just Ray Bradbury and Henry Kuttner but also Sam Merwin and H.L. Gold—Merwin because he singlehandedly lifted *Startling* and *Thrilling Wonder Stories* from the depths of Sarge Saturn to the heights of *Against the Fall of Night*, and Gold because the early *Galaxy* seemed to spring fullblown into life as a literate and exciting sf magazine, establishing a standard in its very first issue that it had taken *Astounding* ten years even to hint at.

In my most active days as a fan I was always as much editor as writer, and a lot of my editing ventures were in the direction of fan books rather than fan magazines: *The Incompleat Burbee*, *The Stormy Petrel*, *The Expurgated Boob Stewart*, et al. I first broke into the pro ranks as a writer, and among my first sales was a short novel commissioned by Don Wollheim at Ace. Don once told me he'd bought the book partly because he'd liked my fan writing, and I suppose he must have noticed something about my editorial enthusiasm too, because two years later he called me and asked if I wanted a job as associate editor at Ace.

(My reply wasn't too well calculated to impress Don with my canny business sense: "Hey, wow, are you serious? I'd love to have the job, I'd love it! . . .Er, ah, first tell me the salary." Oh well.)

I spent my first few months at Ace learning the day-to-day mechanics of book production—copyediting, proofreading, writing blurbs. I discovered it wasn't much different from editing fanzines, except that the levels of intelligence and literacy seemed a bit lower among the writers who worked regularly for Ace then. As I worked my way into the job and gained confidence, inevitably I began petitioning Don with my own ideas of what Ace should and shouldn't do. (Any fan who doesn't believe in his innermost heart that he could do better at selecting sf stories than do the established editors in the field must be a fakefan.)[1] Don bore with my criticisms patiently, and listened with an open mind to my

For important information regarding title change and future publication schedule of this magazine, see Editorial on page 15.

suggestions; as a result, Ace was soon publishing more books in which I had a real interest: Jack Vance's *The Eyes of the Overworld*, Avram Davidson's *Rogue Dragon*, John Myers Myers's *Silverlock* and any number of others.[2]

Simultaneously, I was getting familiar with the really fine work Don had been publishing all along: astonishingly good novels by Phil Dick, Chip Delany and so on. Some of our books were so much better than the others that I couldn't quite understand it; I asked Don about it, and he explained that the lesser efforts were published to make money and the better books because he liked them and they didn't do *too* badly on the stands. What the science fiction mass market audience wanted, essentially, was good juvenile books, judging from the sales reports.

I had conflicting reactions to this judgment. On one hand, my cynical fannish self said it must be true that sf readers had juvenile tastes—look how silly so many fans were. But on the other hand, my idealistic fanself felt that the readers had always been underestimated by science fiction publishers: give them quality books and they'd respond to them.

But there was no arguing the fact that Ace's better books never seemed to sell as well as the space operas. So I wondered about that off and on for awhile, and gradually I began to suspect a very simple answer: it was a matter of faulty packaging. When Ace published adult quality sf books, it was with titles like *Clans of the Alphane Moon* or *The Escape Orbit* or *Clash of Star Kings*,[3] with covers as garish as their names; any reader who'd want to buy an adult sf book would be put off by these, whereas the kids who did pick them up would discover they didn't like them.

I told Don what I thought and he said, well, yes, maybe . . . but try to get A.A. Wyn, Ace's owner and publisher, to agree to such a radical change in packaging. Wyn had started in publishing in the 20's as a pulp editor and then a pulp publisher, and most of his ideas on how to sell to the mass market had been fully formed by 1940 at the latest. They included: garish titles, simpleminded action covers, sensationalistic blurbs, and cover prices kept below

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the prices of the competition. The latter was sometimes a boon to the reader, but usually not really: as a result of the lower cover price Ace couldn't pay as much for its novels as the competition, so Don seldom got first look at the top material. Don had labored under this system for over a dozen years, and was tired of hitting his head against the wall; on the other hand, I was comparatively new in the job and faunching for a chance to prove we could publish quality science fiction regularly and profitably. But I needed an opening wedge.

It came in the form of a huge novel called *Dune*, which had just been published in hardcover by Chilton Books, a lesser-known publisher in Philadelphia. Both Don and I knew the enthusiasm *Dune*'s component serials in *Analog* had stirred up; I said, "We ought to buy the book—it's going to win the Hugo, you know," and Don said he thought so too. (I should mention that at this point neither of us had actually read the book. We knew it only by its reputation within science fiction fandom. Editors are busy people, and *Dune* is a very long science fiction novel; Don had received a copy of the Chilton hardcover edition, and every week or so we'd look at it and Don would say, "Sure is a long book," and I'd say, "Sure is," and we'd go back to reading a novel by Gardner F. Fox or Robert Moore Williams.) So he persuaded A.A. Wyn to pay the highest advance Ace had ever laid out for an sf book (though the price was dirt-cheap compared to more recent paperback-reprint sales)[4] and as a result of that and the book's length we were forced to put a high cover price on our edition.

Don and I discussed plans for the book and decided that it would make absolutely no sense to try to package it for Ace's usual teenage market, which would probably shy away from the high price; instead, we figured this was the ideal time to test out the effectiveness of an adult-oriented package. So we commissioned John Schoenherr to paint the cover (his covers and interiors for the *Analog* serials had so identified him with *Dune* that we never considered anyone else) and allowed him to do a non-sensationalistic, quiet and altogether beautiful painting. Rather than hard-sell blurbs, we advertised on the front cover that the book had won the Nebula and Hugo awards, as by then it had, and on the back cover printed critical praise for the book by people like Heinlein and Clarke.

The resulting package, everyone seemed to agree, was tasteful and appealing. And *Dune* became the fastest selling science fiction book Ace had ever had.

I immediately interpreted the book's sales as total vindication of my thoughts on quality sf packaging; Don, more experienced and conservative about these things, said it might be just a flash in the pan, that it wasn't every day that a book like *Dune* became available. He wasn't inclined to push for any changes in Ace's science fiction program.

But I was. The direct causes were many and varied: I'd seen Chip Delany's *The Einstein Intersection*, an excellent book that won the Nebula award, published with a blaring red monster dominating the cover, and our sales department reported that about five or six people had bought copies;[5] I'd found some of the books published by Ace so inept that I was embarrassed and defensive about working for the company; and I was about to turn thirty, a time of one's life (mine, anyway) when you feel you ought to be settling down seriously to whatever job you want to make your career.

So I wrote a one-page memo to A.A. Wynn in which I proposed a new series of science fiction books to be aimed at adult tastes, with quality packaging, higher cover prices and higher payments to authors. I pointed out the large number of new writers in science fiction whose work, I believed, was lifting the field to a new level, and whose books could be long-term as well as short-term money-makers for us. (I also suggested a regular reissue program of the really good sf books on our backlist, and with Don choosing from his own previously published books we've since gone back to press with a lot of fine stuff by Phil Dick, Delany, Simak, Anderson, van Vogt and others.) I said I saw signs that the sf readership was changing from a predominantly high school age median to one around college age, and that this new program would be ideally aimed at them. Then, with more wishes than hope, I handed the memo to Mr. Wyn.

He astounded me by reading it quickly, glancing up and saying, "Sounds like a good idea. Go ahead and do it."

This happened late in 1966. The next few months were spent in working out the details of editorial control, payment rates, discussions of packaging and the amount of sex

allowable in the books. At first I was to recommend the books and they'd be read by three other editors at the company none of whom was Don, since Mr. Wyn felt Don and I might get into arguments. This arrangement left something to be desired from my point of view, since the other editors involved didn't really know much about science fiction; before too long the setup was changed so that Don read my recommendations. This was better but still not perfect; Don's tastes and mine do differ, and I felt that if I was to do my best work in editing the series I'd have to have complete control. (You can't really be effective as an editor if you have lunch with an author to discuss book ideas and it's all subject to possible rejection by someone else later.) Before long this was changed too, and I was given full control over the series.

The question of sex in the books was a thorny one. I personally am annoyed as hell at censorship of any kind, but Ace had for a long time as one of its strong arguments with wholesalers the fact that there was never anything at all offensive sexually in our books, so they could order any of our titles without worrying about the PTA or Women's League of Decency lodging complaints. (Apparently this really happens, and it can get your whole line of books thrown out of various chains of drugstores or school newsstands, particularly in the Midwest.) I argued that if this new line was to be aimed at adults we couldn't make sex—or anything—a taboo, and suggested that we make it clear on our order forms that the Specials were a departure from our standard lily-white line and should be ordered accordingly. Eventually this approach was adopted, but not before I'd lost the chance to buy paperback rights to a very good novel, John Christopher's *The Little People*, because there was some small amount of sex in it.

Despite A.A. Wyn's background as an ex-cowboy turned pulp editor and then pulp publisher, he had respect and taste for more artful things; in curious contrast to his taste in Ace cover printings, he was an artist himself when away from the office, concentrating on meticulously rendered op art. He showed me reproductions of some of his work during the period we were discussing the format for the Specials. (That series title, by the way, was chosen by him, apparently because of the increasing use of "specials" as a designation for more serious programs on television.) It occurred to me that op art hadn't yet been used on paperbacks, and that it was well suited to science fiction, so I wanted to incorporate op art into the Specials covers.

Early in 1967 Harlan Ellison came to New York to wrap up some of the final details on *Dangerous Visions*, including the jacket and interior illustrations, which were to be by Leo and Diane Dillon. He stayed several days with Carol and me, and introduced us to the Dillons, who lived nearby. Looking over the beautiful paintings they had around their house, I fell instantly in love with their work and decided I wanted them to do all the covers for the Specials. They had done a certain amount of science fiction art in the past—interiors for *Galaxy* in the fifties, later covers for Regency Books while Harlan was editor there, as well as miscellaneous others like the Vonnegut books published by Gold Medal—but they'd never really moved into the science fiction field with any regularity, so their bold, imaginative style ought to give a distinctive new look to the series.

One night I brought up the matter with the Dillons, waxing enthusiastic over my plans for the Specials. The series would be a breakthrough in sf publishing, I said as I got caught up in my own rhetoric, and I *needed* someone as talented as they were to design the covers. I mentioned my idea for incorporating op art into the covers, and Leo and Diane apparently took that as some positive sign that I was serious about a new approach for this series. They said they were up to their ears in work as it was, that their rates were considerably higher than the price Ace normally paid, but that they'd do the series if they could have complete control over the package. I said if they'd make up samples of the format and style they wanted to use, I'd do my best to sell it at the office, and also to up our payment in their case.

I gave them *The Witches of Karres* and *The Revolving Boy*, two reprints from hardcover that were slated for the Specials, and they shortly turned in comps (comprehensive layouts including artwork) for these two covers. The layouts broke just about every rule in the book: the title wasn't on top, the artwork was in two separate boxes, one op art and one graphic art that was more symbolic than representational, and no effort

was made to work in spaceships or monsters. I found them altogether stunning, took them in to the office and showed them to people in the editorial and circulation departments, all of whom agreed about their quality but some of whom were dubious about how effective they'd be in selling paperback books. I said nonsense, the very differentness of the format would attract attention, which is half the newsstand battle right there.

A.A. Wyn had at this time become seriously ill with what we later learned was cancer, and he was running the office from home. The comps were sent to him there, and the next day I was told that they'd brightened his whole day, he'd liked them so much. Leo and Diane got the assignment, a free hand with the artwork, and a higher price than any of our other artists at the time.

When I called to tell this to Leo, at first he didn't believe me. "Carr, you're kidding me. We deliberately threw out everything we've ever been told about how to design 'safe' paperback covers and just did those things the way *we* wanted to. Are you trying to tell me something as far out as that is commercial?" I told him we thought so and wanted to try it; amazed, Leo said by god then, okay, they'd do the series.

Meanwhile, I'd already started buying novels. I had several things going for me then: I had a budget that started at $2,000 per book and went up from there, which was top money in the field at the time; I was aware of some of the lesser-known hardcover publishers of science fiction like Chilton, from whom we'd bought *Dune* and from whom I quickly snapped up Schmitz's *The Witches of Karres*; and, because I'd been reading every story published in the sf magazines in my research for the *World's Best SF* series Don and I had launched three years before, I had a good idea of which new writers looked like they might develop into major novelists in the field.[6]

So I started writing to people, asking them if they were working on or considering any science fiction novels and if so could I see them for this new series? R.A. Lafferty was one of these; he replied that he had one novel on submission with Berkley but that if that one came back he'd send it to me, or alternatively he'd send his next novel to me. As it turned out, Berkley did buy that book—it was *The Reefs of Earth*—and I got the next one, *Past Master*. It was the first original I'd bought, and I was tremendously excited by it.

I'd also heard, through personal contacts, that Alexei Panshin had done a good first novel that was being submitted with frustrating lack of success to hardcover publishers, and that Joanna Russ's first novel was going the same route. I called Alex's agent and asked to be the first paperback editor to see the book if the hardcover people didn't pick it up, and after a few more rejections along the lines of "Who needs another starship book?" and "The author's name sounds Russian, so we're afraid people would equate the book with the antiquated reprints of Russian science fiction that have been published in this country," the novel was sent to me. It was, of course, *Rite of Passage*, and I snapped it up. Meanwhile Joanna had shown me a carbon copy of *her* novel, *Picnic on Paradise*, and I was so impressed by it that I immediately made a high-money offer to her agent to ensure that I'd get first look in paperback if the hardcover editors passed it up. I had to wait almost a year, but eventually all the hardcover possibilities were exhausted and I got the book.

These two novels, along with *Past Master*, became nominees for the Nebula Award; and *Rite of Passage* won the balloting. Subsequently, both *Rite of Passage* and *Past Master* have also been nominated for Hugos. It's enough to make you wonder what hardcover editors get paid for, and in fact Don has occasionally kidded me that the success of the Specials has been due more to the obtuseness of editors at other houses than to any particular brilliance on my part. I have to admit there's a lot to that; people have congratulated me on my superior taste and courage in buying *Rite of Passage* and *Picnic on Paradise* after they'd been rejected so often, but really, how hard is it to tell that these books were good ones?[7]

Actually, if there's one thing I do as an editor that's the key to getting good books, it's probably more in the area of courtesy than talent. Writers for the Specials always get a chance to go over their manuscripts after I've edited them, so that they can repair any egregiously stupid errors on my part, and then I'll send them page proofs when the book is set in type, so they can check for typesetting errors that a proofreader less familiar with the book might easily miss. (I also have a separate copy of the proofs read in our office, of

course, and collate both proofreader's and author's corrections on the copy I send back to the typesetter.) This kind of treatment of authors should be standard throughout the field, I think, and it is generally accorded to writers by the hardcover houses, but I don't know of any other paperback editor who makes a regular practice of this. You'd be surprised how many writers will pass up sending their books to larger or more "prestigious" publishers in order to ensure they'll be able to get their work into print in the form they intended. It's their bylines, after all. (And it's usually the better writers who will make this kind of choice: the workaday hacks are usually happy enough to get a book out of their typewriters and forget about it.)

While making my disclaimers, I ought to mention the help I've had from Don Wollheim on the series. In the first place, it was he who bought Gertrude Friedberg's *The Revolving Boy*, not me; after the Specials line was decided upon, Don suggested that I might like to use it, and I accepted gratefully. Don had been trying for years to buy Tucker's *The Lincoln Hunters*, but A.A. Wyn had always considered it too cerebral in appeal to fit into our then existing line; the launching of the Specials removed this objection, and I was able to buy it. Not to mention the fact that it was Don, not me, who bought the first novels of Roger Zelazny and Ursula K. Le Guin, so in a sense *Isle of the Dead* and *The Left Hand of Darkness* were inherited from him.

And needless to say, the backing of A.A. Wyn himself was all-important. He died late in 1967, before the first book of the series, published by the new management of Ace Books, carried through with the plans.

But back to the beginnings of the series. Another idea I had for the Specials stemmed directly from our publication of *Dune:* the use of no blurbs on the back cover other than quotes from the reviews. The purpose was to give the idea immediately that these books were to be taken seriously, not just an hour or two's pastime to be forgotten by next morning, as most sf paperbacks are.

It's easy, of course, to quote from the reviews on books you're reprinting from hardcover, because the hardcover house will always supply you with the clippings, but what about paperback originals? What could I do for the back cover blurbs of books never before published and so never reviewed?

The thought hit me that hardcover publishers frequently send advance proofs of their books to established literary names so that they can quote their comments on their jacket copy; why shouldn't I do the same with the Specials? It would involve working several weeks ahead of the usual schedule, in order to give advance readers time to read and comment, and we'd have to pay extra money for those additional sets of proofs, but it seemed worth a try. *Past Master* was the first Special to be sent out this way, and it drew fine comments from Samuel R. Delany, Judith Merril, Harlan Ellison and Roger Zelazny. I was delighted; it seemed right then that the idea was sound, and indeed since then I've never had trouble getting comments on the originals in the series. Most of the biggest names in the field have lent their support to books they liked.

It's not because I'm paying them for it, either. In fact, the thought of that never occurred to me, nor apparently to any of those people asked for comments, until just a couple of months ago when a writer to whom I'd sent advance proofs called me to say that he liked the book and would be happy to say something nice about it for publication, but since I was in effect asking him to write advertising copy he wanted to be paid. I was, quite honestly, taken aback. He was right, of course; those quotes on the back *are* advertising. But . . .

But if I were to establish a policy of paying for such comments, wouldn't I be jeopardizing the credibility of those who wrote them? Wouldn't there be a temptation to reach for something laudatory to say even if a person didn't like the book, just in order to get a little extra money? (As things stand now, if an advance reader doesn't care for the book I ask him not to comment, rather than faking enthusiasm—and yes, this *has* happened in some cases, though thankfully not in many.) So I declined to pay for the man's comments, and instead got three very nice ones from others.

I try to send these advance proofs to writers whose own work bears some relationship to the book in question, by the way; that way their names should attract approximately the

kind of reader who'll most enjoy that book. Thus a fairly experimental book like *Past Master* went to more or less "new wave" people, while a more traditional novel like Bob Shaw's *The Two-Timers* went to Lester del Rey and Keith Laumer.

So far as I know, the whole experiment has been successful both in terms of sales and critical acceptance. Several of the Specials published just last year are already out of print and scheduled for more printings soon; *all* of them apparently sold well. And the reviews have been just beautiful, both in fanzines and prozines. Theodore Sturgeon devoted a whole review column in *National Review* to the Specials. Three out of the seven Nebula nominees for Best Novel this year were Specials, including *Rite of Passage*, the ultimate winner. Two of this year's five Hugo Nominees are Specials, too: *Rite of Passage* and *Past Master*. The Dillons are nominated for a Hugo in the Pro Artist category. And several of the Specials published this year are already being talked up for awards next year, particularly *The Left Hand of Darkness*.

One of the annoyances I've had from the Specials has come in the form of left-handed compliments. I can't count the number of times people have come up to me and said, "Hey, what's the matter that you published this book? It's *great*, and it oughta be in hardcover." Yes, it oughta be, but I don't make those decisions, the hardcover editors do. In any case, we seem to be getting some breaks in this area too, because we've been selling quite a few of the recent Specials to the Science Fiction Book Club to be published in hardcovers by them. (In fact, as I write this four of the last five Specials are scheduled for SF Book Club editions, with the fifth being considered as a possibility.)

Not that all of the Specials have been priceless pearls that received unanimous acclaim, of course. A few of them drew what we like to call "mixed reviews," which is a euphemism if I ever heard one.

Late last year Sid Coleman returned from a summer spent in Europe and we saw him a few weeks later. He came in the door and said, "Terry, as soon as I got back I bought all the Science Fiction Specials you've been publishing, and I liked them so much I decided you were the best editor since John W. Campbell in the early forties. But yesterday I read your latest one, and now I think you're the best editor since John W. Campbell last month." Oog.

A word about my tastes in buying books: I've been accused by sf reactionaries of being soft on the "new wave," a phrasing that makes it sound like I must be some kind of fellow traveler. Actually, rather than being a radical in science fiction I'm really just a sort of white liberal. I've yet to publish a book that I think is out-and-out "new wave," though several have had their experimental aspects—and I *have* rejected any number of "new wave" novels, from some of the biggest names in the field. I've also declined a lot of books by "old wave" writers, of course. Generally speaking I'd say my tastes in science fiction are as eclectic as I can make them: I try to see the good in all kinds of writing, whenever it's there, and thus broaden my ability to be entertained. I think a lot of today's sf readers, especially the younger ones, are doing the same.

Oh, one thing I haven't got around to explaining is the change in cover format for the Specials beginning with Zelazny's *Isle of the Dead* this past January. The reason for the change is very simple: the previous layout was striking and original, but unfortunately it required that beautiful paintings by the Dillons be reduced to a size about two inches square. It's just impossible to come even close to capturing the subtleties of color and detail in their work when you reduce the size that much, and my soul would ache every month when I'd see the weak reflections of their paintings that would come out on the books. So, after discussing it with them, I arranged for the new format. While I was at it I took off the front cover blurb, so that now each book just tells you the title and the author and, in smaller type, the fact that it's an Ace Science Fiction Special. This is a bit unorthodox too, and it remains to be seen if the new format will be as effective as the old at selling books.

If the Specials do as well in their second year as they did in their first, I'll be delighted. And I think they may.

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

As it turned out, 1969 was a very mixed year for the Specials in terms of sales. Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness* became a best-seller for Ace, and several other Specials that year sold well, especially Zelazny's *Isle of the Dead* and Bob Shaw's *The Palace of*

Eternity, all three of which had magnificent Dillon covers. (The original painting for *The Left Hand of Darkness* hangs on my wall today, a gift from Ace Books.) At the end of the year I received a Christmas bonus of $2,200. Once again, several of the Specials were nominated for Hugo and Nebula Awards, *The Left Hand of Darkness* winning both awards. John Sladek's *Mechasm* won an award as best humorous science fiction of the year.

But during this year the Dillons developed a dislike for Ace's art director, with the result that they put less and less energy (and color) into their covers for the Specials; some excellent novels, especially John Brunner's *The Jagged Orbit*, Sladek's *Mechasm* and Lafferty's *Fourth Mansions*, suffered in sales because of this. In addition an economic recession was beginning to be felt in the publishing industry, and Ace's new management—which had bought the company after the death of A.A. Wyn—had so little experience in publishing that they made several very costly mistakes in the non-science fiction books they bought. I remember having lunch a number of times that year with Don Wollheim and commiserating with him over memos received from the management that they had bought, without consulting the editorial department, one undistinguished book after another for prices of $50,000 and higher. Every one of these books (*Melinda* by Gaia Servadio, *The Bitter Woods* by John S.D. Eisenhower and others I can't even remember) proved to be a disaster in terms of sales.

Nevertheless, at a company meeting at the end of the year, Ace's circulation manager introduced me to someone by saying, "This is Terry Carr, one of our editors. His books sell so well I'm not allowed to give him circulation figures, or he'd ask for too big a raise." And I did get that $2,200 bonus that year. (It wasn't all for the Specials: In addition to them, I was editing the *Man from U.N.C.L.E.* series of novelizations, as well as the various science fiction series of the time such as Jack Vance's *Planet of Adventure* novels and Fritz Leiber's Fafhrd-Grey Mouser books.)

1970 saw Ace Books fall seriously into the red, as the economic recession and (in my opinion) inexperienced management took their toll. My budget for the Specials was curtailed, with the result that I wasn't able to buy all the books I wanted for the series; nevertheless that year saw the appearance of Joanna Russ's *And Chaos Died*, Wilson Tucker's *The Year of the Quiet Sun* and Ursula Le Guin's *A Wizard of Earthsea*. The Russ and Tucker novels were awards nominees, and Ron Goulart's *After Things Fell Apart* won that year's award as best humorous sf.

Very few of Ace's science fiction books of any kind sold well that year, though (in fact, the only consistent money-makers Ace published that year were its "Gothic" novels), and late in the year we again changed the cover format for the Specials, keeping the Dillons as artists but using flashier type styles and more conventional newsstand-type blurbs. Needless to say, this abandonment of the Dillons' own cover format did nothing to make them happier with Ace's art director, and the paintings they turned in (frequently late, after the deadline) reflected this. I don't believe the Dillons ever compromised their artistic integrity in their covers for Ace, no matter how disenchanted they became, but they simply ceased to pay any attention to commercial effectiveness in their paintings. Their cover painting for Le Guin's *A Wizard of Earthsea* is a good example: a subtle, graceful work of art, it was painted in dull shades of brown and green.

(I might enter a note here to explain that the Dillons' troubles with the art director were, in my opinion, almost wholly a personality conflict—the art director was an earnest, hard-working man who admired the Dillons' work greatly but who was unfortunately in the position of having to take the flak when they chose to paint covers in browns or purples.)

In 1971, Ace Books found itself tottering on the edge of bankruptcy; we had had a disastrous year at the newsstands. Most publishers that year were feeling the crunch of the recession, but Ace was among the hardest hit. At one point the company was several months behind in paying its typesetter, and he was threatening to stop doing work for us at all. Ace's management was panicking, and (as always happens in such situations, in any kind of business) office politics began to take up more of the working day than actual business did. I hate office politics, and I chose not to play that game; every day when I went in to the office I shut my door and let other people argue while I tried to get on with the business of buying and publishing books despite the fact that payments to authors were coming through

months late and whenever I asked just when a given check would be ready I was given a false answer. It's extremely discomfiting to tell someone like Fritz Leiber that his check would be sent out next week, and then not have the check come through for months afterwards. I understood the problems of the company, but it seemed to me it would be better to tell authors, "We won't be able to pay you till March, sorry, can't help it" than to say a check would reach them in a week or two when that was a lie. (Nor was I the only editor laboring under this problem at Ace; I've been told Don Wollheim quit the company later that year largely because of this problem, and that his replacement, Fred Pohl, quit after a few months for the same reason.)

The effect on the SF Specials was that early in 1971 it was decided to stop using the Dillons as the cover artists for the series (they seemed relieved to be let off the hook, when I told them), and instead we chose a new artist, Davis Meltzer. Meltzer was a flashier artist than the Dillons, adept at painting spaceships and alien monsters in bright colors, and as such artists go he was very good. (I would have preferred to hire Kelly Freas for the series, if that was the direction we were going to take, but Kelly's rates were beyond Ace's means by then.)

In addition to the change in cover artists, my budget for the SF Specials was cut further, so that the availability of top-quality novels became extremely scarce. I resorted, early in 1971, to buying first novels from new writers who weren't necessarily ready to produce material of the quality I'd tried to establish for the series. Gordon Eklund's first novel, *The Eclipse of Dawn*, struck me as a good book but a very uneven one; Suzette Haden Elgin's *Furthest* had a number of good points but lacked the depth and consistency I'd have preferred; Gerry Conway's *The Midnight Dancers* was bought on the basis of an excellent outline, but his execution of plot and theme didn't live up to my hopes. Still, I did publish John Brunner's *The Traveler in Black*, an interconnected series of novelettes that I liked well individually if not in combination, and Mike Moorcock's *The Warlord of the Air*, a rousing pastiche of Victorian science fiction that worked on two or three levels. And Bruce McAllister's first novel, *Humanity Prime*, the very last of the books published as SF Specials, struck me as a rich, thoughtful evocation of a thoroughly alien world.

All this was too little to stem the tide; one day I was called into the president's office and told the company was cutting back on personnel and I was to be one of the people who'd have to go.

My reaction surprised even me: I told the man I thought the decision was stupid, I detailed the mistakes I'd seen the company commit in the past couple of years, I reiterated my belief that the SF Specials were an important series full of books that would prove valuable commercial properties over the years, and I suggested that Ace employ me as an editorial consultant to continue the series while working at home. The president (rather taken aback, I thought) said he'd get back to me later in the day; and when he did, he said the management had agreed to my proposal to produce the Specials from home. I asked for a contract to formalize the arrangement, but he said, "You'll have to trust us." Indeed I had no choice, despite my expectations, so I agreed. And for three months I worked from my apartment in Brooklyn Heights, until the inevitable grind of the economy and office politics came to its conclusion: I was told by a secretary that our arrangement had been terminated.

People who have never experienced the workings of office politics in a large corporation (as Ace then was, despite its lack of capital) will be unable to imagine just how the combination of personality conflicts, professional envy, greed and panic can produce business decisions with little or no regard for the facts of a situation. As an illustration, I'll report the following: In early 1969, shortly after the new management had taken control of Ace Books, a meeting was held comprising all the executives of Ace at the time: editors, vice presidents, circulation managers, chief accountants, etc. We were given a speech that went about like this (quasi-quote): "Usually, when a new management takes over a company, they start by firing all the top-ranking personnel and replacing them with their own associates. We want you to know that this won't happen here. We know that Ace Books is in the best of hands right now, and we promise you that there will be no such personnel changes whatsoever as a result of the change in management." More than two dozen people were in the room at the time; yet two years later, only one of those people was still

employed by Ace Books.

As it happened, the termination of my association with Ace wasn't a terrific blow to me. For two years I'd been considering resignation from the company—not, originally, because of dissatisfaction with the management, but for reasons of health. I had a severe case of chronic bronchitis, and my doctor said the only thing I could do about it was move out of New York City: "Studies of the air pollution here have shown that just breathing the air is the quivalent of smoking two packs a day."

So my request to be allowed to edit the Science Fiction Specials from home had been the opening wedge in a plan to move back to California, where I'd lived most of my life, and when my connection with Ace was completely severed Carol and I terminated our lease on our Brooklyn Heights apartment and shipped our belongings to the Bay Area, where we subsequently bought a house and have settled in most contentedly on a wooded hillside surrounded by pines, eucalyptus and plum trees. My "chronic bronchitis" disappeared about the time I left the city limits of New York City, and has not recurred since. These days I make my living writing science fiction and editing science fiction anthologies for Random House, Harper & Row, Ballantine, Simon & Schuster and other publishers, on a free-lance basis.

With regard to the Science Fiction Specials, I should mention what I think of as the "Shadow Specials": those books which I had bought for the series but which were published after I left the company. There were eight of these books, published in 1971 and 1972; they were: *The Falling Astronauts* by Barry Malzberg, *The Barons of Behavior* by Tom Purdom, *You're All Alone* by Fritz Leiber, *The Worlds of Theodore Sturgeon, A Trace of Dreams* by Gordon Eklund, Bob Shaw's "slow glass" novel *Other Days, Other Eyes*, D.G. Compton's *The Missionaries* and Brian Aldiss's *Barefoot in the Head.* This last novel, published late in 1972, had a cover painting by the Dillons: I had arranged to buy reprint rights to the Doubleday edition of the book but when Doubleday belatedly notified us that they didn't control the Canadian rights (the book had originally been published in England) Ace was reluctant to assume the U.S. paperback rights. The book had already been scheduled as a Special and the Dillons had painted the cover (one of their best) but we pulled the book out of the schedule. After I'd left Ace, they decided to go ahead and publish it even if they couldn't sell copies in Canada, which was why the Dillons appeared one last time on a "Science Fiction Special."

Looking back on the experience of editing this series, I can say that it was an artistically exciting period, that I'm proud of the record of books published and have great admiration for the people who wrote those books: Ursula K. Le Guin, R.A. Lafferty, Joanna Russ, Alexei Panshin, John Brunner, Bob Shaw, Roger Zelazny and many other first-rate science fiction writers. And I think my prediction that they would prove to be long-term money-makers for Ace Books has proven out: Since they were originally issued, such novels as *The Left Hand of Darkness, Rite of Passage, The Jagged Orbit, The Warlord of the Air, Why Call Them Back from Heaven?, The Witches of Karres* and a number of others have been reissued time and again by Ace. I've been told that a number of other novels from the SF Specials series would be reissued by Ace, too, except that their authors or their agents have withdrawn the rights.

A lot of people ask me what was my own personal favorite book from the series, but I'm honestly unable to give a definite answer. I can't choose between *The Left Hand of Darkness* and *And Chaos Died.* Besides, there was *Past Master, Rite of Passage*, Compton's *Synthajoy*, Shaw's *The Two-Timers*, Zelazny's *Isle of the Dead*, etc. etc.

People have also asked me if I published any Specials that I later regretted, and the answer is yes, but only two. I won't name them.

To be Continued Next Issue

NOTES

1. "The transition from fan to professional editor is one which is undoubtedly the secret ambition of most fans and particularly of those who have edited fan magazines and who have written science-fiction stories. . . . Which is as it should be." — Donald A. Wollheim, in *Spaceways*, April 1941

2. I remembered that when I was at the Scott Meredith agency, Jack Vance had been writing a sequel to *The Dying Earth*, so I asked to see it for Ace and we published it as *The Eyes of the Overworld.* I asked Avram Davidson for a novel and he responded with *Rogue Dragon*, which was nominated for the Nebula

Award as best novel of the year. I recommended John Myers Myers's *Silverlock* for reprint.

3. James White's *The Escape Orbit*, a Nebula nominee, was originally titled *Open Prison*. Avram Davidson's *Clash of Star Kings*, another Nebula nominee, was originally called *Tlaloc. Clans of the Alphane Moon* was Phil Dick's own title, chosen because he knew he was writing the book for Ace. . . .My favorite story about Ace's title-changes has to do with another Phil Dick book which he called *Cantata 140*. It concerned, among other things, a whorehouse in orbit around Earth. When I saw the memo that said the title had been changed to *The Crack in Space*, I rushed into Don's office and explained the double-entendre to him (he'd intended the title to refer to a leakage between dimensions in the novel). Don said, "Oh well. No one will notice."

4. The price was $3,000. More recently, novels by Robert A. Heinlein and Arthur C. Clarke have been sold to paperback for between $50,000 and $100,000. And they're not alone.

5. I didn't like the title-change on this book, either: the original title had been *A Fabulous, Formless Darkness*. (Chip Delany swore after this book he'd never write for Ace again—and he didn't.)

6. In the first several years of this series I acted as first-reader for Don: I read everything published in the sf field and recommended what I thought was good, and Don chose the contents of the book from my recommendations. Later we rearranged things so that Don read some of the sf magazines and I read the others, and we both had to agree on whatever went into the book. The funny thing I remember about this period is that Don would never read *Analog*—one year he even decided to cover *New Worlds* rather than *Analog*.

7. I don't remember the exact numbers, but *Rite of Passage* and *Picnic on Paradise* were rejected by over two dozen publishers.

*Conducted March-July 1974 © by Paul Walker

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S F and the Cinema

FOOD OF THE GODS An American International Picture. Produced and directed by Bert I. Gordon. Screenplay by Gordon, based upon a portion of the novel by H.G. Wells. Starring Marjoe Gortner, Pamela Franklin, Ralph Meeker, Jon Cypher, John McLiam, Belinda Balaski, Tom Stovall, Ida Lupino. 96 minutes. Rating: PG

Bert I Gordon has written and directed a film very modern in content and mood, based partly on H.G. Wells' classic terror tale. He has done so realistically, with frightening special effects and with an outstanding class of top performers. Gordon has set the story in the present day (the film was shot in Vancouver, British Columbia) and concerns the terrifying events caused when a farmer feeds his normally harmless animals a mysterious substance he finds seeping from the ground. Almost overnight it causes them to grow abnormally large and vicious.

Since the essence of the film is the death struggle between man and fearsome over-sized animals and insects, the special visual effects are of great importance. But it is the live actors who save the film (the script is disappointing) and make it worth viewing.

Ida Lupino, who plays the pivotal character of Mrs. Skinner, is one of the great names in the history of film acting (she rivaled Bette Davis in the 1940s as the leading Warner Brothers actress) and in this film gives one of her best performances. Marjoe Gortner, who began charming audiences as an evangelist at the age of six, has only recently been applying that same charisma to motion picture audiences but that special appeal has already proven very great. In this film Gortner stars as Morgan, the leader of the battle against the giant creatures, and does a first rate job. Ralph Meeder as a greedy businessman and Pamela Franklin (looking somewhat like Gayna Shireen) as a lovely lady biologist also do well.

The film's opening in Hollywood was attended by Forrest Ackerman, Jay Robinson, A.E. Van Vogt and other leading lights in the science fiction field. It should do well nationally.

—Dr. Donald A. Reed and Grant Jones

The International Scene

by Mark Purcell

THE INVINCIBLE, by Stanislaw Lem. Tr. by Wendayne Ackerman. Ace 37170, 1975. 223 pp. $1.25 (hardcover: Seabury, 1973. $6.95)

This paper reprint is of course an essential hard-sf buy for anybody with no copy of Seabury's original hardbound. I did a review for LUNA Monthly 46 (March 1973) of a French edition of *Invincible*, which served as a review of the hardbound Seabury. (Wendayne Ackerman's translation is based on a 1967 German edition.) My original review was probably too argumentatively concerned with Lem's main theme; for an early review, I should have probably displayed a little more naive enthusiasm. *The Invincible* is a masterpiece of contemporary hard sf.

For Lem's U.S. reader, the possible complication is that the author is trying to succeed in a genre—technological problem-solving sf—yet to transcend it, as the final chapter makes clear. Rereading *Invincible* for this second review, I'm more conscious of this possible difficulty for a U.S. reader.

About the story: "The Invincible" of the title, an exploratory ship, lands on some future-time outwards-bound planet, Regis III. It's in pickup search of a previous exploratory ship, Condor. What both Condor and Invincible have run into, is a fascinating problem in mechanized evolution. For *Invincible* is the third (1964 in Polish) in Lem's evolutionary trilogy of novels, after the popular *Solaris* (1961) and *Eden* (1959, no English edition)—and theoretically it is perhaps the most ambitious. What Lem has asked himself is: what would happen to advanced computer-robot equipment if its human managers disappeared?—in this story, because a nova storm once radiated across the planet. Lem gives his fictional derelict equipment an unimaginable sum of years and of deserted planetary space in which to carry out its mechanical survival-of-the-fittest struggle. It takes 5 chapters and 110 pages simply to lay down the bare bones of the biological-ecological problem facing Invincible's (at first) baffled explorers; and the book has several separate brilliant theoretical explanatory chapters intercalated from 6 to 10.

I see no reader pleasure-problem for anyone who enjoyed *Astounding* in the 1940's. That is, unless such a reader either (a) thinks John Campbell laid down the outer bounds of theoretical hard sf; or (b) presumes that Lem is attempting a simpler kind of fiction than he actually is. There are passages or chapters in *Invincible* that are meant to be building blocks leading up to the hero Rohan's mystical final-chapter revelation. But some readers may misunderstand, and consider Lem has merely mistimed his narrative climaxes.

For instance, in this final chapter Rohan is on the still radioactive, still smoking battleground of an epic battle fought three chapters earlier, between Cyclops—the ship's computerized armored "unstoppable" robot vehicle—and the evolved mechanized cloud-"species" that has successfully survived the loss of their old human "masters" (though not in their "ancestral" mechanical form). Furthermore, Rohan is present, alive and more or less well; because the ship-scientists—one chapter earlier—have just theorized how one deals with an enemy planet evolved to destroy or de-brain any organism outside the ship's force-field. (I'm trying to avoid spelling out some of Lem's brilliant theoretical speculations, while still dealing with his novel's theme.)

Well, in *Invincible*, the epic Chapter 8 battle only serves to summarize by dramatization what happened to the previous (Condor) crew and ship; and, as well, the millenia-long evolutionary struggle on this planet. And Chapter 10's theoretical revelation is not a purist-detective story breakthrough that will lead Rohan to "capture" the enemy planet: quite the contrary. Rohan can now accept the "deadly" black mechanical cloud lapping harmlessly over him—not as some hippie prof might smell a plant before his class; but as Whitman accepted Lincoln's death up in Manhattan or the Civil War casualties in a Washington hospital. "Nature" becomes Death and (man's) built-in limitations, including the limitations on our intellectual achievement and social success.

In other words, *Invincible* puts the case against "progress" in terms of a very sophisticated technological-cosmological understanding. And Lem's book can logically be

used to make intellectually respectable some very unrespectable intellectuals. Against these types, and on behalf of the epic hero of fact and fiction—call him Columbus, Einstein or Errol Flynn—I felt committed to argue with *Invincible* on first reading. As I say above, probably my review should have been more of a straight blurb.

THE STAR DIARIES, by Stanislaw Lem. Tr. from Polish by Michael Kandel. Seabury (A Continuum Book), 1976. 275 pp. $9.95

To celebrate the bicentennial, sf people may justly use this first English-language appearance of *Star Diaries* in a good translation. Of equivalent importance for us would be the first English edition of, say, *Brave New World* or *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea.* Like these, Lem's *Diaries*—the comic, fantastic space-time adventures of Ijon Tichy—may be neither one of the absolutely top sf books, nor even its own author's best work. But outside our own language belt, *Diaries* is as durably popular a classic: with Tichy stories selectively available in French by 1966, in German by 1961. Prof. Kandel has used the 1971 (4th) Polish edition for his translation; but I will otherwise save bibliographical information for my appendix below.

The Tichy stories of which this volume collects 12, are related in tone and stylistic venturousness to the robot-constructor tales of *Cyberiada* (1965, ff.). The relative prominence of this type of comic treatment in Lem's more recent work suggests that he is one of those imaginative creators who has come to prefer blowing riffs on his themes, to more elaborate or straight-faced composition. The Lem fan is likely to associate Voyage 28 with *Futurological Congress*; Voyage 20 with the great evolution-trilogy of 1959-61-64, and such a fan might even make a game of finding a novel-analogue for each of the 12 stories. (The reason the stories aren't numbered "1-12" is explained on pp. 132-3.)

The interest and the gamesmanship of the stories lies (for us and probably for Lem) in how many layers of material can be compressed into one "voyage." The lengthiest stories (Voyages 11, 21) therefore seem to me the most interesting; though I don't mean to thereby suggest that the *Diaries*' stories are only frustrated novels.

To use Voyage 11 as an example, it could be misleadingly described, in terms of its organizing theme, as one more sf satire on human conformity vs. the comparative moral purity of robots and computers. In fact, the story is also—not "also"!—a serious satire on cold-war espionage and on the sadistic strain in classic European pornography; there is perhaps a conscious borrowing from the climax of *Wizard of Oz* (from the movie?), and yet what makes Voyage 11 work as a story is the stylistic decision to put the dialogue of its robot-planet inhabitants into the 1471 English of Malory's Arthurian "knyches." (The blurb calls it "Chaucer's" English, not Malory's: surely incorrect, even if the translator himself did the blurb.)

Even more complex a mix of intellectual materials is Voyage 21; perhaps in this case too fascinating to the author himself, since he seems to have let the imaginative "story" element thin out. An account of how the True Catholic Faith is preserved c700 years from now—by robot monks and their Rev. Father computers—it may take off from "Voyage of St. Aquin" and *Canticle for Leibowitz.* If so, it goes well beyond Boucher or Miller. Voyage 21 employs the most modish postwar trends in international theology to become a brilliant projection of intellectual adaptation to a future of cloning, reverse-breeding, and as I say robot monasteries. This story has a further biographical interest for the Western reader. Lem's most knowledgeable critics (Rottensteiner, Suvin) have so far presented him to us in secular-humanist peergroup-liberal terms. Voyage 21 (a 1971 addition to the *Diaries*' canon) is, with *Investigation*, the Lem fiction perhaps most explicit about his relation to Polish Catholicism.

APPENDIX: The edition under review slightly abbreviates the 1971 (4th) edition of *Star Diaries.* Actually, if my reader refers now to Darko Suvin's essential checklist back of the copy of *Solaris* that my reader surely owns, some of the Tichy stories originally premiered in the Lem collections that Suvin numbers: 2-4-11; quite aside from *Diaries*' four separate editions. (*Diaries* is "4" in Suvin.) This 1976 edition omits Voyages 18-24-26 and cuts 22 slightly. Voyage 24 is available in English in Suvin's *Other Worlds, Other Seas* (Random House, 1970; paperback Berkley, 1972).

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Editorial

The following changes are being made in the name, publication schedule, and size of LUNA Monthly and LUNA' (prime):

★ These two titles are being combined into one magazine, which will be named LUNA. Numbering of issues will continue the sequence which has been used on LUNA Monthly.

★ The frequency of publication will be quarterly and the size of the magazine will be increased to 48 pages for all future issues. This will produce a net decrease of 50% in the number of pages published per year.

There are dozens of reasons for making these changes, but what it all boils down to is the production of a magazine more suited to our present life style. The main reasons are economics and time—the fact that this magazine does not pay its own way, and we can no longer afford to put hundreds of dollars per year into the magazine as we have in past years; and that the publication of a monthly magazine takes a tremendous amount of time. We are no longer willing to devote all of our time to this, month after month, while our other interests are neglected.

All present subscriptions will be adjusted effective with the next issue to reflect the 50% decrease in the number of pages to be published per year. Subscription rates have been revised to reflect these changes in the publication.

The material we will be publishing in LUNA will remain essentially similar to that we have been using in LUNA Monthly, with the exception of the Forecasts and Calendar, which will be dropped due to the less frequent publication schedule.

Paul Walker: In A Critical Condition

MILLENNIUM, by Ben Bova. Random House, 1976. 277 pp. $7.95

Is there a new trend in sf—novels written for, rather than in imitation of, the mainstream? *The Dispossessed*, *The Mote in God's Eye*, and now Ben Bova's *Millennium* among others, all handsomely packaged, high priced, and published by major firms not as "science fiction" but as "novels." If so, I approve. This is progress not only for the genre but for the writers themselves. So far these books have combined conventional, even overly familiar, sf themes with equally conventional mainstream treatments, but the results have been thoroughly readable, and *Millennium* is no exception.

It is one of the most pleasant tales of terror I have ever read. In fact, the word "pleasant" is sufficient to describe every good thing about the book. Like *Earthlight*, *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress*, and others, it is the story of a revolt on the Moon led by the idealistic commander of the United States' base in the year 1999. America and Russia are on the brink of nuclear war. The commander, Kinsman, is put on alert. Years before, when relations between the great powers were good the American and Russian moonbases were built side by side, intended to cooperate in the business of research and survival. The two sides came to feel like a single community which they called Selene. Now, as the clouds of war close over them, they are asked to become mortal enemies. Kinsman refuses. With the aid of his Russian counterpart, he plots to declare independence of the Earth and to stop the impending war. If the story sounds familiar, it is, and you ought to be able to figure out how it ends.

Still, it is pleasant. The good guys will win your allegiance; the hawks will make you grit your teeth; the derring-do will hold your attention; the ingenious schemes of the lunarians will make you sigh with admiration; the finale will make you cheer for the spirit of man and IBM. I read every word of it without once being bored: what better recommendation can a reader give you?

Its faults? I would like to have known lots more about the moonbases. Bova's scientists, like his world leaders, talk like college freshmen; and his extrapolations on the current political scene are about as naive as his views of the UN, and the prospect of world government. Very unconvincing.

Still, for a good read, *Millennium* will do just fine.

BID TIME RETURN, by Richard Matheson. Ballantine 24810, 1975. 278 pp. $1.75

Richard Matheson has always been one of my favorite writers. I have loved his books, his short stories, his movies. They have flaws. He is a rapid writer, careless, crude, commercial, only a notch above pulp quality, but he can tell a story in a most effective, human way. His characters are always alienated men and women caught in a nightmare; and I always believe in them and shiver and shudder on cue. The same almost applies to Richard Collier and his plight.

Richard is the protagonist of Matheson's *Bid Time Return*. He is a dying man trying to escape overly protective relations. A television writer, a romantic who is passionately fond of Mahler, yet a man who has never fallen in love. He finds an old hotel where he also finds an escape into the past, a love affair with a long dead actress who once performed at the hotel. He learns everything he can about her including that something happened to her at the hotel in 1896 that changed her life ever after. He becomes convinced that it was himself who happened to her; somehow he travelled back in time and they fell in love. The idea becomes an obsession so real to him that he actually manages it. He goes back to 1896, meets his actress, they fall in love, and I should not tell you any more.

For the first fifty pages or so I had hopes Matheson could bring it off. I liked Richard Collier, I felt for him; I was intrigued by his obsession; I even got a goosebump or two as the obsession became reality; but once back in 1896, I began to skim. Too many words, too little action, no real feeling for atmosphere. I began to skim faster and faster until I realized I was not really reading the book at all. I glanced ahead to see how it all came out and tossed it aside. Pity.

But I was not surprised. It takes a special kind of talent to bring something like this off. Robert Nathan had it in "Portrait of Jennie." But Matheson lacks the touch of the poet, the delicacy of style necessary to create a fairy tale past. He wrote *Bid Time Return* as a tv script first and it shows. The cliches stick out.

My admiration for Matheson remains, however. I go on looking forward to his next novel and his next. That's a fan for you.

THE SHORES OF KANSAS, by Robert Chilson. Popular Library 00358, 1976. 220 pp. $1.25

As I said a few columns ago, Robert Chilson is a friend of mine. I have never met him, but he tells me he is short, dark-haired, very thin, and wears glasses. He speaks with a light Missouri-Southern accent, is shy but amiable, has a good sense of humor, and is not one to confide his troubles until they are over. He lives with his cousin and her small son in an unfinished house in the woods which is periodically invaded by dozens of relatives who move in for weeks at a time. Chilson built much of the house itself and keeps it in repair. He is carpenter, electrician, plumber, and general all-around handyman for himself, and in the past five years he has almost single-handedly built a bridge and a road. And in his spare time he has acquired a respectable knowledge of science and science fiction, besides becoming a very promising writer.

The Shores of Kansas is his third published novel, and he has been rather upset about it because the editor at Popular Library made quite a few changes (at least two a page) without consulting him. I expected to find something dreadful, but did not. I have no quarrel with the prose. This is a very different kind of book than Chilson has written before. It is an honest-to-God novel rather than an extended short story; a character study of a near-future hero who reminds me very much of Lindbergh in that he is a private, fiercely independent man who is thrust painfully into the spotlight as a national hero.

Grant Ryals is a time traveler, but just how he travels is a mystery even to him. Call it ESP. There are only six people in the whole world who can do what he does, but none who can go back to prehistoric times. Ryals appreciates his gift. He has become an expert paleontologist specializing in the Mesozoic and with the funds made from a movie he photographed in his travels he has set up an institute to disseminate the information he, and others, have gathered.

The original, and primary, purpose of the institute is scientific research, but institutes cost money to run—more and more money the larger they grow—and they require increasingly numerous and powerful administrative personnel like Dr. Adrian who is turning Ryals's institute into something resembling a Hollywood studio. But what can Ryals do? Instead of a quiet life of study, he is forced to attend parties, grant endless interviews, accept awards and be hounded everywhere he goes as a celebrity. No wonder he looks forward to his next escape to the prehistoric.

There is not much more to it than that. In the end, Ryals does learn something about himself and acquires a travelling companion.

The problem with the novel is that Grant Ryals is not a very interesting character. He is too healthy, too normal, too competent to deserve our sympathy; and his cause to keep the institute free of commercialism is not really a desperate one. Frankly, the book is dull. But it is not without virtues.

The scenes of Ryals' Missouri neighborhood are vivid and alive. The character of his father, Jacob, is memorable; a witty, cantankerously independent old man with a very sane view of life. And his dog, Ripper, is a terror. Chilson's depiction of Ryal's Mesozoic travels is absolutely convincing, cinematic, involving no super-heroics. Ryal's heroism is believable, although he is just a bit too perfect. Likewise, his nightmare experiences as a celebrity are thoroughly credible and harrowing, and Chilson's perception of the conflict between science and commerce in an institution is intelligent and accurate.

Would I recommend *The Shores of Kansas*? Well, as I said, Chilson is a friend of mine, and therefore I cannot review his book objectively. You'll have to make up your own mind.

THE PLANTS, by Kenneth McKenney. Putnam, 1976. 246 pp. $7.95

The Plants is Kenneth McKenney's first novel to be published in the United States, and it is just awful. But for a curious reason. Most bad books are bad because they are badly written or conceived. *The Plants* is neither. McKenney's fictive abilities are adequate. His background is not bad, a small English village and its rural environs. His characters are acceptable, including the not-too-quaint pub-types, the little old lady who loves her garden, and the science reporter hero. Nor is the plot, basically, uninteresting. A strange summer has fallen on England; the plants are growing out of all proportion; it is as if they had suddenly acquired a mind of their own and were trying to communicate with the human race. A man dies under mysterious circumstances; the village is cut off by the plants; all humanity is threatened, etc. etc. etc. I've read worse. It is like an old movie, but there is nothing wrong with old movies.

What makes *The Plants* intolerable is that it is naive to the point of being embarrassing. McKenney was a geologist so one might assume he knew how scientists talk, but you would never believe it from his novel. Take this, for instance, from page 28 where his scientist says,

> Michael Martin leaned forward and began to speak urgently. "It's happening to the plants. They're just about ready to rebel."
>
> "Rebel?"
>
> "Yes. For years we've been manipulating them, creating new species, killing off others. We began with cross-pollination and now we're transplanting genes. Scientists are even talking about changing, recoloring and disciplining nature. Have you ever heard of anything more arrogant. *Disciplining nature*? It's insane."
>
> Philip nodded. "Mankind's a bit like that," he said, watching the intensity in Martin's face. "The things that've been done to guinea pigs and fruit flies . . ."

And pretty soon everybody is talking like that.

I skimmed ahead to see how it all came out. It's too embarrassing to recount. Books as bad as this make me wonder what goes on in editors' heads.

THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES READER, edited by Peter Haining. Doubleday, 1975. $7.95

Of the eighteen stories in Peter Haining's *The Ancient Mysteries Reader*, I liked six of them very much, which may not seem a very good average, but when I say "very much" I mean *very*. Two of them I had read years ago, and enjoyed far more in re-reading: Lovecraft's "The Call of Cthulhu," which is really one of his best stories, and A. Merritt's "The Moon Pool." The latter is here in the original short story version. The others were Doyle's "The Terror of Blue John Gap," Poe's "Ms. Found in a Bottle," B. Traven's "A New God Was Born," Geoffrey Household's "The Lost Continent," and Gerald Kersh's "Men Without Bones." The remainder of the stories ranged from interesting, such as the excerpt from Bulwer-Lytton's "The Coming Race," to fair, such as Theodore Sturgeon's "The Cave of History."

As I have said before, my idea of a good anthology is one in which the editor tries to share his own personal discoveries and enthusiasms with the reader, and Peter Haining does that. The "ancient mysteries" of the title refers to such quasi-occult phenomena as subterranean worlds, lost races, Mu and Atlantis, Stonehenge, the Abominable Snowman, and mythological survivors in our age. Haining has written lengthy prefaces to the stories, which are interesting and give substance to the book. He has tried to choose stories that not only genuinely illustrate the mysteries, but ones which are not too familiar. Even where I did not care for the story, I never had reason to question his taste. Peter Haining is a good editor, and *The Ancient Mysteries Reader* is a good anthology.

SF in Academe

SCIENCE FICTION: AN INTRODUCTION, by L. David Allen. Cliffs Notes, 1973. 187 pp. $1.95

SCIENCE FICTION READER'S GUIDE, by L. David Allen. Centennial Press, 1974. 299 pp. $1.50

THE BALLANTINE TEACHER'S GUIDE TO SCIENCE FICTION: A PRACTICAL CREATIVE APPROACH TO SCIENCE FICTION IN THE CLASSROOM, by L. David Allen. Ballantine, 1975. 346 pp. $1.95

HERBERT'S DUNE AND OTHER WORKS: NOTES, by L. David Allen. Cliffs Notes, 1975. 101 pp. $1.50

STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND AND OTHER WORKS: NOTES, by Baird Searles. Cliffs Notes, 1975. 59 pp. $1.25

BRAVE NEW WORLD & BRAVE NEW WORLD REVISITED: NOTES, by Warren Paul. Cliffs Notes, 1965. 66 pp. $1.25

1984: NOTES, by Frank H. Thompson, Jr. Cliffs Notes, 1967. 51 pp. $1.25

MORE'S UTOPIA & UTOPIAN LITERATURE: NOTES, by Harold M. Priest. Cliffs Notes, 1975. 64 pp. $1.25

VONNEGUT'S MAJOR WORKS: NOTES, by Thomas R. Holland. Cliffs Notes, 1973. 58 pp. $1.25

All except Ballantine title available from Cliffs Notes, Box 80728, Lincoln, Nebraska 6850l.

The most common adjunct to the academic study of sf on a college or high school level is the anthology/text, some of which have been reviewed in LUNA's pages and whose number is growing rapidly. Although such works contain commentary, questions, projects, etc., the criticism is usually not much more than brief commentary linking or contrasting the stories. Critical works are becoming more common as well, as this group of paperbacks makes clear.

The first two titles are identical in content (the second is designed for mass market distribution). Following a brief typology, Allen, a University of Nebraska English instructor, analyzes and summarizes thirteen representative sf novels, including *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, *The Time Machine*, and eleven modern works (1950-1970), from *I, Robot* to *Ringworld*, most of them Hugo or Nebula winners or nominees. The remaining third of the book analyzes Herbert's *Dune* more thoroughly, discusses verisimilitude in sf, lists novel and short fiction winners, and concludes with a recommended bibliography, an annotated bibliography of works about sf, and an index.

The Ballantine guide repeats the typology, then devotes about 20 pages to each of 15 works (13 novels), only one analysis (*Ringworld*) duplicated in both guides. Each chapter is followed by topics and projects, which may help students gain more from the work under discussion but which frequently struck me as simple-minded busywork. While most works selected are important, their selection was apparently dictated less by their intrinsic worth than by their availability from Ballantine, a harmless bit of self-promotion. The first is the preferred guide, but both are inexpensive and useful for the teacher and student and to some extent for libraries.

Cliffs Notes are brief, clear, largely descriptive discussions of literary works, classical to modern, studied in high school or college. That the publisher emphatically states that the notes are not a substitute for reading the works themselves or a classroom discussion thereof, tells us something about many students and American education. Following a brief biographical sketch of the author, the major works are summarized in detail and commented on, although the commentary is not the heavy or detailed analyses typical of the academic journals. The comments relate the works to one another and to the author's development but do not usually relate the author's work to the wider literary background. Notes on

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New Books

HARDCOVERS

Aldiss, Brian W., ed. SPACE ODYSSEYS: A NEW LOOK AT YESTERDAY'S FUTURES. Doubleday, May. $7.95

—and Harry Harrison, eds. HELL'S CARTOGRAPHERS: SOME PERSONAL HISTORIES OF SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS (repr Brit) Harper & Row, April. $7.95

Asimov, Isaac. THE PLANET THAT WASN'T (coll essays) Doubleday, Aug. $7.95

Bester, Alfred. THE LIGHT FANTASTIC. Berkley/Putnam, May. $7.95

STAR LIGHT, STAR BRIGHT (coll) Berkley/Putnam, July. $7.95

Bishop, Michael. AND STRANGE AT ECBATAN THE TREES. Harper & Row, March. $7.95

Bova, Ben. MILLENNIUM: A NOVEL ABOUT PEOPLE AND POLITICS IN THE YEAR 1999. Random House, March. $7.95

Bradbury, Ray. THAT GHOST, THAT BRIDE OF TIME (play fragment) Roy Squires (1745 Kenneth Rd., Glendale, Calif. 91201) $15.00. 400 copy limited ed.

Brameld, Theodore. THE TEACHER AS WORLD CITIZEN: A SCENARIO OF THE 21ST CENTURY. ETC Publications. $6.95

Bryant, Edward. CINNABAR. Macmillan, Aug. $7.95

Butler, Octavia E. PATTERNMASTER. Doubleday, July. $5.95

Campbell, John W. THE BEST OF JOHN W. CAMPBELL, ed. by Lester del Rey. SF Book Club, May. $2.49

WHO GOES THERE? (coll, repr of 1948 ed) Hyperion Press. $12.50

Carr, Terry, ed. CREATURES FROM BEYOND (repr) SF Book Club, April. $1.98

UNIVERSE 6. Doubleday, April. $5.95

Carter, Lin. ZARKON, LORD OF THE UNKNOWN IN THE VOLCANO OGRE... Doubleday, March. $5.95

Cherryh, C.J. BROTHERS OF EARTH. SF Book Club, June. $2.49

Clarke, Arthur C. IMPERIAL EARTH (repr) SF Book Club, April. $2.49

Cromie, Robert. A PLUNGE INTO SPACE (2d ed, repr) Hyperion Press. $12.50

Dann, Jack & George Zebrowski, eds. FASTER THAN LIGHT: AN ORIGINAL ANTHOLOGY ABOUT INTERSTELLAR TRAVEL. Harper & Row, April. $8.95

—and Gardner R. Dozois, eds. FUTURE POWER. Random House, April. $7.95; SF Book Club, July. $1.98

de Marinis, Rick. A LOVELY MONSTER: THE ADVENTURES OF CLAUDE RAINS AND DR. TELLENBECK. Simon & Schuster. $6.95

Derleth, August. DWELLERS IN DARKNESS (coll) Arkham House, April. $6.50

Dickson, Gordon R. THE DRAGON AND THE GEORGE. SF Book Club, July. $2.49

—and Harry Harrison. THE LIFESHIP. Harper & Row, May. $7.95

Dodson, Daniel B. ON A DARKLING PLAIN. Mason/Charter, July. $8.95

Edwards, Peter. TERMINUS (repr Brit) St. Martins, June. $8.95

Evans, Robley. J.R.R. TOLKIEN. Crowell. $7.95

Ferman, Ed & Barry Malzberg, eds. ARENA: SPORTS SF. Doubleday, March. $5.95

Geston, Mark S. THE SIEGE OF WONDER. Doubleday, May. $5.95

Haining, Peter, ed. THE BLACK MAGIC OMNIBUS (repr Brit) Taplinger, April. $10.95

Harris, Marilyn. BLEDDING SORROW (supernat) Putnam, Jan. $8.95

Hodgson, William Hope. THE NIGHT LAND: A LOVE TALE (repr) Hyperion Press. $16.50

Holland, Cecelia. FLOATING WORLDS. Knopf, March. $10.95

Irwin, W.R. THE GAME OF THE IMPOSSIBLE: A RHETORIC OF FANTASY. Univ. of Illinois Press. $9.95

Knight, Damon, ed. ORBIT 18. Harper & Row, June. $8.95

Koch, Eric. THE LAST THING YOU'D WANT TO KNOW. Scribners, Aug. $8.95

Komatsu, Sakyo. JAPAN SINKS (tr. from Japanese) Harper & Row, May. $7.95

Lafferty, R.A. NOT TO MENTION CAMELS: A SCIENCE FICTION FANTASY. Bobbs-Merrill, June. $6.95

Lamb, Hugh, ed. TERROR BY GASLIGHT: MORE VICTORIAN TALES OF TERROR (repr Brit) Taplinger, April. $8.95

Le Guin, Ursula K. THE WORD FOR WORLD IS FOREST. Berkley/Putnam, April. $6.95

Lem, Stanislaw. THE STAR DIARIES (tr. from Polish) Seabury, June. $9.95

Levin, Ira. THE BOYS FROM BRAZIL (marg) Random House, March. $8.95

Lovecraft, H.P. SELECTED LETTERS IV. Arkham House, May. $12.50

Moorcock, Michael. THE END OF ALL SONGS (The dancers at the end of time, v.3) Harper & Row, July. $8.95

Parry, Michel, ed. THE ROOTS OF EVIL: WEIRD STORIES OF SUPERNATURAL PLANTS (repr Brit) Taplinger. $7.95

Pedlar, Kit & Gerry Davis. THE DYNOSTAR MENACE (repr Brit) Scribners, April. $7.95

Pohl, Frederik. THE EARLY POHL (coll, repr) SF Book Club, June. $1.98

Pratchett, Terry. THE DARK SIDE OF THE SUN (repr Brit) St. Martins, July. $7.95

Priest, Christopher. THE SPACE MACHINE (repr Brit) Harper & Row, June. $8.95

Rice, Anne. INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE. Knopf, May. $8.95

Russell, Ray. INCUBUS: A NOVEL OF SEXUAL POSSESSION. Morrow. $7.95

Silverberg, Robert. CAPRICORN GAMES (coll) Random House. $6.95

(ed) THE ALIENS: SEVEN STORIES OF SCIENCE FICTION. T. Nelson, July. $6.95

NEW DIMENSIONS 6. Harper & Row, May. $8.95

Simak, Clifford D. SHAKESPEARE'S PLANET. Berkley/Putnam, May. $6.95; SF Book Club, May. $1.98

Small, Christopher. THE ROAD TO MINILUV: GEORGE ORWELL, THE STATE AND GOD. Univ. of Pittsburgh Press. $9.95

Spinrad, Norman. PASSING THROUGH THE FLAME (repr) Berkley Medallion.

Story, Ronald. THE SPACE-GOD HOAX: A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE THEORIES OF ERICH VON DANIKEN. Harper & Row. $7.95

Strick, Philip, ed. ANTIGRAV: COSMIC COMEDIES BY SF MASTERS. Taplinger, March. $8.50

Tate, Peter. FACES IN THE FLAMES. Doubleday, April. $5.95

Temple, Robert K.G. THE SIRIUS MYSTERY (nf) St. Martins, July. $10.95

Tropp, Martin. MARY SHELLEY'S MONSTER: THE STORY OF FRANKENSTEIN. Houghton Mifflin, March. $7.95

White, Jane. COMET. Harper & Row, March. $7.95

Wilson, Colin. THE SPACE VAMPIRES. Random House, March. $7.95

Wilson, Paul F. HEALER. Doubleday, June. $5.95

Würf, Karl. TO SERVE MAN: A COOKBOOK FOR PEOPLE. Owlswick Press. $6.95

Yarbro, Chelsea Quinn. TIME OF THE FOURTH HORSEMAN. Doubleday, July. $5.95

Zelazny, Roger. DOORWAYS IN THE SAND. Harper & Row, March. $8.95

THE DREAM MASTER (repr) Gregg. $8.50

THE HAND OF OBERON. Doubleday, June. $5.95

JUVENILES

Anderson, Mary. F*T*C* SUPERSTAR (marg fty) Atheneum. $6.95. Age 8-12

Baum, Thomas. IT LOOKS ALIVE TO ME! (fty) Harper & Row, April. $5.50. Age 10 up

Bond, Nancy. A STRING IN THE HARP (fty) Atheneum. $9.95. Age 10-14

Boston, L.M. THE FOSSIL SNAKE. (fty) Atheneum. $4.95. Age 8-12

Cohen, Daniel. THE ANCIENT VISITORS (nf) Doubleday, April. $5.95. Grade 6-7

Garden, Nancy. DEVILS AND DEMONS (nf, The weird and horrible library) Lippincott, April. $5.95, $2.95 paper

Ginsburg, Mirra, ed & tr. THE AIR OF MARS AND OTHER STORIES OF TIME AND SPACE (tr. from Russian) Macmillan, March. $6.95. Age 10 up

PAMPALCHE OF THE SILVER TEETH (folklore, adapt. from Russian) Crown, March. $6.95. Age 5-8

Harris, Christie. MOUSE WOMAN AND THE VANISHED PRINCESSES (Indian legends) Atheneum. $6.95. Age 8-12

Hildick, E.W. TIME EXPLORERS, INC. Doubleday, May. $5.95

Hunter, Mollie. THE KELPIE'S PEARLS (repr, new ed) Harper & Row, April. $5.95. Age 8-12

Karl, Jean E. THE TURNING PLACE: STORIES OF A FUTURE PAST (coll) Dutton. $7.50. Age 12 up

Kennedy, Richard. THE PORCELAIN MAN (fty) Little, Brown. $5.95

Kestavan, G.R. THE PALE INVADERS (repr Brit) Atheneum. $6.95. Age 10-14

L'Engle, Madeleine. A WIND IN THE DOOR (repr) Dell Laurel Leaf 8761, March. $1.25

A WRINKLE IN TIME (repr) Dell Laurel Leaf 9805, March. $1.25

McCaffrey, Anne. DRAGONSONG. Atheneum. $7.95. Age 10-14

Macfarlane, Iris. THE MOUTH OF THE NIGHT (supernat coll, from Gaelic, repr Brit) Macmillan, Feb. $6.95

McHargue, Georgess. MEET THE WEREWOLF (nf, The eerie series) Lippincott, April. $5.95, $2.95 paper

STONEFLIGHT (supernat, repr) Avon. $1.25

Mayer, Mercer. LIZA LOU AND THE YELLER BELLY SWAMP (marg fty) Parents Magazine Press, March. $5.50. Age 5-10

Murphy, Shirley Rousseau. THE GRASS TOWER (esp) Atheneum. $7.95. Age 12 up

Oakley, Graham. THE CHURCH MICE SPREAD THEIR WINGS (marg fty, repr Brit) Atheneum, Spring. $7.95. Age 4-8

O'Connell, Jean S. THE DOLLHOUSE CAPER (fty) T.Y. Crowell, Jan. $5.95. Age 8-12

Price, Susan. THE DEVIL'S PIPER (fty) Greenwillow. $6.95

Randall, Florence Engel. A WATCHER IN THE WOODS. Atheneum. $6.95. Age 10-14

Shaw, Richard, ed. WITCH, WITCH! STORIES AND POEMS OF SORCERY, SPELLS & HOCUS-POCUS. F. Warne. $6.95

Simon, Seymour. GHOSTS (nf, The eerie series) Lippincott, April. $5.95, $2.95 paper

Smith, Dodie. THE HUNDRED AND ONE DALMATIANS (fty, repr) Avon Camelot. $1.25

Snyder, Zilpha Keatley. AND ALL BETWEEN (fty) Atheneum. $6.95. Age 9-13

Travers, P.L. MARY POPPINS IN THE PARK (fty, repr) Harcourt Voyager AVB 102. $2.45 paper

BRITISH BOOKS
January-February 1976

Aldiss, Brian W. THE MALE RESPONSE. Panther, 60p. ne, pb. 586.04310.1
NON-STOP. Pan, 60p. ne, pb. 330.24638.0

Anderson, Poul. ENSIGN FLANDRY. Hodder, 65p. ne, pb. 340.21864.8

Ashe, Gordon. PLAGUE OF DEMONS. J. Long, £3.25. 09.125560.0

Asimov, Isaac. BUY JUPITER AND OTHER STORIES. Gollancz, £3.20. coll. 575.02078.4

Barclay, Alan. THE CITY AND THE DESERT. Hale, £2.90. 7091.5180.2

Barrett, G.J. SLAVER FROM THE STARS. Hale, £2.90. 7091.4668.X

Barron, Donald G. THE ZILOV BOMBS. I. Henry Pubns, £2.50. ne. 86025.055.5

Bayley, Barrington J. THE SOUL OF A ROBOT. Allison & Busby, £2.80. 85031.145.4

Blackburn, John. FACE OF THE LION. Cape, £2.60. 224.01184.7

Bloch, Robert. ATOMS AND EVIL. Hale, £2.80. coll. 7091.5086.5

Bradbury, Ray. THE SMALL ASSASSIN. Panther, 50p. ne, pb, coll. 586.04228.8

Chandler, A. Bertram. WAY BACK. Hale, £2.90. 7091.5278.7

Clarke, Arthur C. (ed. A. Wells) THE BEST OF ARTHUR C. CLARKE: 1937-1955. Sphere, 50p. ne, pb, rev, coll. 7221.2453.8

Cole, Adrian. MADNESS EMERGING. Hale, £2.90. 7091.5398.8

Coney, Michael G. FRIENDS COME IN BOXES. Sphere, 50p. ne, pb. 7221.2460.0

Cooper, Edmund. TENTH PLANET. Hodder, 60p. ne, pb. 340.20512.1

Davidson, Avram. OR ALL THE SEAS WITH OYSTERS. White Lion, £2.95. coll. 7274.0015.0

Davis, Gerry. DR. WHO AND THE TENTH PLANET. A. Wingate, £2.25. juv. 85523.062.2

Davis, Richard, ed. SCI-FI 3. Armarda, 40p. pb, juv. 00.691077.7

de Camp, L. Sprague. LOVECRAFT: A BIOGRAPHY. NEL, £5.75. nf. 450.02840.2

Derleth, August. THE MASK OF CTHULHU. Panther, 60p. ne, pb. 586.04139.7

Dick, Philip K. OUR FRIENDS FROM FROLIX 8. Panther, 60p. pb. 586.04295.4

Dickinson, Peter. THE BLUE HAWK. Gollancz, £2.95. juv. 575.02074.1

Dicks, Terrence. DR WHO AND THE LOCH NESS MONSTER. A. Wingate, £2.25. juv. 85523.054.1; Target, 40p. pb. 426.22041.2

du Maurier, Daphne. RULE BRITANNIA. G. Prior, £4.95. ne, large print. 904000.54.0

Dunn, Saul. THE COMING OF STEELEYE. Hodder, 60p. pb. 340.20507.5

Engdahl, Sylvia. THE HERITAGE OF THE STAR. Puffin, 50p. ne, pb, juv. 14.030779.6

Eyles, Allen. THE HOUSE OF HORROR. Odeon/Lorrimer, £1.95. ne, pb, nf. 85647.020.1

Farmer, Philip Jose. TIME'S LAST GIFT. Panther, 50p. pb. 586.04209.1

Farrar, Stewart. TWELVE MAIDENS. Arrow, 50p. ne, pb. 09.912020.8

Garnett, David S. COSMIC CAROUSEL. Hale, £2.90. 7091.5003.2

Gaskell, Jane. ATLAN. Tandem, 60p. ne, pb. 426.15966.7

Gurney, David. THE DEVIL IN THE ATLAS. NEL, 50p. pb. 450.02559.4

Harrison, Harry & Brian W. Aldiss, eds. YEARS BEST SCIENCE FICTION no. 8. Sphere, 65p. pb. 7221.4398.2

Heinlein, Robert A. FARNHAM'S FREEHOLD. Corgi, 65p. ni, pb. 552.10067.6
GLORY ROAD. NEL, £2.95. ne. 450.02851.8

Herbert, Frank. BEST OF FRANK HERBERT 1952-64 (ed. A. Wells) Sphere, 55p. ne, pb, rev, coll. 7221.4523.3
BEST OF FRANK HERBERT 1965-70 (ed. A. Wells) Sphere, 55p. ne, pb, rev, coll. 7221.4528.4

Howard, Robert E. THE LOST VALLEY OF ISKANDER. Orbit, 60p. pb. 86007.880.9
SWORDS OF SHAHRAZAR. Orbit, 50p. pb. 86007.881.7
WORMS OF THE EARTH. Orbit, 60p. pb. 86007.879.5

Hulke, Malcolm. DR WHO AND THE DINOSAUR INVASION. A. Wingate, £2.25. juv. 85523.061.4

Jahn, Mike. RESCUE OF ATHENA ONE. Star, 45p. pb. 352.39844.2
WINE, WOMEN AND WAR. Star, 50p. ni, pb. 352.19878.7

King, Christopher. THE WORLD OF JONAH KLEE. Hale, £2.90. 7091.4674.4

Laumer, Keith. TIME TRAP. Hale, £2.70. 7091.5251.5

Le Guin, Ursula K. THE WIND'S TWELVE QUARTERS. Gollancz, £3.80. 575.02070.9

Leiber, Fritz. NIGHT OF THE WOLF. Sphere, 50p. pb, coll. 7211.5475.5

Levin, Ira. THIS PERFECT DAY. Pan, 70p. ni, pb. 330.02657.7

Mackelworth, R.W. STARFLIGHT 3000. NEL 40p. ne, pb. 450.02310.9

Mahr, Kurt. THE GHOSTS OF GOL. Orbit, 45p. pb. 86007.869.8
THE PLANET OF THE DYING SUN. Orbit, 45p. pb. 86007.870.1

Moorcock, Michael. A CURE FOR CANCER. Quartet, 70p. ne, pb. 7043.1256.5

Morgan, Dave. GENETIC TWO. Hale, £2.90. 7091.5397.X

Norman, John. CAPTIVE OF GOR. Tandem, 60p. ni, pb. 426.16782.1
PRIEST KINGS OF GOR. Tandem, 50p. ni, pb. 426.16774.0

Norton, Andre. CROSSROADS OF TIME. Gollancz, £2.75. juv. 575.02077.6

Nowlan, Philip Francis. ARMAGEDDON 2419 AD. Panther, 50p. pb. 586.04299.7

Pereira, W.D. ANOTHER EDEN. Hale, £2.90. 7091.5230.2

Pohl, Frederik & Jack Williamson. FARTHEST STAR. Pan, 60p. pb. 330.24639.9

Pratchett, Terry. DARK SIDE OF THE SUN. C. Smythe, £2.25. 901072.20.6

Price, Roger. FOUR IN THREE. Piccolo, 30p. ni, pb, juv. 330.24294.6

ONE LAW. Piccolo, 35p. pb, juv. 330.24312.8

THREE IN THREE. Piccolo, 30p. ni, pb, juv. 330.24105.2

Priest, Christopher. REAL TIME WORLD. NEL, 40p. ne, pb, coll. 450.02432.6

Richards, Evan. SOLID GOLD KIDNAPPING. Star, 45p. ni, pb. 352.19832.9

Shaw, Bob. NIGHT WALK. Gollancz, £3.30. ne. 575.02071.7

Silver, Alain & James Ursini. THE VAMPIRE FILM. Tantivy Press, £4.25. nf. 904208.40.0

Silverberg, Robert, ed. NEW DIMENSIONS SCIENCE FICTION 5. Gollancz, £3.75. 575.02087.3

THREADS OF TIME. Millington, £3.50. 86000.051.6

Smith, E.E. THE BEST OF E.E. "DOC" SMITH. Weidenfeld & Nicholson, £3.95. coll. 297.77004.7

Smith, George O. VENUS EQUILATERAL, pt.1. Orbit, 75p. pb. 86007.860.4

VENUS EQUILATERAL, pt.2. Orbit, 75p. pb. 86007.861.2

Stableford, Brian. THE FACE OF HEAVEN. Quartet, 60p. pb. 7043.1194.1

Tevis, Walter. THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH. Pan, 60p. pb. 330.24679.8

Tubb, E.C. SCATTER OF STARDUST. Dobson, £2.75. 234.77008.2

Vance, Jack. BRAINS OF EARTH. Dobson, £2.75. 234.77055.4

MOON MOTH AND OTHER STORIES. Dobson, £2.75. coll. 234.77069.4

THE PNUME. Mayflower, 50p. ne, pb. 586.12343.0

White, James. DREAM MILLENIUM. Corgi, 50p. ne, pb. 552.10062.5

Williams, Jay & Raymond Abrashkin. DANNY DUNN, SCIENTIFIC DETECTIVE. Macdonald, £2.25. juv. 356.08375.6

Williams-Ellis, Anabel, ed. TALES FROM THE GALAXIES. Piccolo, 40p. ni, pb, juv. 330.23507.9

Wrightson, Patricia. NARGUN AND THE STARS. Puffin, 40p. ne, pb, juv. 14.030780.X

Wyndham, John. THE MIDWICH CUCKOOS. Longman Educational, 70p. ne, sch. 582.23137.X

Zelazny, Roger. TODAY WE CHOOSE FACES. Orbit, 60p. ne, pb. 86007.838.8

The information in these lists is presented in the following format: Author. Title. Publisher. Price. Status. SBN.

Author: Alphabetically. Mc is indexed as Mac.

Title: Listed alphabetically within each author's works. Anthologies edited by an author are listed after his novels and collections.

Status: The following abbreviations are used:

ne: New Edition. A book published by a different publisher, or at a higher price, or in a different format from any previous edition.

ni: New Issue. A book reprinted by the same publisher at the same, or a lower, price and in the same format as a previous edition.

IF NO EDITION INFORMATION IS GIVEN, THE EDITION LISTED IS THE FIRST BRITISH EDITION.

pb: Paperback. A book is in hardcovers unless otherwise indicated by 'pb.'

juv: Juvenile. A book written for children.

sch: School. An edition meant for use in school.

abr: Abbreviated. Text cut from a previous edition.

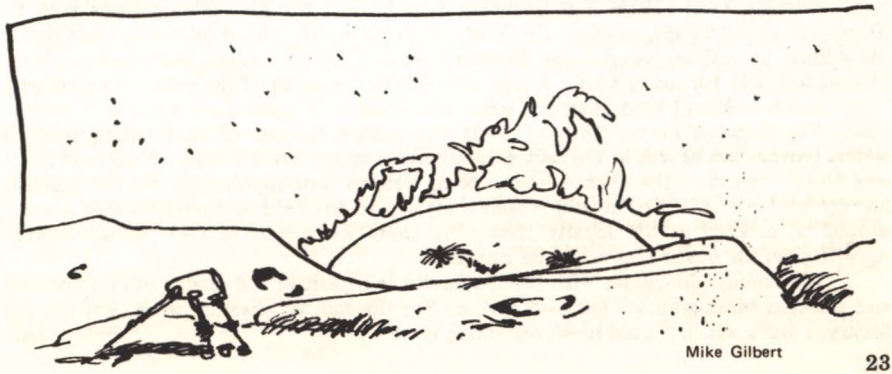
rev: Revised. Text expanded, rewritten or altered.

coll: Collection. A book of short stories by one author.

nf: Non-fiction.

The information contained in these monthly lists is cumulated, with additions and corrections, and published with a title cross-index every two years by Aardvark House. This listing is compiled by Gerald Bishop of Aardvark House.

NOTE: The books in these lists are only available outside the United Kingdom subject to market restrictions.



Mike Gilbert

Reviews

TO SERVE MAN: A COOKBOOK FOR PEOPLE, by Karl Würf, pseud. Owlswick Press (Box 8243, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101), 1976. x, 93 pp. $6.95

I have a friend who keeps a copy of a porno novel, *The School Librarian*, on his shelves with his books on librarianship. Many people (if many people buy this unusual item) will keep it with their cookbooks for the same reason. They will be wrong because this is a bona fide cookbook (though I have not personally checked the recipes—and I know a reviewer who will not review a cookbook until he has checked the recipes and who refuses to even look at a copy of this work). I think pork could be substituted for most of the recipes.

We all know Damon Knight's story "To Serve Man." It inspired "Würf" to compile this cookbook for human flesh (and the book is dedicated to Damon). The recipes all look as if they would work and the remarks are witty. The book is divided into "Old Standbys," "Ethnic Dishes," "Variety Meats," and "Soups & Stews." Thirteen illustrations by Jack Bozzi embellish the 71 recipes. The introduction is by Margaret St. Clair. There is an index.

—J. B. Post

HELL'S CARTOGRAPHERS: SOME PERSONAL HISTORIES OF SCIENCE FICTION WRITERS, ed. by Brian Aldiss and Harry Harrison. Harper & Row, 1976. 246 pp. $7.95

Although biographic accounts of modern sf writers are not unknown (such as Moskowitz's *Explorers of the Infinite*, 1963, and *Seekers of Tomorrow*, 1966), autobiographies are relatively rare, at least in book form. Aldiss asked several friends to write brief memoirs of themselves, "to be as frank as possible about their lives and to discuss their involvement in the world of science fiction." The six resulting sketches are uneven but always interesting and should also be of value to historians of the field.

Sf is a singularly poorly paying field of commercial writing, and these accounts document this in depressing detail. And these are among the top few of their chosen field! The youngest by a decade, Robert Silverberg (born c.1935), is the only one to attain considerable wealth from his writing, which was in almost all fields of commercial writing, including much non-fiction. Only because of his enormous output—over a million words several years running—could this be achieved. The economics of sf writing, if nothing else, guarantees the truth of Sturgeon's so-called law.

Alfred Bester (1913- and the oldest contributor) surmounted his pulp years to write for films, TV and magazines such as *Holiday*. The highlight of his account is his meeting with Campbell in 1950, just before Hubbard's article on dianetics appeared. He remarks of that meeting: "It reinforced my private opinion that a majority of the science fiction crowd, despite their brilliance, were missing their marbles."

Harrison (1925-) is perhaps the most peripatetic of the six. Readers who know his work better than I do should recall if his work reflects his considerable training in art.

The piece by Damon Knight (1922-) is chatty and too in-groupish for my taste, with little substance.

Frederik Pohl (1919-) is probably best known for his collaborations with C.M. Kornbluth (1923-1958), notably *The Space Merchants*. An early sf editor, he confirms that the editors sometimes bought one another's stories, the incestuous pulp ghetto which so limited the field for many years. Aldiss calls this the triumph of the editor over the writer.

Aldiss (1925-) recounted his work and ideas in a quasi-diary covering a month in 1969, *The Shape of Future Things* (1970). This essay is the best of the six and provides the widest perspective as well as the only non-American viewpoint. His view of the field in 1974 was bleak: "Most of the science fiction being written is disappointing, and not merely on literary grounds . . ." Yet he still retains a loyalty to the field and remarks that a non-fan should be amazed at the loyalty shown by these six writers to their chosen specialty. Agreed; even the newer fans might be surprised.

The volume concludes with brief, sometimes repetitive statements of how they write and selected bibliographies for each writer. For the fan, an essential work. For the larger library, a work which should have continuing value. —Neil Barron

THE BEST OF BARRY N. MALZBERG. Pocket Books 80256, 1976. 398 pp. $1.95. A collection of 38 short stories

GALAXIES, by Barry N. Malzberg. Pyramid V3734, 1975. 128 pp. $1.25

These two books appear to represent the scope of Malzberg's science fiction. The one overwhelming impression he gave me was that when he writes, he is conducting experiments in style. His stories vary widely in both subject matter and presentation.

The short pieces in his collection range from the humorous "A Delightful Comedic Premise," in which he exchanges imaginary letters with editor Ed Ferman, to the obscure and pessimistic "A Reckoning," which seems to be about a man who unwittingly caused Earth's subjugation by the Jovians. Readers unfamiliar with his work should be warned not to expect entertaining escape from the problems of life. It is the very problems of life which are his themes; he explores them in every possible variation in every possible light. His pet topics are the decadent future, the nature of time, assassination, sex, religion, killing, schizophrenia, and the purpose of life. His style varies from straightforward storytelling to a Faulkner-like stream of consciousness.

In *Galaxies*, Malzberg presents the reader with a "series of notes toward a novel." In tone it is much like a movie script top-heavy with philosophy. The author is very visible, but his attitude is unclear. At times the book seems to be a cynical put-down of sf. At others, he seems quite serious about the idea of a space ship carrying a cargo of the dead caught in and falling forever in the timeless trap of a black hole. Unfortunately, his grand idea is marred by his flawed understanding of stellar evolution. His existentialistic philosophizing is possibly more important than the plot; there is internal quibbling on this point. Whatever his purpose, his ideas are worth considering.

Malzberg is by far the most literary science fiction writer I have read. I can think of no comparable sf author; but, rather, he reminds me of the theatre of the absurd. His writing is surrealistic. His writing is also experimental. In fact, he seems afraid of settling into a style. After his relatively brief career in the field, he has decided to produce no more work in the genre (p. 388 in *The Best*).

—R. Laurraine Tutihasi

THE HAPPENING WORLDS OF JOHN BRUNNER, ed. by Joe De Bolt. Kennikat Press (90 S. Bayles Ave., Port Washington, N.Y. 11050), 1975. 216 pp. $12.95

As the first of a possible series titled Critical Explorations in Science Fiction, this is a collection of eight critical essays by De Bolt and his fellow faculty members at Central Michigan University, introduced by James Blish, and with a response by Brunner, followed by a complete bibliography of works by and about Brunner, excluding only most of his fanzine appearances.

The fifty-page introduction by the editor provides a detailed picture of Brunner's career and his writings, with extensive quotes from Brunner's published and unpublished letters, including quotes from conversations recorded at the editor's university in 1973. This overview provides an excellent introduction for a reader unfamiliar with this author of over sixty novels and eighty short stories.

Three essays treat his novels (John Pfeiffer), short fiction (Stephen Holder) and his poetry (Ronald Primeau), the last little known to sf readers but one of Brunner's strong interests. (The recent DAW collection, *The Book of Brunner*, provides samples of his poetry, limericks and translations.)

Both Norman Rasulis and William Browne treat the political economies of Brunner's major works, *Stand on Zanzibar* (1968), *The Jagged Orbit* (1969) and *The Sheep Look Up* (1972), which present a thoroughly unpleasant world motivated by greed, directed by unprincipled power, and unwittingly suicidal. One reason for Brunner's popularity, as they point out, is its continued relevance to our confused contemporary world. At the same time, however, Brunner's bleak visions of the future repelled many sf readers, many of whom apparently still believe, to quote Jacob Bronowski's unfair judgment on Wells, in "stories in which tall, elegant engineers administered with perfect justice a society in which other people had nothing to do but be happy."

Robert Slocum provides an interesting critical analysis of Brunner's use of science, technology, ecology and scientists in the three works mentioned above. Like any novelist, he derived many of his ideas and themes from his personal experience, such as his work for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. The editor and Edward Lamie explore Brunner's use of computers as a key shaper of future society. Not only do the major dystopias mentioned use computers in key roles, but even an early novel, *The Threshold of Eternity* (1959), relies heavily on this influential device.

Brunner's response is an informal autobiographical account of his development as a writer, amplifying in more details parts of the editor's introduction. The immense efforts and negligible financial rewards of becoming even a well-known sf writer are again evident and underscore Vonnegut's insistence that he is not an sf writer, a statement which is entirely justifiable if the writer has any desire to make a living from his writing.

This book is a promising beginning, since there are very few book-length works treating sf authors. A recently announced similar series from Taplinger should also be of interest to readers and libraries (details from the series co-editor, Dr. Joseph D. Olander, c/o The Commissioner of Education, The Capital, Tallahassee, Florida 32304).

—Neil Barron

PLURIBUS, by Michael Kurland. Doubleday, 1975. 184 pp. $5.95

E pluribus his, unum non veniat. At least, not for a good century or two. The plot: after establishment of a Martian colony, much of humanity is wiped out by The Death—a strain of something-or-other. Ordinary folk have returned to agriculture, superstition, and fundamentalist religion. The remnants of the universities have drawn into enclaves whence emerge peddlers, judges, and craftsmen who try to keep civilization and communications from breaking down completely. Mordecai, disguised as an itinerant showman, is trying to get from California to the New York Exclave with books in microform, and, en route, meets the Martian-human who is carrying a serum which may or may not counteract a newly mutated form of The Death.

Most of the characters here are pretty two dimensional: the locals—VERY YOKEL; Peter & Ruth—very young lovers; Mordecai—wise, dry-humored old philosopher. The situations—walled towns, feudal wars, witchcraft trials, nomadic herders, as well as academic bickering within the enclaves—are all possible under the circumstances. All in all, the novel is an entertaining thing to read on a snowy afternoon.

—Charlotte Moslander

ATTAR'S REVENGE, by Robert Graham. Pocket Books 77988, 1975. 144 pp. 95¢

WAR OF NERVES, by Robert Graham. Pocket Books 77989, 1975. 158 pp. 95¢

Attar is prime agent of ARAL (Aquatic Research Associates, Limited), trained from earliest childhood on the Australian island of Seahope to be a future leader of the organization. ARAL is not only a research foundation but also a dedicated team fighting to protect the oceans from human predators and polluters. Attar and some few others have been surgically fitted with functional gills for underwater breathing. And he, alone, possesses the secret of dolphin intelligence and a telepathic bond of communication with the species.

In *Attar's Revenge* the merman's foster sister is slain during their raid on a criminal base. Swearing bloody vengeance, he stalks the hierarchy of the dread Black Lotus syndicate to their deaths. In *War of Nerves* Attar is called in by the CIA to foil the devilish blackmail plot of the man who calls himself Rasputin. Against all odds he and the killer whale Grampus must nullify the threat of a bomb set to rupture 40 drums of deadly nerve gas, spreading it across the Caribbean.

The first two novels in the Attar the Merman series are a somewhat more bloodthirsty modern blend of The Phantom, Doc Savage and Aquaman. Surprisingly enough, the result is readable—if not very believable. The writer is less sloppy than in many stories of this ilk, and the novels provide enough super-hero action to offer more than the typical quota of escape for the undiscriminating.

—B. A. Fredstrom

SCIENCE FICTION, TODAY AND TOMORROW, ed. by Reginald Bretnor. Penguin 3921, 1975. 342 pp. $2.95 (hardcover: Harper, 1974. $7.95)

Fifteen critical essays which assay science fiction, its meaning and its impact, from inside, meaning that the 15 contributors are professional writers and editors of science fiction. The contributors include Ben Bova, Theodore Sturgeon, Fred Pohl, Thomas Scortia, Poul Anderson, Hal Clement, Jack Williamson, Anne McCaffrey, Alan Nourse, George Zebrowski and others. And, as you may imagine from such a roster, their ideas are good, they are frequently eye-opening, and they are on solid ground, for they have given years of thought to what they are saying. About the only one missing from here is Ike Asimov, which is probably a pity, for Ike said something in his *Before the Golden Age* anthology that would fit in right here. Not long ago, Professor Leslie Fiedler of the University of New York at Buffalo published a critical assay of science fiction called *In Dreams Awake* which concluded that science fiction was pure escape—the stuff of which dreams are made. Too bad Prof. Fiedler didn't have either Asimov's comment that it is a strange kind of escape literature that had youngsters concerned about the waste of fossil fuels some 40 years before the rest of the world even heard about it; or Ben Bova's comment that science fiction does not attempt to predict man's future but shows him a range of *possible* futures with the clear message that the choice is up to him.

The range of subjects is wide, from publishing, to the individual achievements of writers, and covering such science fiction themes as romance and glamor, religion and morals, imaginary worlds, and creation. I strongly doubt that anyone reading Ted Sturgeon's essay on morals and religion in science fiction could fall back on the "escapist" label—too many science fiction writers have been more forthright and more courageous than theologians in dealing with the ultimate mysteries. This is a brilliant book and not to be missed if you are at all interested in testing your own ideas as to what science fiction is about against those of the men and women who daily create it. —Samuel Mines

ILLUMINATUS, by Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson
Part 1: The Eye in the Pyramid. Dell 4688, 1975. 304 pp. $1.50
Part II: The Golden Apple. Dell 4691, 1975. 253 pp. $1.50
Part III: Leviathan. Dell 4742, 1975. $1.50

Talk about the kitchen sink—*Illuminatus* throws in the whole plumbing factory. It's part put-on of just about everybody's favorite conspiracy theory, part take-off on science fiction cliches, part subtle (well, not always subtle) propaganda for libertarianism.

Shea and Wilson aren't familiar figures in sf, but they must have read a lot of it—at an apocalyptic rock festival in the climax of the trilogy, some of the rock groups have names like The Players of Null-A, Solution Unsatisfactory, the Entwives and Thunder and Roses. Some of the others include Standard Oil of Ohio, The United States Commitment and Preparation H. As the title implies, there really is a Bavarian Illuminati Conspiracy here—but it's all mixed up with the Atlantis legend, the Cthulhu Mythos, and God knows what else.

Our story starts, more or less, with a police investigation into the bombing of a radical magazine and the disappearance of its editor—who was apparently hot on the track of the Illuminati. But from there, it takes off in so many directions even A.E. Van Vogt would have trouble following it. One sometimes wonders if Shea and Wilson themselves know what's supposed to be going on. Besides the Illuminati, it seems, there are anti-Illuminati conspiracies, such as the League of Dynamic Discord and the Justified Ancients of Mummu and the Erisian Liberation Front, led by Hagbard Celine (who goes around in a yellow submarine), John Dillinger (who was never killed, of course) and the Dealy Lama (who has a headquarters under Dealy Plaza in Dallas, and who didn't kill J.F.K.). They work together, more or less, to keep the Illuminati from immanentizing the Eschaton. But besides these primary conspiracies, there are so many secondary conspiracies the mind boggles—the missing editor is really one of the conspirators, there's a Mafia chieftain who switches sides, and several conspirators seem to be playing both ends against the middle. Assorted pawns are initiated into assorted groups, and viewpoint characters change in mid-stream, a la Ken Kesey in *Sometimes a Great Notion.*

Actually, it is possible to follow the main events—even though Shea and Wilson pull the rug out from under the reader a number of times when "real" events turn out to be hoaxes. More annoying are teasers that don't lead anywhere—for instance, there's a lot of talk about "fnords," which end up being used to make a sociological point, and are thereafter promptly forgotten.

There's all sorts of stuff about numerology, the I Ching, astrology, and what have you—much of it in appendices that try to duplicate the effect of those in *The Circus of Dr. Lao*, but at even greater length. Whatever your favorite brand of mysticism is, you'll find *something* about it here. And if you don't go in for that, you'll find explanations of Proudhon's seemingly contradictory statements about property, private monetary systems and other libertarian concerns.

Illuminatus is confusing, irritating and a lot of fun. But it tries too hard to be the opposite of deadpan seriousness of Ayn Rand (who's apparently a character herein, along with an avatar of hers named Atlanta Hope). There's such a thing as a comedy of ideas—Bernard Shaw is a casein point. But Shea and Wilson pile so many put-ons on top of put-ons, including a final revelation that the whole Armageddon with the Illuminati was largely a put-on, that it's hard to get emotionally involved with any of the characters, or to take their ideas as seriously, as we are clearly intended to.

Summing up, *Illuminatus* has to be given credit—it's a really *unique* work. But it's better in its parts than in its whole. No doubt we'll be hearing from Shea and Wilson again, but it's hard to imagine what they'll do for an encore. —John J. Pierce

THE MAN WHO AWOKE, by Laurence Manning. Ballantine 24367, 1975. 170 pp. $1.50

All five stories are here—Norman Winters' five leaps into the future at intervals of 5000 years, bringing him roughly to 25,000 A.D. Considering that these were written in 1933, it is amazing how they stand up, and how tremendous Manning's vision was. These stories should not be judged on their accuracy of prophecy, a scoreboard would be unimportant and almost irrelevant. What counts is Manning's concept of change, of the possibilities of man's evolution, and in the end, when the technology of *things* has been so far conquered as to represent little problem, of how man turns to pure thought and grapples boldly with the greatest riddle of all: the story of creation. That Manning, in 1933, should boldly have brushed aside the conventional notions of the Creator as designed in man's image—a super chemist as it were—and grappled with totally new concepts, is a tribute to original thinking. The writing is characteristic of the period—we have progressed since then, but the story moves in spite of its lack of heavy plot, and it continues to be engrossing. It is in every way worthy of the description "classic." —Samuel Mines

THE TOWERS OF UTOPIA, by Mack Reynolds. (A Frederik Pohl Selection) Bantam Books T6884, 1975. 201 pp. $1.50

Mack Reynolds continues his leisurely survey of the social and political economy of our near future. This is the year 1000—only 24 years away, but the world has changed drastically. Cities are replaced by huge single apartment complexes of 5,000 apartments or more, a complete city supplying every necessity of life. Tenants need never leave the building if they wish, and many do not. A very large proportion are on NIT—Negative Income Tax—or a guaranteed income by the government, and the economy is supported by a vaguely impractical letting of contracts to tear down barely obsolete "demes" as the apartment buildings are called, and build new ones. Money is outmoded and everyone lives by credit card, so theoretically, such innocent pursuits as crime and gambling are impractical. Yet love will find a way, and this plot deals with an outbreak of both crime and gambling in a representative deme. The book has elements of fascination because Reynolds makes it sound both real and plausible. It's a little slow-moving and just a wee bit repetitious, but in a novel of this kind, which falls somewhere between fiction and documentary, you expect somehow the characters to lecture each other for the benefit of the reader—and they do. As a result of these lectures, you too can go out and become a deme manager. —Samuel Mines

SIGN OF THE UNICORN, by Roger Zelazny. Doubleday, 1975. 186 pp. $5.95

Unlike the two preceding volumes of this series, this book is set mostly in Amber, and does not contain any particularly ambitious battles. This is not, as the blurb would have us believe, "a complete adventure in its own right"—the reader must be familiar with the two earlier books in order to follow the plot of this one, as there are quite a few references to Corwin's amnesia and to the various family members who were introduced elsewhere.

In my personal opinion, this is the best of the three books, yet it leaves unanswered the questions about the origins of the Pattern, and what will happen to the Shadows if Amber is destroyed. Also, if all Shadows are but imperfect imitations of Amber, how can a creature or creatures from the copy destroy the original. Unless Hell is a place with its own existence. Zelazny is apparently trying to tell us something about our own condition in these books, and, so far, it is a gloomy message, indeed. In a work of this size, character development can proceed slowly, but those princes and princesses seem to be as unpleasant and ruthless as they were when we first met them in *Nine Princes in Amber*—no one has learned from his/her misfortunes.

The ending is a real cliff-hanger, so I assume there is at least one more book to come. I hope so—I am beginning to think that "Amber" is a pun. . . .

—Charlotte Moslander

THE SCIENCE FICTION ROLL OF HONOR, edited by Frederik Pohl. Random House, 1975. 264 pp. $8.95

Why is it that social history moves in pendulum swings, from one extreme to the other? Has it really been less than 10 years since radical was "chic" and people were terrified of anything "reactionary"?

Well, here we are in the midst of the nostalgia boom, and science fiction hasn't escaped. Former advocates of the New Wave like Brian Aldiss and Michael Moorcock and Damon Knight are cashing in on anthologies of sf from the thirties and earlier—fiction they wouldn't have been caught dead reading, let alone reprinting, back in the 1960's.

Frederik Pohl was never one of the New Wavicles, of course, but he hasn't missed the chance to tap the nostalgia boom. With his wife Carol, he's editing a series called *Science Fiction: the Great Years*, which is one of the best of the recent excursions into nostalgia, along with Isaac Asimov's *Before the Golden Age*, Laurence Manning's *The Man Who Awoke*, the SFWA's *Science Fiction Hall of Fame*, etc.

The best nostalgia volumes have a good idea behind them—an overview of an era as in Asimov's volume, revival of an undeservedly neglected classic as in the Manning book, collections of works from several decades that have stood the test of time as in the SFWA volumes. Unfortunately, *The Science Fiction Roll of Honor* doesn't have that kind of idea. What it has is a gimmick.

Said gimmick is to "honor" those who have been guests of honor at World Science Fiction Conventions. This is the sort of thing that will appeal more to the hard-core audience of say, Advent, than to the broader science fiction market—but that might not matter if the book served some other important purpose as a showcase for fiction not generally available elsewhere. It doesn't.

In large part, it recycles familiar classics that are either in print or soon will be: Poul Anderson's "Kings Who Die," Isaac Asimov's "The Last Question," Robert A. Heinlein's "The Long Watch," Fritz Leiber's "Sanity," Theodore Sturgeon's "The Hurkle is a Happy Beast," John W. Campbell's "Who Goes There?" and even an excerpt from E.E. Smith's *The Skylark of Space.* The only real classic here that doesn't seem to be readily available right at the moment is James Blish's "How Beautiful with Banners," but that's bound to turn up in a *Best of James Blish* or something before long.

Once you get past these works, so familiar to most sf readers it's hardly necessary to describe them, you get some fair but hardly classic works—Arthur C. Clarke's "Dog Star," Lester del Rey's "The Monster" and A.E. Van Vogt and E. Mayne Hull's "Abdication" (one of the Blord series, published in paperback as *Planets for Sale*). Also generally available—but if you can't find them, it won't kill you.

What's left? Well, you get "Daybroke," a pretty obvious commentary on the Evils of Atomic War and Nasty Generals by Robert Bloch who, let's face it, deserves honor—but not for his science fiction. You get Lloyd Eshbach's "Dust," which is a good sample of the alien menace stories of the 1930's—in this case, spores from the Moon that sprout into monstrous plants—but no better than other examples already published. Frank R. Paul never wrote any fiction, so we have his Gee Whiz guest of honor speech. Maybe a fan press should issue a collection of guest of honor speeches—that's where this belongs. Hugo Gernsback complains about the lack of science in recent science fiction, and drops some hints about ideas that could be used in sf stories. Jerry Pournelle can do as much every month in *Galaxy*. And, finally, we have a minor think-piece by Willy Ley on the mathematical, as opposed to popular, meaning of the word "impossible"—but this would fit better in a collection of essays. Maybe it already has.

Compared to other nostalgia volumes, including Pohl's, *The Science Fiction Roll of Honor* wouldn't be much of a bargain even in paperback. In hardcover, it's only for dedicated completists.

—John J. Pierce

I AM NOT SPOCK, by Leonard Nimoy. Celestial Arts, 1975. 135 pp. $4.95 paper

Methinks he doth protest too much—Leonard Nimoy is and always will be Spock in the hearts of all Star Trek fans. His autobiography, however, shows that Nimoy does have many faces, both on and off stage. Anecdotes about the making of Star Trek abound, but he talks about Mission Impossible and starring theatrical roles such as Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof* and McMurphy in *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Photographs complete this very well written and interesting volume. Nimoy is quite an actor, philosopher and writer, and it is good to know more about him.

—Marylou Hewitt

FAR LANDS, OTHER DAYS, by E. Hoffmann Price. Carcosa (Box 1064, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514), 1975. xxi, 587 pp. $15.00

Not since the original publication of *The Outsider and Others* have we had a bargain like this—an author's collection of tales which gives a cross-section of much of his writing. And as if the text were not enough, the work is illustrated by George Evans with 31 major illustrations and several lesser ones repeatedly used as tail-pieces for stories (and a superb dust jacket painting). A well made book, a bargain at the price just as a physical object.

But however lovely a book may be as a physical object it is always the content which decides its ultimate value (with a few exceptions like *Al Azif*). Price was one of the better writers in that genre known as the "Oriental Tale" or "Oriental Story." It was set anywhere in Asia south of Siberia or in the lands of Islamic culture (and was somewhat of a misnomer since Arabic Africa could be included). It may or may not have contained a supernatural or fantasy element, the glamour of the East was the primary ingredient. Price had knocked around the world a bit and could convey the color of faraway places with strange sounding names as well as most other writers and probably a good deal better. And Price was a popular writer who reflected the values of his readers so those written during WWII reflect a common bias. Still the man comes through, in his own way, in many of the stories. He had served in the Philippines and the lay of the land sounds real. His love of Bayonne (France, not New Jersey) comes through (the book has more than his "Orientals"). I would say most of the 31 stories are "Oriental," but his d'Artois cycle set in France (and having fantasy elements) are also included. The stories are often dated in style or even plot (but see me in 25 years and tell me if what you are reading now is deathless literature) but in spite of this (or because of it if you dig nostalgia) the stories most of the time still have a vitality which makes them readable. I am least happy with the introduction in which Price comes across as a crusty old man (but, what the Hell, he was born in 1898) muttering about his past glories and present dislikes. As a collection of one author's stories in a special genre this book has an obvious value in literary history circles; for those of us who like this kind of story the collection is worth reading (and maybe even buying). Like it or loathe it, it can't be ignored.

—J. B. Post

EXPLORING CORDWAINER SMITH. Algol Press (Box 4175, New York, N.Y. 10017), 1975. 33 pp. $2.50

This is somewhere between a memorial and a literary analysis, probably closer to a memorial, though Paul Linebarger deserves better (as does "Cordwainer Smith," for that matter). For any who may not know, Paul Linebarger was (among other things) Professor of Asiatic Politics at Johns Hopkins University. He had been on Stillwell's staff in China and been in Korea in military intelligence. He wrote science fiction—pretty damned good science fiction on the whole—under the name "Cordwainer Smith."

This pamphlet has Arthur Burns writing on Paul Linebarger, John Foyster writing on "Cordwainer Smith," and the two men jointly discussing him in a dialogue. Sandra Miesel points out Christian symbolism in "Smith's" works, particularly "Dead Lady of Clown Town." Alice Turner gives us a chronology and J.J. Pierce gives a bibliography. There is a concluding page of background notes preceded by a reproduction of a calling card.

An informative little offering, but the subject deserves better.

—J. B. Post

ABOUT THE SLEEPING BEAUTY, by Pamela L. Travers. McGraw-Hill, 1975. 111 pp. $7.95

Mary Poppins' author has just published a new children's book (after *Friend Monkey*). Illustrated by Charles Keeping with Arabian beauties executed in wavy lines and gorgeous greens and blues, or a page in orange, the book gives six versions of the Sleeping Beauty tale and an essay dealing with the Sleeping Beauty theme. All fairy-tale fiends will love it.

The essay explains what in fairy tales is enduring and central to adult understanding of experience; it is not a scholarly treatment, nor is it keyed to the motif-indexes. It does explain why the author likes such tales, and why the reader or listener may like the other five versions.

—Deirdre C. Purcell

SCIENCE FICTION OF THE THIRTIES, ed. by Damon Knight. Bobbs-Merrill, 1976. xii, 469 pp. $12.50

An examination of Cole's *Checklist of Science Fiction Anthologies* (1964) reveals that the pulps of the 1940s and 1950s were far more heavily mined for stories than those of the 30's. The Margulies & Friend anthology, *From Off This World* (1949) was an exception, drawing its 18 tales from pulps of the 1929-1937 period, none of them among the 18 selected for this exercise in nostalgia. These are arranged chronologically from 1931 to 1939, grouped in three periods, each preceded by 3-4 pages of commentary, which is much too brief to provide any real understanding of the changes in popular fiction of the period.

Campbell's "The Battery of Hate" is a quintessential Gernsback story, loaded with hardware, peopled by cutouts and stereotypes, with the good guys triumphant. Weinbaum's "The Mad Moon" takes place on Jupiter's Io and features the exotic extraterrestrials for which he was well known. The romantic interest is embarrassing. De Camp has two entries, "Hyperpilosity" and "The Merman," the sort of pleasantly inconsequential stories he does so well. The first assumes a flu virus which causes everyone to grow hairy pelts in 1971 (the story dates from 1938), and some of the consequences of this are humorously explored. The second involves an aquarium employee who develops a temporary ability to breathe under water. Howard Graham, Ph.D., proves that an awful story can be written even by a doctorate, which will come as no surprise to thesis readers. The other stories are not much better. A complete listing would serve no purpose. Each story is preceded by a b&w illustration from the period. The unidentified cover is from the August 1934 *Astounding*, a hurtling spaceship by Howard Brown illustrating Smith's *Skylark of Valeron*, and may be the best thing in the book.

If readers and libraries really want this sort of thing, Asimov's *Before the Golden Age* (Doubleday, $16.95; Fawcett, 3 vols. $1.50 each) is a better selection of 26 stories, each introduced by autobiographical commentary mixed with affectionate evaluation of the authors and stories. Nostalgia we don't need.

—Neil Barron

BREAKAWAY, by E.C. Tubb. Pocket Books 80184, 1975. 141 pp. $1.50

MOON ODYSSEY, by John Rankine. Pocket Books 80185, 1975. 156 pp. $1.50

THE SPACE GUARDIANS, by Brian Ball. Pocket Books 80198, 1975. 142 pp. $1.50

COLLISION COURSE, by E.C. Tubb. Pocket Books 80274, 1976. 159 pp. $1.50

If you've seen any of the television opuses—or is it opi?—of *Space: 1999* with Martin Landau and Barbara Bain, you already know that they haven't quite inherited the mantle of *Star Trek*. Barbara Bain does a lot of standing and staring and Martin Landau looks pained as though he were wishing Mr. Spock were there. The TV productions have outstandingly good props and outstandingly poor scripts, which is a pity. With so much money lavished on hardware, a little more might have gone for good stories. Or maybe they wanted what they got—raw space opera, undefiled by thought. If you are virginal about *Space: 1999*, the basic plot is that a group of alleged scientists are home based on the moon, which by virtue of a nuclear explosion, is nudged out of Earth's gravitational field and does a runaway. On their damaged and wandering satellite, the colonists meet the usual collection of magicians, spooks and freaks which some writers are convinced populate outer space. This is the kind of thing most uninformed people think of when someone mentions science fiction. I don't know if the TV productions were made from these novels, or these were novelized from the TV scripts, but it doesn't much matter. The books have a good number of photographs from the TV productions and if you happen to think Barbara Bain is beautiful you might enjoy looking at them. Martin Landau looked better on *Mission Impossible.*

—Samuel Mines

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well-known authors, such as Orwell or Huxley, often include review questions and a selected bibliography.

Allen's notes on Herbert cover both his short fiction and novels, from *Under Pressure* (1956), his first novel, to *Hellstrom's Hive* (1973). The comments on *Dune* are largely repeated from the first two works reviewed above.

Searles is an editor of *The Science Fiction Review Monthly* and obviously knows Heinlein's work thoroughly. From "Life-line," 1939, his first published story, to *Stranger in a Strange Land*, he shows the growth in craftsmanship and the changing emphases of Heinlein's stories, both adult and juvenile. He discusses the "future history" stories and the major themes in Heinlein's works. A selected bibliography concludes this survey, which is roughly comparable to Panshin's *Heinlein in Dimension* (1968).

Paul's notes on Huxley's two works ary mostly summary, and of very limited value in understanding this prolific writer's widely varied works. Many more comprehensive studies have appeared since Huxley's death in 1963 and these 1965 notes. Similar comments can be made about the Orwell gloss. Preferable to this would be *Orwell's 1984: Text, Sources, Criticism*, ed. by Irving Howe (1963). The Priest work gives a moderately detailed overview of More's seminal work and briefly discusses later utopian and dystopian fiction. Holland treats eight novels and a play, from 1952 to 1973, each depicting man as puppet and victim, an unrelieved black humor popular in the 60's and 70's. A more useful overview would be *The Vonnegut Statement*, ed. by Klinkowitz and Somer (1973).

Anyone who has studied literature well knows that works cannot be reduced to their paraphraseable plot or content. These notes can be useful if they are consulted after reading the works in question, as for refreshing one's memory regarding plot details. And if they promote greater reflection, so much the better. But as the publisher laments, they are too often a substitute for the works themselves. While not of much use in most libraries, they have some value for classroom use as aids to greater understanding—but as beginning, not ending, points.

—Neil Barron

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